

# Case Study



## Box Canyon Dairy

Industry: Agricultural

### CHALLENGE

- Streamline management of the dairy's complex breeding and veterinary procedures
- Provide employees with access to up-to-date information

### SOLUTION

- Migrate existing software to a mobile, full screen TabletPC
- Introduce mobile version of DairyQuest on to fully digitize management of dairy's veterinary procedures

### RESULT

- More efficient, streamlined operations
- More accurate decision making, less errors



## Idaho Dairy Reduces Cattle Wrangling Time by 50 Percent with New Software, RFID and a Rugged Tablet PC

When it comes to taking care of a herd of cows, few things are simple. In addition to nourishing them and cleaning up after them, there are the more difficult tasks of providing each and every cow with the veterinary attention needed to thrive. That includes everything from basic examinations to treatments and breeding shots. Simply identifying the animal that needs treatment can turn into a logistical nightmare.

Scott Haag, general manager of Box Canyon Dairy in Wendell, Idaho is all too familiar with these challenges. The 2,500-acre dairy roughly 100 miles southeast of Boise, has been in operation for the past 26 years and milks roughly 7,000 cows on a regular basis. The dairy owns an additional 1,000 dry cows and is in the process of buying another dairy, which will bring its total count to approximately 10,000 cows.

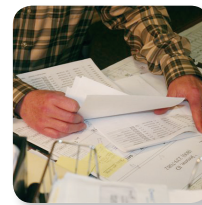
With an operation of this magnitude, management of the veterinary care and breeding of these animals is not only a priority but a necessity. So, when Haag decided to implement a more efficient process for the health, care and breeding of the cows, he turned to ProfitSource, a software developer for the agriculture industry based in Wisconsin, and MobileDemand, a rugged Tablet PC manufacturer based in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The resulting implementation has completely transformed daily operations at the dairy.

### The Customer Challenge

To manage the complex breeding and veterinary procedures that take place at the dairy, Haag would traditionally create up to 10 pages worth of daily instructions for his employees, breeders and vets. This would eat up about two to three hours of his day.

Every morning, Haag would provide his team with a list of cows, identified by numbers, which needed attention on that day. This amounts up to 600 cows per day, 4-5 times per week. His team would then begin the arduous tasks of scouring the pens and finding the cows that needed attention. Once identified and herded in pens, treatment could finally begin. When completed, Haag and his team would then record the treatment that occurred and note any follow-up steps that needed to be taken by hand. He then would enter this data into a back office PC for processing. This process was time-consuming and ineffective due to frequent errors.

Haag knew that a wireless computing



solution would be a valuable tool in enhancing productivity. In fact, he was already labeling cows with RFID tags for this very reason. However, the

hand-held, palm tablets that he had tried in the past lacked the power and versatility he needed for a successful implementation. It also lacked the display size needed to provide adequate decision support information for his veterinary operations. Haag realized that he would need a mobile software program and a more powerful Tablet PC to succeed in a farm environment with all types of weather and environmental challenges.

### The MobileDemand/ProfitSource Solution

Haag launched his quest by turning to Lee McCauley, the president of ProfitSource, a software development company whose flagship product is "DairyQuest." Like count-



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less other dairies all across the country, Haag had been using DairyQuest on his PC for a number of years to manage and maintain his record system.

Recognizing the opportunity for a mobile version of software, McCauley quickly developed a tablet version of DairyQuest. He then began searching for a mobile platform that could survive the harsh environment and fulfill the operational requirements. He found what he was looking for in the MobileDemand xTablet Tablet PC series.

As a full screen computer with the industry's highest processor performance, the MobileDemand xTablet Tablet PC provides Box Canyon with the ability to run DairyQuest in the field. This gives them access to all the information necessary to make decisions regarding veterinary treatment of animals while standing right next to them.

This means that Haag is able to upload all of the day's relevant data onto the rugged Tablet PC, and instead of looking for cows by their numbers, dairy employees are able to identify cows using an RFID wand connected to the xTablet PC.

When a cow is spotted, the Tablet PC will speak to the farm hand, vet or breeder and then outline the treatments that need to occur. Treatment can be recorded and tracked in the central database immediately and wirelessly through the Tablet PC.

"The match up between DairyQuest and MobileDemand's Tablet PC ushers in a new era in dairy recordkeeping systems. With this kind of system in place they are able to access all the information they need concerning the cow that is in front of them," said McCauley. "This enables them to give focus to an individual cow and on today's large farms, the vet check is one area where they need to be able to zero in on an animal like that."

Aside from the xTablet's superior performance, Haag was also impressed by its ruggedness. Designed for durability, the Tablet PC was designed to meet military specifications for dust, moisture and drops

to concrete. And when it comes to rugged environments, few are more extreme than the unforgiving surroundings of an Idaho dairy farm. From mud puddles, to manure, to flying cow hoofs and irate heifers, the Tablet PC's that are currently in circulation need to withstand a lot.

"Our people have to jump fences and walk through mud and work in a pretty harsh environment so the rugged Tablet PC has to be able to survive a lot of things," said Haag. "Just the other day one of our breeders was bent over behind a cow and the cow kicked him. The Tablet PC actually was strapped to his chest and ended up taking the brunt of the kick and although the touch screen got cracked, the Tablet PC was still operational with the dual mode digitizer."

## The Results

These days, the two to three hours that Haag used to spend preparing paperwork are a thing of the past. Instead he spends 25-30 minutes uploading updated information on the eight xTablet PCs at the dairy. This also translates into more efficient workdays for his crew.

"I gained an additional 2 hours in my day to do something else," said Haag. "As for my employees, it cuts in half the amount of time they spend looking for animals."

It's no surprise then that Haag's employees have taken a liking to the Tablets PCs

"We went from three tablets to five tablets to eight tablets," said Haag. "I get to the office at 6 a.m. and by 8 a.m. all the tablets are gone and in use. We've never had any problems, they've performed flawlessly," said Haag. "They take a beating and they just keep going and going and we need that for our operation."

Haag has been so impressed with the software and the tablet that he plans on purchasing additional xTablets and finding other ways to integrate the technology into his operations.



Rugged Computing for a Wireless World

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