CASE STUDY:
HOW FREEING UP 10 HOURS PER WEEK REDUCED MY STRESS AND SAVED MY SANITY

Marketing Events Coordinator at Cellular One Has Also Successfully Used the Software to Improve Budgets

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asset panda ™

Cellular One of Northeast Arizona is a wireless communications company which provides products such as cell phones and cloud-based, IT business solutions to more than 80,000 customers across northern Arizona and northern New Mexico.

"My staff, my coworkers, my boss are consistently amazed at the amount of work that Asset Panda is doing for us that we have never had before." - Brittney Touchin, Marketing Events Coordinator

Cellular One Technologies

Industry: Wireless Communications and Technology

Location: Show Low, Arizona

Asset Panda Solutions:
- Asset Photo Tagging
- Inventory Returns
- Multiple Users
- Reservation System
- Email Notifications
- Real-time Asset Tracking
- Asset Move Scheduling
- Categories and Tags

Summary

Cellular One's Brittney Touchin was hired almost two years ago to run the company's marketing events across both northern Arizona and New Mexico. When she started her position, Touchin was provided a simple Excel spreadsheet of the inventory in Cellular One's warehouse. However, this spreadsheet was neither updated nor accurate and only covered one of the four warehouses owned by Cellular One which housed marketing and event-related assets.

As such, Touchin needed a better way to organize and keep track of all assets and inventory for the events she oversaw. To avoid having to drive out to every single warehouse herself each week, or use another employee's precious time to take stock of all the inventory, Touchin searched for an asset tracking software solution she could customize to Cellular One's needs, utilize and access across all warehouses, and update in real-time without her having to be physically present on location.
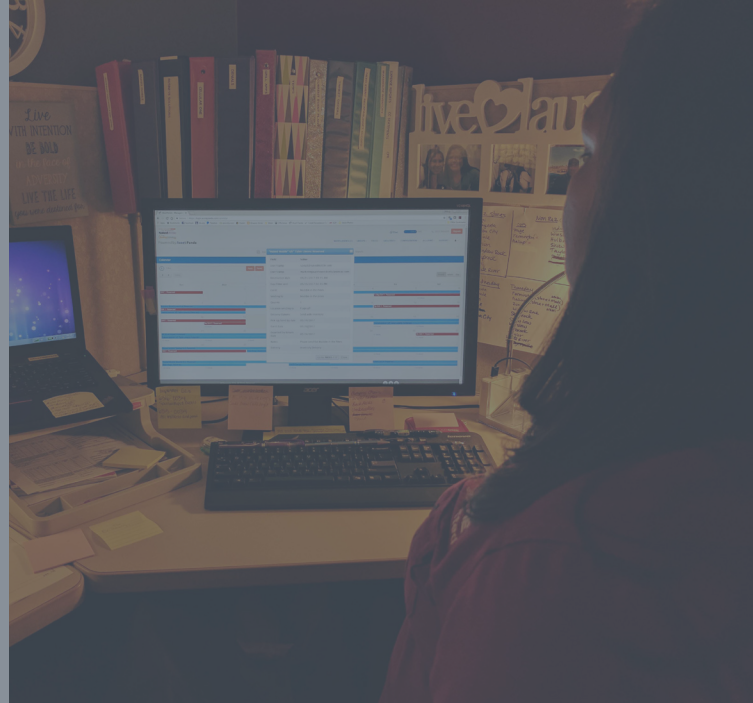
After choosing and implementing Asset Panda, Touchin saw the following results:

- Up to 10 hours per week, or 40 hours per month, saved from having to travel to and update warehouse inventory

- Half of what she used to do manually is now covered automatically by Asset Panda

- 90-95% of the time Touchin now comes in under budget for marketing events

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The Challenge

In 2016, Touchin found herself responsible for not only promoting Cellular One's five separate product lines/brands across 150 different events, but also sending out products to events and ordering new items as needed. While her duties were complicated by the fact that certain items for one brand couldn't be sent to and used at another event, her stress was only heightened thanks to the outdated Excel sheet she was working with. This sheet only tracked about 400 items in one of Cellular One's four warehouses.

"[Cellular One's employees] were trying to keep track of it [all] on an Excel sheet and it wasn't in real time. So they put it down on the spreadsheet, and it could've changed the next day," Touchin recalled. "We just didn't quite know; it was sort of a basic 'we might have had this at one point but I don't know if we still have it, it was there yesterday.' It was a very, very loose list of hundreds of items that were in that location at that one point in time. The count was never kept up-to-date and it was never in real-time unless someone went in and manually updated it themselves. No one was the owner of that project."

Initially, Touchin operated the best she could with what she had, and managed to develop a process she and one other employee could handle. However, Cellular One then hired two more people, and then three more people, to help ease her load and make event planning easier, a move which unfortunately had the opposite effect.

"For five people trying to work off one Excel spreadsheet just was not working," Touchin said. It was one thing for two people to coordinate between each other but when you are trying to get five people to coordinate with each other with just one Excel sheet, it just wasn't happening."

Touchin knew eventually her system would fall apart the more employees who came on board, so she started to look for a more robust, customizable, and long-term solution to Cellular One's asset tracking problem which multiple employees could access at the same time.

The Solution

The first step for Touchin was to search for online programs which met her criteria, finding that most of their descriptions were vague and unclear about whether or not they could do what she needed them to. Touchin tried two different software options, using free trials to try to mold the software into what she was looking for, but with no luck.

Touchin's main concern was finding an asset solution which would allow her to properly calculate returns; for example, if she sent out 500 assets and got 300 back, she wanted those 300 to be returned back to the inventory. Touchin also wanted a program which allowed images of assets to create a photo catalog of sorts. This feature meant she'd no longer have to wonder what specific types of an asset were available. She often dealt with items of different colors, styles, and sizes; without a readily-available picture of each, but Touchin had no idea which "lanyard" or "hat" she was viewing the asset tracking programs she was trying.

"Those were the two make-or-break attributes I was looking for in a program and they just couldn't do it," Touchin explained. "People make returns all the time to Walmart, and it gets put back into their inventory, so why can't I have a program that does that? [Regarding the photos], eBay does it, Amazon does it: they tell me how many they have in stock and they show me a picture of it. Why can't any other program do it?"

After several weeks of Googling to find better solutions and testing various products, Touchin discovered Asset Panda via an article listing top inventory and asset tracking software options. She opted for Asset Panda's 14-day free trial, and was immediately contacted by the support team to see what she needed; she even had a one-on-one call after the software was installed to better understand how it worked and how to make it do what she needed.

"They built something very basic for me to go off of and it did exactly the two main items I needed it to do," Touchin said, "And once I was okay with that and got the approval from my manager, I said, 'Hey, this program has pictures and it sends inventory out and returns it so let's do it.'"

Touchin quickly discovered she could also customize Asset Panda to make it work harder for her team. As one of her customizations, she added in a reservation system so her five co-workers could coordinate and not accidentally overbook the exact same items for two different events. Another bonus for Touchin was her ability to access Asset Panda's backend instead of having to contact a support team and wait for her requested changes to be implemented. And, when Touchin wasn't able to figure out how to adjust the software, she said the Asset Panda team was always there to help.

"It has taken me weeks to fine-tune Asset Panda because I didn't realize it could do so much for us," Touchin said. "So when I realized that, I started going to town, and said, 'Hey, maybe it could take this job off my plate and it could take this job off my plate, and this job off my plate, and with one transaction I would have all of a sudden taken four jobs off of my plate which is so cool. My job is running more smoothly than it ever has. I have turned the basic site we were given into something that now does half the work I spent so much time doing."

Results

In addition to Touchin's improved job efficiency thanks to Asset Panda's automated systems, she's also saving up to ten hours per week (or 40 hours per month) on having to drive out to her company's local warehouse (which is still three miles away) and manually see, count, and update asset and inventory records.

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"I used to have to dig through boxes, climb ladders, unroll banners, and go out to physically see if have these three different styles of a lanyard," Touchin explained. "I would spend hours upon hours out there at the warehouse, driving out there, digging around in stuff; I would say out of a 5-day work week I was out there 2-3 times a week for at least 3-4 hours. And that's just at the location that is down the street."

Obviously, this process was time-consuming and a drag on both Touchin's time, as well as company resources if she had to have someone else help her. "Having to call somebody to say, 'Hey, can you run over to the New Mexico store and get into the closet and count how many pens I have in there?' was not only costing me time to have to wait for that number, but it was also inconveniencing or costing me money to have to send an employee out there and sit for 2-3 hours to count 5000 pens. It really is saving us hours upon hours of work to be able to know what we have on hand, where, and what it looks like."

Asset Panda has also helped Touchin in terms of finances. First, the software made her aware of exactly how much the company's event assets were worth and helped her avoid unnecessary losses and expenditures. Second, Touchin was able to calculate exactly how much Cellular One spends on each event, which not only improved her planning and budgeting for future events, but also meant the company could determine if events were worth it in terms of return on investment.

"Before, we were unsure of the value of what we had in our warehouses was. It may be that we order umbrellas and umbrellas came to us at $15 each, and all of a sudden we are down a box of 25 and that's a lot of money walking out the door and nobody knows where it went," Touchin said. "I've always been very

conscious of the amount of budget I've been given for these events and 90-95% of the time if I have control of the event we are going to come in under budget."

After implementing Asset Panda, Touchin and Cellular One's employees are now also able to:

- Check which assets are in stock and available in all four warehouses and in Cellular One's Arizona and New Mexico stores
- Avoid overbooking items
- Move inventory around and have it transported from New Mexico to Arizona
- Schedule out items for delivery and have Asset Panda automatically send an email to the delivery team to pick the items up or to drop them off
- Communicate better with the warehouse which Touchin is nowhere near, whose team gets the Asset Panda emails and notifications requesting shipments and is able to pack it and send it immediately
- Provide future employees a ready-to-go system: "If two or three years down the road I'm not here and a new person comes in to fill my shoes, they have something to work off of and aren't starting from ground zero. Now, this program is built to outlast us and is going to be able to grow with the company as the company grows."

Conclusion

Without Asset Panda, Touchin claims her team "would have drowned": "Our inventory would've gone missing, nobody would've known where things were. We would've been stepping on each other's toes, we would've been losing inventory, and we would've not known the real price amount spent on events. Asset Panda has taken something that was not very monitored and completely out of control into something that now works for us.

Touchin's superiors are also in love with the product. "Even my bosses and my directors who have access to Asset Panda are continuously telling me that they love it, they love what it's doing for us, that it keeps us all on the same page, and how it keeps the communication all in one location when it wasn't before. My staff, my co-workers, and my boss are consistently amazed by the amount of work that Asset Panda is doing for us that we have never had before."

If you or your company is in a situation similar to Touchin when she started at Cellular One, why not give Asset Panda a try? Our free, 14-day trial will set you on the road to properly tracking, cataloging, and updating your assets and inventory records in real-time.

About Asset Panda

Asset Panda, the most powerful, yet simple to use free asset tracking software in the world, enables clients to track their IT assets exactly how they want, and from the mobile devices they already carry. The platform may be accessed either online or via free mobile iOS and Android apps that sync with the cloud. The apps include a mobile barcode scanner, so there's no need to purchase a separate handheld barcode scanner. Users can add voice notes, videos, documents or photos to the asset's information. The tool allows users to view check-in/check-out status, GPS location, lease/purchase information, complete maintenance history, insurance information, and the depreciation and in ation calculations your accounting and compliance teams require. Companies of every industry sector and size – including some of the world's biggest brands – have chosen Asset Panda to help them manage millions of dollars' worth of vital assets.

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