

GRAM Traffic Counting

The Background: On the Road

Road and highway departments hire GRAM Traffic Counting Inc. (GRAM) to collect data in order to make engineering decisions when planning new roads or improvements to old ones. Along with traditional traffic counts, GRAM administers three- to six-minute roadside questionnaires to drivers.

The Challenge: Eliminating the Extra Step

GRAM employs many temporary workers to conduct roadside surveys, and needed to find an easy way to make those workers as efficient as possible.

GRAM employees conducted surveys with paper and a pen, and then entered the data into the computer back at the office. Re-keying this substantial amount of information led to errors, and was time consuming.

In addition, GRAM staff often diagrammed working locations with pen and paper to show clients diagrams of intersections. The staff wanted to eliminate the extra step between their original paper drawings and the computer-generated diagrams produced back at the office.

The Solution:

GRAM started using lightweight, clipboard-shaped tablet PCs from Motion Computing to do roadside travel surveys and diagram working locations for its highway department customers.

Survey workers now fill in electronic forms on the Motion tablet PCs. GRAM used Microsoft FoxPro to create the pen-enabled forms they needed to make the best use of the Motion tablets. Workers use the tablet's pen to select answers from pull-down lists or to handwrite answers that are later converted to text. It means no more re-keying, and no more errors in transcribing.

GRAM staff now uses Motion Computing tablet PCs and Microsoft's diagramming application, Visio, to eliminate inefficiencies and create polished-looking diagrams on the spot.

The Motion tablet PC features a bright, 12.1-inch screen, integrated wireless capabilities, an ultra-low-power Intel processor and pen-based input made possible by Microsoft's Windows XP Tablet PC Edition operating system.

Real Results: 50 Percent Savings in Time and Money

By deploying the Motion tablet PCs, GRAM saw an immediate increase in productivity and efficiency, says president Patricia Nassour.

"Using electronic forms on the Motion tablet PC saves us at least 50 percent of the time and money we used to spend on the surveys," Nassour says. "We were able to reduce the number of temps we hire. It helped us be more competitive in our bids and allowed us to be more timely in delivering to our clients."

In fact, GRAM has cut its reporting time in half, from 90 days – the industry average – to 45 days.

The GRAM management team also uses Motion tablet PCs in meetings to take notes and at trade shows to display presentations.