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# Konica Minolta Achieves Significant Cost Savings while Improving Customer Service with ClickSoftware



KONICA MINOLTA

## Background

Konica Minolta Business Technologies Inc is headquartered in Tokyo, Japan. With a total workforce of 22,500 employees worldwide, the company generated net sales of over £5 billion in 2007. Konica Minolta Business Solutions provides its clients with digital imaging systems which are then maintained under contract by its skilled mobile workforce.

## The Challenge

Following the merger between Konica and Minolta in 2003, Konica Minolta, the new company, sought to capitalize on its combined strengths and to drive significant efficiencies through the business. The fundamental aim was to shift the organization's mindset from being product-focussed, to the delivery of complete business solutions.

In addition to this internal challenge the market was becoming increasingly competitive. As a result of this, customers were negotiating Service Level Agreements (SLAs) more favourable to themselves into the contracts for engineer support.

For the operations in the United Kingdom (UK) and Germany, this posed a particular problem. Key to delivering the existing, and the increasingly more demanding SLAs, was the scheduling system used to organize the field technicians, it needed to be reliable enough to make sure Konica Minolta's contractual demands were met. Unfortunately in both regions, the manual systems in place, struggled to cope. Brent Mayo, Customer Support Manager in the UK explained the situation particular to the UK, *"Previously individual dispatchers managed 14 UK regional areas, this approach was inherently inefficient. In the UK these jobs would also be allocated in advance to the engineers, two, three, or even four at a time. A lack of operational visibility also meant that management did not have the accurate, up to date information they needed to follow through on Konica Minolta's strategy."*

The German operation suffered similar constraints to those in the UK. It had 24 regions, manually scheduling crews using a paper-based system. Wolfgang Meurer, General Manager Service and Support in Germany explained another inefficiency of this approach, *"We had one dispatcher managing ten technicians. We knew we could reduce costs by operating on a more efficient basis than this."*

## Benefits

### UNITED KINGDOM

- Improved Customer Service
- Helped achieve 96 percent of SLA objectives
- Dispatch team reduced by 43 percent
- Assisted in raising field staff productivity by 22 percent
- Increased visibility of field service activity

### GERMANY

- 90 percent of SLA objectives met (up from 50 percent)
- Field engineer productivity up from 67 to over 90 percent
- Average calls per day per engineer increased between 16 to 24 percent
- Number of dispatchers reduced by 72 percent

The inflexibility of the existing scheduling system was hampering the newly merged company's strategic and commercial ambitions. Crucially this maintenance activity was also an important revenue generator (accounting for 49% of revenue in the UK). It was becoming increasingly apparent that scheduling needed to be much better aligned to the customers' needs.

## The Solution

The German and UK organizations therefore initiated a joint search for a new scheduling solution for its field and Customer Contact Centre service employees.

After a thorough vendor evaluation process that included demonstrations, a decision matrix and references, Konica Minolta chose ClickSchedule from ClickSoftware. On the decision matrix ClickSoftware scored highly in a number of areas; it had an existing SAP interface (the chosen Enterprise Software at Konica Minolta's European Headquarters), it provided international support, and most importantly the ability to continuously optimize the schedule. Mayo again, *"The service environment is very fluid at Konica Minolta; ClickSchedule's ability to revise and optimize the schedule during the day, on the fly, would be important to meeting SLAs"*.





Matrix scores and demonstration aside it was also clear to Konica Minolta that ClickSoftware had the best of breed solution in this area, with the references to back it up, as Meurer explained, *“ClickSoftware were the only shortlisted supplier that provided us with a list of reference sites similar to our own business where we could choose who we called and then visit the client by ourselves. From that moment the facts were backed up by a good feeling about Clicksoftware. We concluded that ClickSoftware provided the lowest risk option, whilst also providing the greatest potential for reward”.*

## The Implementation

The implementation began separately in both countries. Mayo again, *“Because of the local differences in our operational structure it made sense to have two separate implementations that nonetheless could report back into the same SAP system”.* Rather than diving head first into a fully automatic scheduling solution, Konica Minolta, upon advice from ClickSoftware, initially opted for a semiautomatic system. This allowed German and UK operations to gradually build their understanding of the step-change a fully automatic system would bring.

**The solution would then be fully optimized over time to work toward the service priorities outlined by Konica Minolta's senior management:**

- Increase Fulfillment of SLAs
- Reduce Cost in Customer Care Centre
- Optimize Travel Time

The UK opted for a nationwide roll-out whilst in Germany the implementation progressed region by region. *“The implementation was challenging, but ClickSoftware adopted a partnership approach working through issues as they arrived and we are very pleased with the outcome”*, concluded Meurer.

## The Results

The implementation of ClickSchedule at Konica Minolta in Germany and the UK has made the company considerably more competitive. The field service teams are now fully aligned to company strategy, SLA's are rarely missed, costs have been reduced and visibility of business intelligence has improved.

Jobs are raised in the SAP system, this information is automatically passed to ClickSchedule via the existing interface. ClickSchedule then allocates the most suitable individual to fix or service the product based upon the engineers' skill sets, location and availability. This information is then seamlessly passed to the field engineer via rugged mobile devices which the engineers use again to update progress.

Wolfgang Meurer explains the new way of working, *“The field now operate in the best interests of the customer and the company. Efficiency has vastly improved. In Germany we have moved from 50 percent to greater than 90 percent in meeting SLA objectives, and field service engineer calls per day have increased anywhere from 16 to 24 percent.”* The German operation has also seen its field service engineers' productivity increase substantially from 67 percent to over 90 percent.

Not only is ClickSchedule capable of optimizing hugely complex schedules more efficiently, it is largely done automatically, this has improved the productivity of

dispatch staff. Mayo outlines the tangible result, *“Previously, with the system pushed to the maximum, the best we could hope for was one dispatcher to manage 25 field engineers, now ClickSoftware easily manages 25 to 42. In Germany, where 70 percent of the schedule is automatic, dispatchers are three times more productive using ClickSchedule. One scheduler handles on average 33 field service engineers”.*

The UK manages the timely delivery of relevant parts to engineers overnight using the ByBox service. This saves time and allows Konica Minolta to take advantage of 'just in time' stock principles.

Overall visibility of operations is now real-time. In the UK this has helped both tactically and strategically. On a day-to-day basis for instance, Konica Minolta Customer Contact Centre staff can provide an accurate expected time of arrival. It has also helped clarify the data needed to make more informed business decisions; for example it is far easier to identify where re-skilling may be needed.

*“Customer Service has really improved, and the cost associated with this has actually reduced. It is fair to say that ClickSoftware has made us a far more competitive business in the UK”*, said Mayo.

Looking to the future Konica Minolta in the UK is considering ClickContact. This would give its customers the opportunity to choose online the most convenient time for an engineer to visit. Then just prior to the call they will be automatically notified (via SMS, eMail or IVR) of the expected time of the engineer's arrival. Following call completion, a customer survey will then be generated so that improvements can be made wherever necessary.

*“ClickSoftware's solution is robust and effective, they have been reliable in their support and we have realized enormous cost savings. When I reflect on our work together I am very pleased that we have achieved our three project objectives of increasing our fulfilment of SLA's, reducing costs in the Customer Contact Centre and optimizing travel time for our Engineers. I would have no hesitation in recommending them.”*

**Wolfgang Meurer,**  
General Manager Service and Support (Germany)

- For more information on Konica Minolta visit [www.konicaminolta.com](http://www.konicaminolta.com)
- For more information on ClickSoftware visit [www.clicksoftware.com](http://www.clicksoftware.com) or [sales@clicksoftware.com](mailto:sales@clicksoftware.com)

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