

# Paperless Plus: When Going Digital Delivers Extra Benefits

For many companies, the simple motivation of eliminating paperwork – for efficiency as well as environmental considerations – is enough to switch to digital tools and processes. But in today's world of multi-function mobile computing, the benefits can extend far beyond the core motivations.

A perfect example is Kropman Services, a Dutch company that provides a full range of technical services to customers in the building, health care and manufacturing industries. Kropman was looking to eliminate paper and increase work efficiency for their field service workers when they started working with the M3 Mobile handheld computers from Handheld. They may have been surprised to find that they also were able to increase worker safety and get to their customers faster.

## Logistical challenges

Kropman has 115 service engineers who go out into the field each day to help solve customer problems. As you can imagine, that presents a daunting daily challenge of scheduling, driving and communication – not to mention a pile of paperwork at the end of each day, as each service engineer fills out customized forms for each customer call. So Kropman decided to do the smart thing – go digital.

The company which finds solutions for their customers found a solution to their own needs with the M3 Mobile. The super-slim rugged handheld runs user-friendly Windows Mobile 5.0 and offers a wide range of functionality and options. Its compact and lightweight, with a rugged design and an IP64 rating against water and dust that makes it ideal for field use in any environment.

## A customized solution

Kropman worked with hardware vendor eMpoly, a Handheld business partner, and software maker 4PS to get the M3 Mobile handhelds configured to fit their needs. 4PS created customized field-service software to replicate Kropman's paper-based forms, with coordination and advice on mobile development from eMpoly.

"We very deliberately chose the M3 Mobile," says Emile Tap, Project Manager for Mobile Working at Kropman. "It's a lightweight and compact device, and its ergonomic grip makes it easy to carry around. It's user-friendly when operated. And despite its compact design, the M3 Mobile is complete and has all the modern features like a GSM/GPRS modem for in-field wireless communication, GPS for satellite navigation and a barcode scanner. The M3 Mobile is particularly suited for our business."

## Streamlined operations

The fact that it's well-suited for Kropman has been proved in the field. Each day the service engineers' appointment schedules are automatically synchronized to their M3 Mobiles. They complete an entire day of service calls using their handhelds to input and store information and create a record of their tasks, and all the information from their completed tasks is wirelessly uploaded to a main network server that stores the data they have compiled. There is no stack of paper forms to turn in – the process doesn't even require a visit to the home office at the beginning or the end of the day.



## Challenge

To reduce paperwork and find a solution for the daily challenge of scheduling, driving and communicating for Kropman's service engineers.

## Solution

A customized and user-friendly field-service application to replicate Kropman's paper-based forms that runs on the rugged, lightweight M3 Mobile handheld.

## Result

The solution eliminates paper and increases work efficiency. Using the built-in GPS receiver with TomTom navigation software, service engineers are able to get to their service calls faster.



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## Unexpected benefits

So Kropman has achieved the two main goals: more efficiency, less paper. But this mobile computing solution comes with more benefits than those. The best example? Kropman's M3 Mobiles have built-in GPS receivers, and each service vehicle is equipped with a special cradle for the handheld. Not only does the cradle charge the M3 Mobile while they drive, but the service engineers can also use the GPS function with TomTom navigation, punching in the next service call address and getting detailed turn-by-turn directions. That adds one more layer of efficiency: they can get to their calls more quickly. And it eliminates another type of paper: a map.



For more information about the M3 Mobile, visit [www.ruggedm3.com](http://www.ruggedm3.com) or [www.handheldgroup.com](http://www.handheldgroup.com)

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