DRMP Improves Asset Visibility

DRMP

DRMP is a civil engineering and surveying firm with over 500 employees and 17 office locations throughout the southeastern United States and has been in the A/E/C industry for 42 years. DRMP offers a range of services under six divisions: construction engineering inspection, land development, structural engineering, surveying and mapping/subsurface utility engineering, transportation engineering and water resources/stormwater management. The award-winning firm is ranked among Engineering News-Record's "Top 500 Design Firms" in the United States.

The Challenge

Field work on project sites is an integral part of DRMP's business. On any given day, hundreds of staff are visiting work sites that are miles away in remote areas or in dense areas near highways or busy intersections.

While working in the field, DRMP's staff frequently utilizes highly-sophisticated, technical equipment including data collectors, GPS, cameras, measurement instruments, LiDAR laser scanners, and drones.

Tracking all of DRMP's equipment has been a continuous challenge. Previous systems that were used to manage the assets were cumbersome, inefficient and inaccurate. As a result, there was a disconnect and a lack of communication between what was happening with the field teams and the firm's Accounting Department.

Todd Catella, DRMP's Asset and Inventory Manager, was tasked with improving the equipment visibility at the firm with a radio frequency identification (RFID) tagging system to develop an efficient system that would quickly and accurately track and manage equipment individually and record its last known location. From an asset perspective, the Accounting Department also wanted regular updates of where the equipment was located to track depreciation of the equipment.

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DRMP also wanted photo verification of the serial numbers on the equipment to be recorded on file in the tracking system. The team was requesting visual documentation to provide a quick snapshot of what these survey devices look like to make identification easier. As you can imagine, associating a device name and serial number on an invoice without an image of the actual device can be a daunting task.

While the Accounting Department wanted improved visibility and accountability, the field teams wanted to make sure that productivity was not compromised. The field teams wanted a solid tracking system that could be centrally pulled up from a web browser at any time with unique login credentials giving multiple levels of office management the ability to check the status of an asset or list of assets without affecting the field crew managers production.

The Solution

Mr. Catella researched several RFID equipment tracking company solutions and quickly identified A2B Tracking's RFID asset tracking platform as a leader in DRMP's final selection.

From the beginning, A2B Tracking clearly communicated system requirements of the tracking platform so that all the stakeholders were on the same page. During discussions between A2B and DRMP it became apparent that there was a variety of equipment that would each require different types of RFID tags to work effectively. The team knew that selecting the correct RFID tags was critical, but they also knew they needed to test the tags before they arrived at any definitive conclusions.

A2B Tracking implemented an RFID system for DRMP by taking advantage of mobile RFID readers from Zebra coupled with Samsung tablets, which were all connected to the A2B Tracking platform in the cloud. Once the system was in place the team started testing sample RFID tags in common scenarios and environments with DRMP's equipment.

It is important to note that a good portion of the surveying and engineering equipment is housed in protective boxes, pelican cases and other types of containers. The RFID readers needed to be able to read through these boxes to the instruments themselves. Each individual asset was labeled with a passive RFID tag. The tags were affixed directly to each piece of equipment and did not utilize a hang tag on the outside of the case.

Upon completing the testing phase, Mr. Catella and his team decided upon four different types of asset tags that would take care of their entire inventory needs. It was not until after this extensive testing phase that DRMP purchased their RFID tags and permanently affixed them to their equipment.

> **"The A2B Tracking solution has been a game changer for the entire DRMP organization."**

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The Results

The A2B Tracking RFID platform has provided DRMP with a real-world picture of their complete inventory. Asset accountability has been achieved throughout the organization. DRMP's management team can now view in real-time as equipment is assigned to field crews, taken out of the office to a work site location and when it is returned.

Custom RFID asset tags from A2B Tracking ensures fast and accurate reads even through Pelican Cases.

DRMP has taken full advantage of this opportunity to strengthen their inventory records by enhancing the asset files with all known information about each individual asset. Additional information like maintenance records, warranty and the condition of the asset are all now being appended to the asset record along with photos and PDF files.

When an aerial drone, for example, is damaged in the field this can be documented in the A2B Tracking system along with photos and a detailed explanation.

Each asset is now assigned to a location with a custodian who maintains department-level ownership over that particular piece of equipment. When a staff member needs equipment for a project they can "check-out" a specific asset and be assigned responsibility to "check-in" that same item at a designated date upon its return.

Conclusion

The A2B Tracking Solution has been a game changer for the entire DRMP organization. The Finance department can now easily account for the inventory and equipment throughout the majority of their office locations and make adjustments to the general ledger accordingly.

> **"The A2B Tracking technology has provided near 100% equipment visibility to an organization that previously struggled with inventory accuracy"**

The entire organization is now able to locate a particular piece of equipment in a fraction of the time compared to previously. The robust asset history is also readily available to everyone in the organization providing the accountability and recordkeeping to be able to improve efficiencies and help pinpoint problems.

DRMP has embraced the A2B Tracking technology and is looking for ways to improve and find even more efficiencies moving forward.

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