

Background

Bob Hawley is the Managing Director at Red Steel. The company is a manufacturer of steel structures in Hawkes Bay, New Zealand. They are a relatively small business with a heavy project load and many components to keep track of within the steel fabrication process. They have a hand in everything from the cutting of steel to the construction of the steel structures on building sites.

Red Steel needed a system for tracking the fabrication process to ensure nothing slipped through the cracks. They manufacture many different elements and track who made the various items, the date they were made, and when components were dispatched. Hawley and his team had been keeping track of all their quotes and projects within a collection of spreadsheets and papers around the office.

Previously, information was stored in a custom-built SQL database, only accessible while at the Red Steel office and certainly not accessible for employees out on their construction sites. This database was built about seven years ago and there were huge cost and time constraints when changes needed to be made. “Our existing system was just so unfixable. It took too much time and money to implement a simple change,” explained Hawley.

Because of the inflexibility of their database, Red Steel had a limited course of action when they needed to make major changes to comply with a new certification scheme. After consulting with their database developer, the necessary change transformed into a much larger addition than they had originally expected. They realized they had two options: either invest a lot of money updating their old, clunky system or explore a different solution to advance them technologically and break the limitations that their current system created. Along with quick and cost-effective editing capabilities, they needed to have access to their information anywhere they went. This was not possible with their SQL database and was especially pertinent to the individuals working in the field at project worksites. Switching to the cloud and becoming mobile was no longer a nice idea, but a necessity. Changes had to be made.

Hawley set out to find an easy and user-friendly solution with a mobile option. Red Steel’s other criterion in their search for a replacement were that it could be accessed from the cloud and would be easily managed and changed without any outside help. With this criterion in mind, Hawley set out to find a tool that would allow his business to go mobile and maximize efficiency.

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Bob Hawley
Managing Director, Red Steel



RED STEEL®

Red Steel is a structural steel specialist based in Hawkes Bay, New Zealand. They undertake structural steel contracts throughout New Zealand, predominantly in the lower North Island. They cover all aspects of their trade from design through to completion. Red Steel has a large fabrication facility and a team of dedicated site personnel.

Red Steel's Solution

Weighing the options

Hawley explored Zoho, Knack, and TrackVia. While testing all three, he found Zoho and Knack to be too difficult to learn without having a technical background. He was impressed with how quickly and easily he could get his application up and running with TrackVia. He loved that it was instantly mobile. This meant any data they input into the app on the Web was immediately accessible on the iPad. The mobile application TrackVia offers was a better option than the Web-based mobile option the other platforms provided. Using the Web-based alternatives on an iPad was not nearly as smooth as having a mobile application. He began his experience with the TrackVia sales team and after two working sessions with them, he began developing his app by himself.

Broadening mobile capabilities

After spending some time in the product, Hawley quickly realized Red Steel could use it in a much broader sense than he previously thought. Their original fabrication tracking application grew into a tool that included their quote register, all incidents and accidents, employee information, and company correspondence. His simple app grew into a robust project management tracking application. Hawley was thrilled that they were able to bring so much information into one place. Red Steel is no longer chained to the confines of their office walls.

It only took three weeks to deploy TrackVia throughout his team once he had familiarized himself with the application. All of the team members using the product love how easy it is to operate. They are also very excited that they can access their TrackVia data anywhere they go. Having critical data at their fingertips on construction sites has been invaluable. All the data presented is super relevant to the task at hand and everything is clearly displayed.

Better management ability

Hawley now feels that he can better manage his company and its activity without being overbearing. "I spent three weeks in the States and to be able to pick up the iPad and see what the boys had done while I was away was fantastic. I could see so much information on one little app. I didn't have to call and and make them feel like I was keeping tabs," said Hawley.

Paper registers are no longer pinned to the office walls, and Red Steel employees can have remote access, when and where they need their data. Since the implementation of TrackVia, Hawley is confident his company is functioning at its highest capacity yet and looks forward to a long relationship with TrackVia.

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The number of weeks it took to deploy TrackVia throughout Red Steel.

“ You just need a little bit of time with Dan to understand a few things, but crikey, you could be up and running in a few minutes if you have a simple application. ”

Bob Hawley
Managing Director, Red Steel

CRITICAL SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS



- Mobile capability
 - Cloud accessible
 - Immediate editing capability
 - User-friendly interface
 - Monthly subscription basis
 - Easy to learn
 - No required assistance of a developer
 - Rapid deployment
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