Asset Factory
Putting you in control of your property assets

www.royalmail.com
Business need
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Due to the very complex nature of its property estate, Royal Mail holds a unique contractual relationship with its FM Supplier. This is a long-standing relationship which was focused on reducing costs to Royal Mail as well as delivering a better service to its customers.

With a large complex estate and high volumes of reactive maintenance work, the challenge was to ensure that up-to-date information was presented as a dashboard to improve supplier performance. An additional challenge was to manage and respond to emerging risks before they impact on its mail operation.

Data was a key strategic driver increasingly driving decision-making across the business. The art of the possible was understood and sharing of data was an important requirement.

Royal Mail presented CDS with requirements/outcomes that needed to be achieved:

- Help improve the performance of the FM supply chain.
- Focus on eliminating/minimising disruption of the mail operation from a property facilities perspective.
- Provide a dynamic dashboard linked to KPI performance on a mobile device.
- Create an interface into the supplier data warehouse, refreshed four times a day, that creates a client side data set and mitigates data/supplier ‘lock in’.
- Provide Royal Mail with visibility of reactive maintenance.
- Pro-actively manage performance.
- Help budget setting through targeted and accurate investment in the estate and its assets.
- Provide insight to asset condition to help inform asset replacement decisions

CDS was able to deliver all of these in full with its Asset Factory Solution.
Solution
Solution

For the past five to 10 years, the FM sector has led the way in the use of technology in the wider property sector. This has included the use of mobile technology to make operations more responsive, web based self-service offering to customers, as well as data integration at a system-to-system level – even Internet of Everything, with devices generating equipment side data to alert on condition or status. No other Industry has been as innovative in terms of “PropTech”.

However, FM is just one element of running a property estate.

• In the real estate area – tenures, leases, rents, rates, service charges, landlord agreements etc all need management.
• In the energy and waste area - consumption, cost, CO2, DECs EPCs etc. all need management.
• With respect to capital projects and programmes – costs, slippages, risks, dependencies all need management.

Solutions are in place, but if not joined up or aggregated they only allow property managers to see their estate in a silo and manage based on hard objective measurements only.

Solutions need to encourage data integration.

Increasingly enlightened organisations are thinking about the people in the properties and the outcomes, value and productivity of those people. i.e. qualitative and subjective matters. They are also recognising the value of their properties in the attraction and retention of staff.

With increasingly outsourced arrangements in the property sector, the data ownership risk looms large for clients. Having technology that allows organisations to deal with these points with an independent and trusted source, and mitigates data supplier lock-in.

Asset Factory allows you to measure the value, cost, risk and performance of your property estate from all angles. It presents actionable insight and goes as far as possible down the route of driving the data to make decisions.

Uniquely, it also captures data from qualitative systems (e.g. Leesman) to blend hard and soft measures, so a balanced view is understood – i.e. “the building is expensive to maintain, but staff enjoy visiting/working in it, utilise it best and are also most productive. It also attracts talent in the way it looks.”
In the case of Royal Mail, CDS developed Asset Factory to analyse FM data from the company’s FM supplier. Reactive, planned and asset condition data is gathered and then reported on.

The main ‘use cases’ for the solution are that Operations Managers and Directors have a solution that allows two-way stakeholder management:

1) Being able to show the mail centre, distribution centre and delivery office managers that the FM service delivery is under control, operating legally and meeting required service levels.

2) Being able to ensure that the FM supplier is dealing with high risk issues that affect operations and mail delivery, in a timely manner.

Royal Mail demands high levels of performance from their assets and facilities and Asset Factory helps keep operations running smoothly.

Reactive Work Order data from the FM provider is analysed four times a day. Planned Maintenance Work Order data, once a week and Asset condition data, quarterly.

Blending asset condition data with actual reactive data allows the client to see the true picture of how an asset is performing, especially if it is coming to the end of its expected life. It allows budgets to be set based upon real-time and trusted data from the operational systems.

Technically the solution has a very simple architecture:

1) A Powerful Integration Layer – this ensures that data can be harvested over multiple communications mediums and formats, email, SFTP, web browser mapping tool and web services.

2) A Flexible Data Layer – A datawarehouse and unique property schema based on CDS’s collective Property skills and heritage.

3) A best in class presentation layer – Asset Factory leverages the Microstrategy mobile app for iOS and Android. We operate a mobile first strategy, delivering to tablet based computing.

Asset Factory Target Operating Model (TOM)
Implementation

The journey to implementation started in May 2015. Although Asset Factory can analyse and aggregate multiple datasets, in different formats over multiple interfaces, we recommend our clients initially work with single data sets in an agile methodology.

CDS was commissioned to work on a Proof of Concept (POC) based on a limited scope and single data feed. Within a month the technology was ready and in June 2015 we commenced the POC.

In three months the proof of concept had been ‘proven’ and so in September 2015 the scope was expanded as described above. On the 4th Dec 2015, the service went live.

Training the users was done in classroom style meetings ensuring that all users were using the solution in the manner it was expected – i.e. all had tablets and all had the app installed on their devices.

From the outset, Royal Mail laid out the reasons for the project and that ultimately this was to help maintain and improve its service to customers.

Weekly meetings to track the project were held. Establishing a meaningful mapping of project resources enabled technical discussions to happen directly and fast, removing blockers as and when they arose.

It wasn’t always plain sailing - some complexity and lessons learned were:

- What is the right hardware for the task? Windows and android devices were considered and discounted.
- How do you want to present the dashboard? –It needs to be intuitive and simple and balance the tactical and strategic reporting nature of the requirements.
- Check the data for quality and accuracy. Trust in the data is key.
- Spend time testing the outputs and ensure all stakeholders are engaged. Test when it’s time to test, not after it’s gone LIVE.
- Follow-up with users and feedback any improvements to consolidate usage – this was done regularly and bugs eliminated/tweaks made in the run-up to ‘operational readiness’.

Royal Mail – Facilities Performance Dashboard
Benefits realised
Benefits realised

Are you constantly frustrated with the lack of evidence or numbers in respect to commercials? Let’s try to put that right.

The business case for Asset Factory has been established in the following areas:

• Time saved (daily work patterns)
• Risk avoided (operations maintained)
• Insight leading to better use of money.

In a recent survey that followed up on the use of the tool and gathered developmental feedback, the users rated some areas but also provided some insight into time saved and risks mitigated.

In the feedback from Royal Mail users, 83% said the solution had saved them at least two days work since January 2015, and 17% said it had saved then up to five days. Extrapolated across a full year (the survey was conducted seven months in), this represented considerable cost savings.

In terms of risk avoided and operations maintained in an estate of this size and complexity it is hard to measure. However, given the level of use by the teams using the tool and the level of intervention, this could be significant. Avoiding cost is not just about saving money, but also about preventing service levels to customers falling and also putting time saved to more productive use.

Without even looking at the Insight leading to better use of investment—the business case has already been met. In addition, Asset Factory is now allowing the senior members of the FM team in Royal Mail to budget more effectively in the maintenance of equipment. This will have far-reaching consequences in terms of the smooth running of Royal Mail’s property estate going forward.

If Asset Factory has saved you time (since using it) can you estimate?

- 1hr – 12hrs
- 12 – 48hrs
- 2 days – 5 days
- 1 week – 2 weeks
- Zero time saved
Here are some feedback from Royal Mail users:

“The system is really good in helping us get an understanding of the level of service being provided within our patch so a welcome addition to our toolbox”

“Asset Factory is used whilst visiting delivery office managers to provide information relevant to them and to ensure jobs raised have been completed on time. It is used during performance meetings with the FM Supplier to check on data. It is reliable and gives as much up-to-date information as possible.”

“It allows you to drill down into specific postcodes/sites and disciplines, eg, BFM, BES etc. It is supplier data therefore it should be correct.”

“I used Asset Factory two to three times a week to support my role to see where jobs have failed or are about to. I analyse the data to see if there is a trend in the jobs being raised day after day without proper fixes being provided from the supplier.”

“Since the extra training I am now able to access data in a timely manner and raise queries with relevant supply chain management for answers on specific issues.”

“Usage of planned / compliance data. Holding sessions with supply chain managers to go through data when undertaking a SOFT (safety observation feedback tour) with Supplier. Review outstanding reactive jobs and have a conversation with the PIC (Person in Control). Improves customer management.”

“Better visibility of jobs about to fail so more targeted chasing can take place when required.”

“I mostly use it to check on work coming into the helpdesk daily for my patch. This helps me decide what I might need to look into further or be aware of where my support is needed, as well as reviewing the outstanding jobs I need to chase.”

“The WOQ (work order query) is very useful when out and about or on-site and I need to investigate event numbers/history.”

“Also I check the volume of work across the patch and national and categories, The latter is helpful to better understand particular areas of poor performance.”
What's next

Maintaining the highest standards of operational performance remains Royal Mail’s key objective. As the nature of the relationship between the company and its FM supplier changes, Asset Factory will become more of a decision-making tool. As more and more data is collected and analysed, the technology can also be used to model different scenarios and explore what-if planning.

This will help to eliminate/minimise issues impacting on Royal Mail’s operations from a property perspective.

It also improves supplier performance in more discreet ways than hard measures previously managed to do.

It will assist in asset replacement and forward investment planning.

Energy and Risk management in the same dashboard.

Clearly the dashboard is benefiting the team using it; eliminating more manually intensive tasks and work that could only be done offline or in unsociable hours.