Wasp
BARCODE TECHNOLOGIES

Locking up elections in Hays County

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

The Hays County Elections Division typically spent several days preparing equipment for elections. Voting booths, security seals and other equipment was tracked manually in a spreadsheet, which led to errors and wasted time.

SOLUTION

With Wasp MobileAsset, the Elections Division reduced election prep time and resources required to put in polls accurately in place. Employee may now work independently, completing twice the work in less than half the time. Election assets are absolutely accurate and ready to withstand stringent state audits.

BENEFITS

3-4 days prep time then

Under 1 day prep time now

100% Asset accuracy

CUSTOMER PROFILE

- Hays County is home to more than 150,000 Central-Texas residents
- Election assets include 300 voting booths and related equipment like laptop computers and security devices.

The Elections Division is required to keep records for four years, demonstrating that the elections process was followed correctly. With MobileAsset, we can easily run a report at a moment's notice, now or in the future.
- Doug Ferguson, Hays County

The Hays County Elections Division facilitates elections for the political entities such as cities and school boards, as well as all federal, state and county elections held in its jurisdiction. Every organization considers their assets to be important, but perhaps none more so than the elections division, where voters expect their ballots to be protected and counted.

Every time an election was held, Hays County spent several days tracking its election equipment. The county maintains more than 300 voting booths, plus related election equipment such as laptop computers, a judge's booth controller, and security devices.

During the year, this equipment is stored in a central warehouse. When Election Day draws near, the Elections Division must deploy equipment to local polling stations in schools, churches and other locations throughout the county. Of course, the state of Texas requires that meticulous records be kept about the location of voting equipment at all times, and audits may be conducted to ensure that proper procedures are followed.

Unfortunately, the Elections Division was tracking its voting assets manually. Each piece of equipment was assigned an asset number, which was printed and affixed to it.

When preparing for an election, employees spent between two and three days carefully recording each machine's asset number, serial number and security seal number with pen and paper, then transferring that data into an Excel spreadsheet.

"Our processes were time-consuming and labor-intensive," said Doug Ferguson, equipment and data coordinator for Hays County. "It took two people several days to prepare the equipment for the election, and two people to receive it back."

When machines were transported to the Elections Division after an election, serial numbers had to be compared with the Excel spreadsheet manually. This meant one person calling out the number on a machine, while the other checked it against the spreadsheet.

"Anytime you are logging data by hand, there is a potential for errors. If there were errors, equipment could be sent to the wrong location. This made it critical that we check and re-check our information for accuracy, which took more time," Ferguson said. "It was a very tedious, painstaking process."

Making Election Day more efficient
When Ferguson joined Hays County, one of his first tasks was to find a better, more

accurate method of tracking election equipment. He discovered Wasp MobileAsset and tried out the demo version of the software.

"I really liked what I saw," Ferguson said. "Our elections administrator asked me to find some alternatives, so we could compare prices. But every competing solution I found cost two to three times more than Wasp."

The Elections Division purchased Wasp MobileAsset software, as well as a barcode printer and mobile computers. In all, the organization spent approximately $5,000 on the solution.

The first step was to affix barcoded asset tags to all voting equipment. In addition, new barcoded seals were purchased for the election equipment.

When an election is scheduled, Ferguson can quickly assign the required equipment to a given polling location and scan the barcode. He then prints a report for that location, listing all of the equipment headed to the specific polling station. This report acts as a packing slip for the election judge on site. When the equipment is received at the polling location, the election judge verifies the equipment that was received against the report.

On Election Day, after all ballots have been cast, the election judge at each polling location carries the voting booth controller box back to the county offices. This box includes a tally of the votes cast that day. When the box is received by the Elections Division, its barcoded asset tag and seals are scanned. In the following days,

the remaining equipment is returned to the warehouse as well, and barcodes and seals are scanned as items are received.

Saving time, surviving audits
Using Wasp MobileAsset, the time required to prepare equipment for an election has dropped from several days to just one day, giving Election Division personnel more man-hours to perform other election tasks.

"We are very confident in the integrity of our data, knowing that each piece of equipment is going to the right polling location. Plus, we are MobileAsset - Asset Tracking Solution with WPA1200extremely happy with the amount of time we save by using the MobileAsset software and mobile computer," Ferguson said. "Most importantly, we know that our data is accurate and would easily withstand scrutiny during an audit."

"The Elections Division is required to keep records for four years, demonstrating that the elections process was followed correctly," Ferguson added.

"With MobileAsset, we can easily run a report at a moment's notice, now or in the future," he said. "I'm sure that there are a lot of county elections offices that would love to find a faster, more accurate way to manage their voting equipment and other assets. We hope that others will benefit from our experience with this solution. MobileAsset is easy to use, extremely affordable, and has saved us a ton of time. Our entire process has improved, while helping ensure the integrity of election results."

WASP MOBILEASSET HELPED HAYS COUNTY:

• Enhance records management in compliance with 4-year regulatory look-back period
• Streamline cumbersome tracking process for critical elections asset data
• Spend less time tracking and preparing equipment for polling locations

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