Mobile-Enabling Logistics

Turning the “Last Mile” into a competitive advantage
When it comes to supply chain, the final process of actually delivering the goods can make or break a company. The impact associated with the delivery process affects margins, customer relationships, repeat business, and cash flow. The paper-laden delivery confirmation process often involves capturing key data and customer signatures, and then handing the paperwork to an admin for processing once the drivers are back at the office. This greatly impacts time to invoice, receiving of cash, revenue recognition compliance, and data quality.

The Linde Group, one of the world’s largest industrial gases company with over 65,000 employees in over 100 countries, sees the opportunity to digitize the process. “We have whole segments of our workforce – third party drivers – making deliveries of liquid product in tanks, and all that paperwork doesn’t make its way back to us for many days,” says David Johnston, SVP and CIO, Americas. “Those days are lost in our cash collection. This means real money to us.”

Honeywell reports that over 50% of the total delivery cost is consumed by what is known as the “last mile,” the stage of supply chain when goods are moved from factory or warehouse to final destination. For logistics teams who manage the delivering of goods to customers, having visibility into where the shipments are and the exact ETAs for their customers can be great competitive advantages. These teams are often “out of pocket” while on the road, with no clear visibility into arrival times. Greg Bellows, president of Trans-i, a leading logistics industry solution provider says, “Final delivery can be complicated or delayed by traffic, construction, inefficient dispatching, incorrect addresses, unattended delivery issues, signature capture problems, and other factors.”

“The opportunity to add visibility to the ‘last mile’ of goods transport is a reality today,” Bellows states. “The drivers already have devices. Manufacturers have the systems with the order and customer data. In today’s world we need to bridge these two entities so manufacturers can better serve their customers.”

The challenge lies in that business applications are designed for super users, requiring time-intensive training, multiple clicks to get to the screen for the task at hand, and access inside the corporate firewall via desktop or laptop. This doesn’t work for drivers, who often aren’t employees and have no access to systems. This is where mobility can help. By creating micro apps for specific workflows that connect the logistics-specific back-end systems and utilize native mobile functionality, logistics teams can improve delivery times, ensure safe delivery compliance, and even help manufacturers and retailers speed up time to cash, improve revenue recognition compliance and customer satisfaction.
How mobility can optimize the last mile for increased profitability and customer satisfaction

When it comes to the last mile delivery processes, there is a paper form for everything: schedules, addresses, travel routes, hazardous materials, delivery confirmation, dispatch orders, bills of lading, invoices and more. The time it takes for drivers to wrangle paper forms and fill them out during the delivery process increases the amount of time the driver takes to complete the delivery. That can eat into the productivity of the route and increases costs. Digitizing pen-to-paper processes with mobile forms helps solve for this. As an expert in logistics systems, Bellows suggests mobile-enabling specific parts of the delivery process to add real business value: route optimization, on-time delivery, ensure safe delivery, accelerated time-to-cash, and enhanced customer satisfaction.

Route optimization

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On-time delivery

Paper processes associated with addresses, routes, delivery confirmation, etc., slow down delivery. By mobile-enabling paper processes and providing a mobile schedule app drivers can get real-time routing updates with GPS optimization, customers can get up to the minute notifications on expected delivery times, and logistics managers can see where drivers are at and what deliveries have taken place in real-time.

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When moving hazardous materials such as chemicals or fuel, there is a host of regulations that drivers must check and report on before departing from the warehouse and during the journey. It’s a very manual process, with stacks of paper to go through and take notes on, which then get entered into a system by admin. Moving this scenario to mobile makes it very easy to use and will save time and data entry. All documents are now digital. Instant and direct communications between the pick and delivery personnel and driver.

**Ensure safe delivery**

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**Accelerated time-to-cash**

Companies can't invoice customers until goods have been delivered and signed for. For many manufacturing companies, capturing proof of delivery is paper-based and invoicing is reliant on the time it takes for drivers to get back to home office to deliver the paperwork, and then when an admin inputs the data into the ERP system. This delay impacts time to cash and revenue recognition compliance as well. Mobile-enable this workflow with signature capture and have the signed forms go straight into backend-systems in real-time for immediate billing and revenue recognition compliance.

**Enhanced customer satisfaction**

In the race to stay ahead of industry trends, companies must manage customer expectations and place their needs at the top of their agenda, especially when it comes to last mile delivery. Enabling drivers to communicate with customers on delivery scheduling and providing real time updates on delivery times can be a great differentiator and a real customer benefit. Gartner states that “a commitment to customer experience results in up to 25% more customer retention and revenue than sales or marketing initiatives.”
Case Study: Titan Machinery

Titan Machinery, one of the largest owners and operators of full-service agriculture and construction equipment dealerships faced the same challenges. Titan Machinery's pickup and delivery processes were anything but state-of-the-art. Field service reps would have to manually capture details of equipment conditions and delivery confirmation with customer signature. Due to the efficiencies in logistics, drivers would be on the road for two weeks at a time and once back at the headquarters, the signed paperwork was passed to an admin to manually input into Oracle JD Edwards. As a result, there was a minimum of a two-week delay in proof of delivery which affects revenue recognition compliance. In addition, important customer details were often left out in the process. By mobile-enabling the proof of delivery process, Titan Machinery was able to have its drivers capture signatures on their mobile device and immediately have the forms updated into JD Edwards, without waiting for drivers to get back from the field and without relying on administrators to enter the data into the system.

“...We have leveraged the power of mobility to transform our business to become more agile and dynamic. By digitally transforming processes and mobile-enabling our workforce, we’ve improved our revenue recognition compliance and billing accuracy, and streamlined field processes.

Rick Keller, Director of Business Applications, Titan Machinery

How Capriza Helps

As logistics providers and delivery companies vie for more businesses, mobility can give your company a critical competitive advantage. The companies that innovate last-mile deliveries in the smartest, most efficient fashion will be the only ones survive and win. Capriza’s has helped many companies mobile-enable supply chain initiatives from existing ERP and logistics systems incorporating electronic signature capture, barcode scanning, GPS, and enabling third-party drivers access to only those specific role-based workflows necessary.
About Capriza

Capriza's enterprise mobility platform empowers IT and business units to simplify critical tasks from existing business applications (SAP, JD Edwards, Oracle, PeopleSoft, as well as homegrown systems) into quick, simple and consistent mobile experiences without any coding, APIs or integration. With Capriza, field employees have anytime, anywhere access to all important information regardless of underlying application. 100+ enterprises and over a half millions users rely on Capriza including: Titan Machinery, The Linde Group, Del Monte Foods, Sargento Cheese, Acushnet and more.

To see a demo or speak to a sales representative, go to capriza.com/demo