

Asset-Tracking Solution is Best Defense for Law Firm's Equipment-Auditing Needs

A Chicago-based non-profit law firm, specializing in public defense, had all the tools it needed to defend its clients on charges such as robbery and drug possession. Yet, when it came to tracking office-equipment, evidence proved that the accounting software and spreadsheet-based, manual system in use at the law firm was not completely up to the task.

The firm, which employs 40 attorneys and support staff, provides free representation to people facing federal charges who cannot afford private lawyers. The firm is funded by a federal grant and must adhere to strict rules and controls.

Every two years, the law firm must perform a physical audit of all equipment, from PCs and notebooks to fax machines and copiers, that costs more than \$250. In addition, the office is subject to an annual audit, which includes the auditor's on-site visual inspection of randomly selected pieces of equipment.

Using a spreadsheet program, the operations administrator managed individual lists for each type of product, such as PCs and printers, while the accounting department kept a separate list of equipment. Tracking equipment with these spreadsheets proved time-consuming and fell short of the firm's needs.

Offensive Strategy

Determined to dramatically cut the hours associated with tracking the firm's assets, the operations administrator hit the Internet in search of an affordable yet effective solution. She discovered Wasp MobileAsset and was ecstatic about the product.

"Thinking back, I'm not sure whether it was the cost or the great customer service that tipped Wasp over other vendors' products. The fact that Wasp provided a complete solution, including the handheld device, the software, and the support, so we didn't have to piecemeal everything out, made our decision even easier," said the operations administrator.

The law firm uses Wasp MobileAsset Standard with a WPA1200 mobile computer and barcode printer. MobileAsset is an affordable asset tracking solution designed to automate manual processes and save organizations time and money.

Order in the Law Firm

The organization now relies on MobileAsset to manage new and existing assets. Today, information regarding each new piece of equipment is entered into MobileAsset as soon as it arrives in the IT department.



CASE STUDY AT A GLANCE...

► **INDUSTRY**

Legal

► **ORGANIZATION PROFILE**

The organization, which employs 40 attorneys and support staff, provides free representation to people facing criminal charges who cannot afford private representation.

► **SITUATION**

Funding mandates required physical audits every two years, and the firm wanted to improve the process of tracking assets. The spreadsheet-based manual process was labor-intensive, inaccurate, and devoured valuable hours.

► **RESULTS**

Wasp's MobileAsset reduced the asset management process from days to hours. The operations administrator can locate notebooks and other IT assets quickly, and the law firm can easily accomplish audit goals. Money that was previously spent to replace small, inexpensive, and easily-lost devices can be devoted to additional equipment.

► **PRODUCTS USED**

- Wasp MobileAsset Standard
- Wasp WPA1200 mobile computer
- Wasp WPL305 barcode printer

Using Wasp's solution, an asset tag is affixed to each piece of equipment and that data is then entered into MobileAsset. MobileAsset empowers the operations administrator to locate an asset without digging through closets or wasting time checking room by room. She uses MobileAsset to check notebook computers in and out, whether they are going to an attorney preparing for trial or the repair shop.



"With Wasp, the check-in and check-out features make this process much more accurate and less time-consuming," she said. "We now know where everything is and when it will be returned."

Audits are no longer a time-hogging nightmare. "When auditors come in and want me to physically show them 10 pieces of equipment, I can now lead them right to each piece. Before, it would take several hours," the operations administrator said.

While some equipment, such as recording or removable storage devices, falls below the \$250 threshold, the firm can even keep track of these assets. "Now we always know the location of each piece of equipment, no matter how small," said the operations administrator.

Equally important, MobileAsset enables the firm to match outlays to equipment, she said. If accounting shows the firm spent \$50,000 on equipment, the operations administrator has to accurately pinpoint how and where each dollar went. "I must enter and allocate it correctly and MobileAsset makes that easy," she said.

Winning the Case

With many other tasks at hand, MobileAsset is used occasionally throughout the year adding new purchases, checking equipment in and out, aligning outlay and equipment, and completing audit related tasks. Wasp's customer support team is always on-hand to assist her and refresh her memory.

"I don't have a computer background; I've only taken a couple of computer courses in my life," she said. "In fact, I might go two or three months when I haven't looked at MobileAsset. While it's pretty easy to use, I might need help so I'll go online or pick up the phone and Wasp immediately responds. They're outstanding."

The task of finding all of the firm's equipment during the annual audit can now be completed in a matter of hours, allowing the firm to spend more time on its mission of providing free representation to persons charged with federal criminal offenses.

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Operations Administrator
at Law Firm