

ROUTE TO SUCCESS

VAR helps manufacturer streamline operations with mobile tech

REAL LIFE SOLUTION

CASE STUDY

- ❖ SOLUTION PROVIDER: Keet Consulting Services, LLC (KCS)
- ❖ CLIENT: Getchell Brothers
- ❖ SOLUTION: RouteMan (POS Route Management Software), Seiko Instruments DPU-S (mobile printer)

GETCHELL BROTHERS INC., a fourth-generation family-owned ice manufacturing company, is one of the largest and oldest ice companies in New England. The business began operations in 1888, cutting ice blocks from the Penobscot River. It now runs manufacturing facilities in Brewer and Sandford, Maine, and distributes products throughout the area, along with several leading brands of ice cream.

Getchell Brothers attributes its continued success, in part, based on effective technology investments, such as becoming an early adopter of route management technology. Over the years, Getchell Brothers learned some important lessons regarding reliability of the product and vendors, and the longevity of the system platform.

IN SEARCH OF AN UPGRADE

In 2004, Getchell began operating with a route handheld system, which it used until the system provider ceased operations. Getchell then had a custom-built system developed by a local company, using a Palm-based host paired with a Seiko Instruments mobile printer. Eventually the Palm devices were no longer supported, triggering a new search for an established vendor that could deliver a complete route management system.

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– ETHAN SOUTHERN, PARTNER, KEET CONSULTING SERVICES

When evaluating vendors, Getchell Brothers looked for a reliable system that was flexible enough to fully integrate into its back-office systems. On the peripheral side, the end user opted to continue using mobile printers from their original supplier, Seiko Instruments, due to the vendor’s track record as an established supplier with consistent support.

After a thorough evaluation, Getchell Brothers selected RouteMan, a route management system from Keet Consulting Services (KCS), a Pelham, Ala.-based solution provider. Soon after, Getchell Brothers began working with Ethan Southern, partner at KCS, and his team, who would implement RouteMan for the company.

Getchell Brothers chose the solution

because it could be easily integrated into existing operations and business processes. Once installed, the RouteMan platform tracks and manages deliveries, accepts orders and payments, prints receipts on-site, and provides intuitive reporting to the system’s administrator.



ETHAN SOUTHERN, PARTNER, KEET CONSULTING SERVICES

“Getchell also liked the longevity of the system from a support standpoint, [and the fact that it] runs on the Windows Mobile 6.x operating system,” said Southern. “And with the tools Seiko Instruments provided, integrating the DPU-S printer was very straightforward.”

THE RIGHT DIRECTION

“In the beginning, the biggest challenge was that the users had grown so accustomed to the interface and reporting functionality of the old system. But with our industry knowledge, and because of the adaptability and intuitive design of the software, we were able to provide new capabilities and get the users up and running fairly quickly.”

Getchell Brothers drivers now download customer data, and updates are uploaded to the company’s in-house accounting system. “The platform is accurate and efficient,” said Southern. “With the RouteMan System, all relevant data, including customer [records], route, and pricing information, is maintained on each handheld. With this feature, the route driver is always up-to-date with the right information.”

Roxsand Farrar, who serves as controller at Getchell Brothers, can vouch for Southern’s assessment of the platform’s advantages. “I really like the way RouteMan displays everything you need to know about a customer in one place,” Farrar said. “The color codes tell me which invoices are paid or not paid at a glance. We make a lot of use of the Urgent Note feature to alert the drivers to information on each customer, and the information in RouteMan is always up to date.” **VSR**

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