

The Practical Side of Compassion

Tidewell Hospice Stretches Precious Donor Dollars; Ensures Regulatory Compliance with AssetOptics

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—Bill Brummett
Administrative Director

Business Challenges

With 21 sites serving a four-county area of more than 3,000 square miles, Tidewell’s facilities maintenance team had their work cut out for them. Relying on a paper-based spreadsheet system with manual data entry, the five-person team frequently spent part of the day inputting data from paper work orders. Once the information was entered, there was no permanent document management or tracking system available.

Work requests were faxed from various Tidewell sites, and if an urgent request came during the day when no personnel were present, the problem might not be addressed until the evening. This often resulted in overtime hours—and expensive damage to facilities and their equipment. “People were faxing those orders in and we had to train them to give a phone call, too, if the situation was urgent,” says Bill Brummett, Tidewell’s administrative director of facilities and support services. “It was a broken process.”

Solution

All these issues sent Brummett in search of a better solution that wasn’t paper driven. As a non-profit that already used Salesforce CRM, Tidewell was a perfect candidate for the appropriate Salesforce CRM add-on. “I wanted a product that delivered work orders to our service

personnel in the field,” says Brummett. “Then, our board started considering an overall facilities management plan, and AssetOptics was a perfect fit. Because we already used Salesforce CRM, adding AssetOptics EAM wouldn’t involve an extreme capital outlay.”

Now, with AssetOptics EAM, sites can sign into the program from any Internet-connected computer, choose the appropriate drop-down service option, and provide the information necessary to initiate a work order. When site supervisors are not available to enter the request, an approved backup person can process it.

Service personnel receive mobile alerts of new work orders, which enables them to respond appropriately to service emergencies such as water leaks, minimizing the damage such crises cause. Aggregation of orders for each site, paired with the alerting system, also helps personnel to determine when there is more than one issue at a particular location. This curtails the need for personnel to make multiple trips to a single site in one day, which had previously been a recurring problem that resulted in significant unnecessary mileage expense and non-productive staff time.

Results

The new system was well received and the sites have become much more cooperative

and proactive about reporting problems. Site supervisors have reliable reports to show what has been requested.

Service staff, who are authorized to generate work orders on the fly if necessary, have begun being proactive in resolving potential problems, resulting in further time and expense reductions. "My service personnel are totally gung ho. The guys are really pushing it," Brummett reports.

Most important for the bottom line, AssetOptics EAM has enabled Tidewell to recover 20-30 percent of its service personnel's prior time expenditure, freeing them up to handle the company's own remodeling projects. "We used to pay a 30 percent upcharge to have other people do this," says Brummett. "Now, we have taken on design and construction functions that we would have otherwise outsourced. AssetOptics' work order system enabled us to make this happen."

Tidewell is also using AssetOptics EAM to assist with its compliance requirements, for example, to automate reminders for fire detector sensitivity testing. Brummett says AssetOptics' technology is actually ahead of the regulatory bodies' requirements, and he looks forward to the day he can provide a single electronic source containing all necessary documentation.

In the meantime, AssetOptics EAM enables Tidewell to work with the existing, hard-copy regulatory requirements. "Our nurses and our staff are clinical. They are helping people by providing care, comfort and compassion. They aren't as concerned about holding onto compliance documents," says Brummett. "With AssetOptics EAM, the vendors send us a PDF of the testing and maintenance schedules. We create a work order and don't close it out until we have documents available for any regulatory body that might come in and ask for it."

Company Background

Serving more than 7,000 patients and families annually in Florida's Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte and DeSoto counties, Tidewell Hospice is one of the largest not-for-profit hospices in the U.S. Tidewell's range of services and programs offering compassionate hospice and palliative care is patient and family directed, with the support of specially trained care teams comprised of physicians, registered nurses, social workers, grief specialists, chaplains, certified nursing assistants and volunteers. Emphasizing patient choice and dignity, Tidewell cares for all, regardless of age, race, creed, culture, gender, lifestyle or ability to pay. For more information, visit Tidewell's web site: **www.tidewell.org**.