

Kawartha Pine Ridge School District

A case study for learning better maintenance practices

PETERBOROUGH, CANADA – For over 25 years the Kawartha Pine Ridge School District had been managing maintenance and their facilities using a paper-based system. The system worked... sort of. With space at a premium, all historical records were recycled yearly; from filing cabinets to central storage and then to the incinerator. This system kept the filing cabinets clean but all work history was lost after 2 years. The old adage of learning from history to improve the future made it clear that a computerized system was needed. KPRSD chose Directline from Megamation Systems to achieve their goals.

Company Background

The Kawartha Pine Ridge School District lies in the heart of Ontario, Canada's cottage country. It encompasses over 100 buildings spread across several towns and counties. With over 40,000 full-time students and an additional constituency of continuing education, the District plays host to a large proportion of the region's educational demands. Managing such a broad spectrum of facilities across vast geographic boundaries is no easy task. To accomplish this task the District employs 28 full time maintenance staff and regularly farms specialized work out to independent contractors.

The Challenge

In addition to needing a system to keep historical records, KPRSD had a list of criteria that needed to be met before they would commit to any one system. Our list of requirements wasn't complicated but it wasn't small either", said Mac MacGillivray, Preventive/Contract & Facility Maintenance Programs Maintenance Supervisor. The following is the high-level overview in order of importance:

1. Flexibility to meet existing processes with the capacity to grow with the District as the department matured
2. Easy-to-use for a relatively computer illiterate maintenance and custodial staff
3. Easy-to-use PM Program
4. Simple to use but robust Work Orders
5. Customer Service – A commitment to work closely with the District

6. Guaranteed Delivery – Reducing risk
7. Affordable Total Cost of Ownership Application, Implementation & Infrastructure
8. Accessibility – Broad distribution of all users needed easy access to the system

The Solution

The District assembled a committee of 5 people representing Maintenance, Engineering and Purchasing to find and review a select group of CMMS applications. "We initially looked at 4 systems that claimed to have a school-specific solution", mentioned Mac. "All four were web-based solutions but only Directline offered a truly hosted". Other solutions wanted the District to host the system locally, adding costs and complexity to the solution; including involvement from an already overburdened IT Department. Only Directline met all the requirements and surprisingly it was not even close to being the most expensive. "Comparing apples to apples", continued Mac, "Directline was by far the most attractive. Because they charge us a monthly fee that covers everything from hosting the solution to the implementation from support to training, Directline was a very attractive solution". The District started with a 4-month pilot project to further mitigate risk. Once convinced that the solution and the service met the needs of the entire district, they rolled the project out to incorporate every facility.

“Maintenance is no longer referred to as the ‘Black Hole’”

“Many of our custodial staff had never even turned a computer on before so getting them to buy into a new CMMS was going to be a challenge”, lamented Mac. “However, the inherent ease of use of the Directline application combined with the willingness of the Megamation account management staff to modify the system to meet our unique needs, made adoption of the solution almost effortless”.

In fact, the only bottleneck to the overall implementation was the lack of internet accessible computers at the custodial level. They had resisted using computers in the past but once they understood the ease of use and the benefits of the new service, they were anxious to get the new computers. Directline became the catalyst for the many benefits now associated with computerization across the District. Mac has not only become an advocate for the Directline solution, he has become the official trainer as well. “Even though Megamation offers free training to anyone on my staff, I prefer to train them myself at my central lab. I know what I want them to get out of the system and I have very specific things I need from them. But the account management staff at Megamation is always there for me when I need them; for training or support”. Mac continued, “The service is unprecedented in my opinion. There are times when I need changes done to the system and I needed them yesterday. I simply pick up the phone, talk to my account manager, ask them for a favor and before I know it, the changes have been made. The folks at Megamation have become my virtual IT Department. In fact, in many ways they are better. They proactively follow up after changes have been made to make sure that I am happy with the service and the results of the changes made. You don’t find service like this every day”. This level of service was evident from day one. The district opted to use internal resources to build the database primarily because everything was on paper. Under the advice of the Directline Account Manager the district recorded more detail than they

originally expected to deliver; paving the way for more meaningful reports in the future. “We hadn’t given much thought to the asset hierarchy detail but after consulting with Helen Furman at Megamation, we quickly realized the value in putting more energy into the front end of the implementation rather than trying to make these changes at a later date”.

Today, custodial staff use Directline to submit Work Requests on behalf of their schools. They also have the ability to check the status of work and where their specific requests fall in the priority bucket. Maintenance staff are able to check their schedules remotely from any of the schools and record work done, eliminating

the need for them to come to the central office – a huge time saver given the large territory they cover. The new computerized system enforces compliance and ensures that no work falls through the cracks, or out the window as was the case on several instances when work orders were written on paper. “We haven’t yet completely automating all of the maintenance processes. There is still a lot to be done. But the few changes we have made over the last couple of years have resulted in tremendous time and cost savings for my department”. “Unfortunately, we have lost some key staff due to attrition. Directline has enabled me to keep up with the workload without having to replace these people. That’s what I call return on investment”. Mac said. “We will eventually bring in additional

functionality at a pace that we can digest. I know that Directline will be able to adapt to our needs and the staff at Megamation will be there to assist us in our efforts. That is precisely why we chose this service over all the other options”.

DirectLine is a world-class online CMMS/EAM service offered globally through an all encompassing monthly subscription. With over 2500 schools of various sizes throughout North America using Directline, Megamation continues to benefit a broad range of maintenance and facilities management professionals.

Some of the Key Benefits for KPRSD include:

- ▶ **History kept for all work and costs associated with each WO and asset**
- ▶ **Elimination of “lost” Work orders**
- ▶ **Ability to get more done with the same resources**
- ▶ **More visibility into maintenance processes by all stakeholders**
- ▶ **Better documentation of work done making reports easier**
- ▶ **Little or no reliance on District IT Department allowing them to focus more on mission critical IT Issues**

Please contact us with any questions
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