



CASE STUDY

ASAP Systems' Online Asset Tracking System, BarCloud, Supplements MBC's Growth in the Environmental Solutions Industry

Case Study Overview

COMPANY:

MBC
www.mbc.net.nz

INDUSTRY:

Services- Environmental

BUSINESS CHALLENGE:

Track the movements of hundreds of office and field based assets loaned to employees who are located throughout urban environments and remote backcountry sites.

SOLUTION:

BarCloud Asset
BarCloud Mobile
Standard Asset Features Package

BENEFITS:

- Equipment check out/in functionality
- Logs scheduled and performed asset maintenance and repair activities
- Ability to search for specific equipment info in online asset database
- Configurable data fields



MBC

"Hands on Environmental Solutions"

MBC, located in South Island, New Zealand, is a company that specializes in environmental solutions involving project management, animal control, vegetation services, erosion control, and more. Since 2007, the company has been providing genuine client care and responsible environmental management to clients in an array of industries including mining, energy generation, government, transportation, farming and forestry.

"We have been expanding our company to new areas of business and therefore significantly stepped-up the amount of equipment we are purchasing. These actions created the need for an inventory system driven by online databases and not spreadsheets," says Adam Walker, Technical Manager at MBC.

THE CHALLENGE

In the last year or so, MBC has expanded their client base and subsequently invested in equipment (assets) to be used during upcoming projects. Before the recent growth, the staff had been tracking the location of assets with a "master" excel spreadsheet. This basic tracking procedure was sufficient for a relatively small amount of assets but could not handle the substantial increase. Inputting data in Excel was prone to data entry errors and it failed to reflect the current state of inventory operations. Walker and his team needed to be able to rely on a scalable and web-based asset tracking system that could monitor the location and status of hundreds of assets anytime, from anywhere.

The multitude of environmental solutions MBC offers required them to use a wide variety of equipment on a daily basis.

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SYSTEMS



Staff members working at off-site locations used tools and electronic devices such as satellite phones, personal locator beacons, generators, GPS devices, VHF/UHF radios and more. In turn, department managers needed the ability to loan out (check out) these devices to employees until a job was completed or the device was designated for return.

In addition to field equipment, general office equipment (e.g. computers, monitors, laptops), needed to be tracked according to job site location and by custodian (the employee assigned to use the equipment). Employees can be simultaneously operating in a number of unique job sites, from inner city Auckland to remote mine sites and forests. They needed an online system that had dynamic tracking capabilities specifically for assets changing location or user; this would help avoid the occurrence of employees misplacing equipment or losing tools while in “the bush.” Without this level of asset control and visibility, managers failed to oversee which resources were being used and what was available in storage.

“Our biggest issue was having staff take ownership of equipment and advising us of the movements of this equipment. We needed help keeping people accountable,” says Walker.

FITTING THEIR NEEDS

Asset tracking needs that were specific to the MBC business environment were cloud-based functionality, configurable data fields, and asset maintenance integration. Walker and his team had concerns regarding the lengthy installation time needed for a locally installed system as well as the costly and complex hardware involved. A cloud-based approach would allow the company to start inputting inventory and asset data right away. It would grant them wireless data synchronization and storage abilities so that inventory and asset content could be instantly accessible online via laptops, smartphones, and tablets. Furthermore, an online system would help the company avoid a hefty long-term commitment to hardware that could potentially hold a business back if their needs were to change.

Tracking the schedule of upcoming asset maintenance activities manually became a headache after the quantity of the organization’s assets began to swell. Each type of equipment required a different form of regulatory maintenance and associated documentation. In addition, maintenance or calibration dates differed for each piece of equipment. In order to kill two birds with one stone, the company desired a system that could monitor the location and status of assets as well as automatically track maintenance schedules.

GETTING STARTED

“I knew I wanted a cloud-based system; that was the starting block. I narrowed my search down to a select few and did evaluations on each. ASAP Systems BarCloud stood out because it would give us the ability to grow into the system as our company grew,” said Walker.



The first step MBC took to find the right inventory management and asset tracking solution was an online Google search. Using the keywords “online asset tracking system” yielded results that included several cloud-based companies and products. The product that aligned most closely to Walker’s goals was ASAP Systems’ online asset tracking system, BarCloud. Then, Walker met online with an ASAP

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Systems engineer for a quick demonstration of BarCloud in order for the engineer to assess what MBC's needs were, answer questions, and determine which modules would create the best asset tracking solution for the company.

After the demo, ASAP Systems recommended a solution that included:

- BarCloud Asset: 1 User License
- BarCloud Mobile: 3 User Licenses
- Standard Asset Features Package

THE SOLUTION

ASAP Systems BarCloud provided MBC with a SaaS application in the cloud that allowed them to visualize a more accurate picture of their business, especially when it came to their inventory of assets. After initial training, Walker and his team could easily input asset data into the online system database and begin checking out or loaning out equipment to employees spread throughout New Zealand. Management received the level of oversight they desired through the ability to track the real-time location, status, and user of equipment. In addition, BarCloud allowed the organization to methodically organize company resources from when they were received, then dispersed to job sites, until the resources were disposed of.

"The main benefit of BarCloud is feeling confident that as we enter data we know it will always remain manageable," said Walker.

User-Defined Data Fields

For Walker, it was important to have the organization's asset tracking policies and procedures clearly defined and communicated from the start. The company worked with ASAP Systems to develop a process for tagging assets, choosing and naming the system data fields, and inputting data so users could navigate fluently through the system.

"We have a policy where each office is the "gateway" for all equipment. All equipment must go through a gateway before it can be released into the field. Certain people in our company have the ability to enter into the database, ID the equipment and distribute out," said Walker.

Asset Maintenance & Alerts

In an effort to extend the useful life of their office and field equipment, MBC used the Asset Maintenance feature to automatically log all scheduled and performed maintenance activities into the asset tracking system. The team could also set up customizable SMS text and email alerts to notify personnel when equipment such as radios or GPS devices needed updates, recalibration, or were approaching warranty expiration. The increased speed of information sharing helped management make quick operational decisions that saved the business from potential future equipment replacements and repair costs.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As the business takes on new environment solutions jobs and purchases more specialized assets for each department, BarCloud will be able to adapt to serve their evolving needs. The company can upgrade from the Standard package to the Professional package at any time to enhance their system with features such as Asset Depreciation and Signature Capture, as well as the GPS Tracking feature being developed. Since BarCloud is cloud-based, there would be no costly hardware requirements and therefore no added burden on their IT department.

At the end of the day, MBC wanted to get the right inventory information that they could trust. The organization could focus more on environmental solution strategies by spending less time managing spreadsheets. ASAP Systems was able to save MBC time and money through better visibility and control of their assets.

For more information on ASAP Systems' online inventory and asset tracking solutions, visit www.barcloud.net or contact sales@asapsystems.com