



UNICCO® Case Study: University of Miami UNI-QSM Inspection System

Background

Since 1991, UNICCO® has provided contract janitorial and landscaping services to the University of Miami. As part of an ongoing effort to provide the University with the latest technological advances in the integrated facilities industry, UNICCO implemented the UNI-QSM Inspection System in May 2000. The UNI-Q (pronounced “unique”) system features a number of enhancements that immediately allowed UNICCO to reduce the number of employees required to make thorough inspections and output comprehensive reports. The UNI-Q system eliminated the need for a paper-based inspection system by replacing it with a faster, more efficient system that utilizes handheld technology.

Product Introduction

UNI-Q is UNICCO’s proprietary Quality Inspection System, which utilizes state-of-the-art hardware and software components. The UNI-Q Inspection System is comprised of five essential components:



- Q-Pocket: a proprietary inspection application developed by UNICCO that allows for quick and simple data gathering on a handheld computer
- Q-Admin: a software application that allows for simple database management on a PC, including the ability to select data to include in reports from categories including date range, inspection types, inspectors, locations, area types, and departments
- Q-Sync Server: a PC application that sends configuration files to the handheld computer
- Q-Sync Client: the application that receives configurations and sends and receives inspection data
- The HP® Jornada 720 handheld PC (pictured) with keyboard, color display, serial and USB connectivity, and the new Microsoft Windows® for Handheld PC 2000 operating system

Product Training

UNICCO’s IT Field Service group traveled to the site to conduct a two-day training and installation program. Q-Admin training took place on the morning of the first day. Later that day, a trainer in the IT Field Services group instructed six supervisors in the use of the UNI-Q Inspection System. On the second day, each administrator was tested for unassisted proficiency in adding inspectors, locations, and area types. Administrators also used the handheld computers to make uploads and downloads of data files. The inspectors met again during the afternoon of the second day to practice making real inspections.

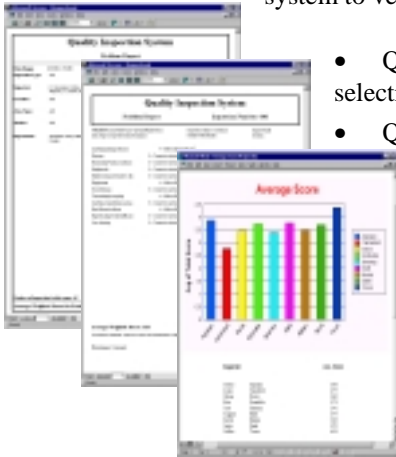
Product Implementation

Supervisors and administrators worked together to create a schedule of buildings that were to be inspected on different days. The administrators assigned a handheld computer to each supervisor to carry during inspection tours, which typically occurred three to four times per week, with each tour consisting of inspections of approximately eight different area types. At the end of the inspection tour, the supervisor returned to the office and gave the computer to the administrator, who connected each handheld computer to the PC and uploaded the inspection results into the database.

At the end of each month, the account manager would evaluate the inspection reports with the supervisors and administrator, and review low-scoring inspections along with all the comments that were typed in during the previous month's inspections. Maintenance comments had been gathered and forwarded to the physical plant for resolution. Previously low-scoring locations became focus areas for the following month. This procedure helped to bring a standard of quality service in every region of the 100-building University.

Product Expansion

Since the initial introduction of the UNI-Q Inspection System, it has been expanded to include eight handheld computers across the three University of Miami campuses. The system has been further expanded to include a computer on the medical campus that is specially programmed to measure specific medical criteria. In August 2000, UNICCO IT Field Services and on-site administrator upgraded the system to version 1.2 and added the following features:



- Q-Pocket rewritten for faster, easier use with no delay in location selection
- Q-Admin report module that allows saving of customized report queries
 - “Problem Report” feature in Q-Admin report module that pinpoints problems by showing only non-passing criteria
 - Report summary in Q-Admin report module shows information summary as first page of all four reports
 - Q-Admin that backs up the data.mdb file each time Q-Admin is accessed

Summary

The implementation of the UNI-Q Inspection System now provides faster return of information which, in turn, results in faster problem resolution. Additionally, the speed with which inspections can now be performed translates to more frequent inspections, and a higher degree of overall maintenance quality.

Using UNICCO's proprietary palmtop technology also eliminates the likelihood of errors in transcribing inspectors' handwritten notes to data entry, and provides much faster results for up-to-date reporting, and makes inspections for the University of Miami inspectors far easier to perform.



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