

NetMotion Mobility® Plays Pivotal Role in Mobile-First Initiative

With more than 3,000 patrols handling 10,000 calls for roadside assistance daily, the UK's largest recovery breakdown service wanted to improve their successful operations model. AA wanted to deliver information needed for roadside response and exemplary customer service into a single interface, accessed via iPhones. To ensure secure, reliable connections for the iPhones no matter the coverage conditions, AA chose NetMotion Mobility software. Mobility is Mobile Performance Management that allows patrols to quickly update records, while improving worker safety alongside busy highways.

Service-Driven, Digital-First Business

"The AA is the market leader in the UK for breakdown services. Now, we are progressing from just a call-centre driven mobile business, to becoming more of a digital-first business," declares Mark Dawson, Transformation Programme Manager for Road Operations for the AA. The centerpiece of the transformation is custom-developed software that unites dispatch functions with information from the AA CRM system. It delivers all the information necessary to not only navigate to the breakdown site, but for the patrol to personally serve the customer. As Dawson explains, "The software acts as their job dispatch unit and gives them the breakdown location, and also the member's name, how long they have been an AA member, the make of the vehicle — all the information captured by either the call centre, or sent directly by the customer via their mobile app. Then the application takes the patrol through our completion workflow to capture what we've done to fix the problem and the next steps for the customer. Do they need a new part? Is it a temporary repair?"

While the patrols have a Panasonic ToughPad in a docking station for accessing directions and performing vehicle diagnostics, the primary tool for accessing the data and communicating with the customer is an iPhone 6. "We chose NetMotion Mobility on the iPhones to allow real-time secure communications with our patrols, over the Internet, and connected into our network servers," states Dawson. "For all the patrols, firing up the application is simple. We pass on their credentials for them, and from there on, they have seamless, fully connected communication with our dispatch application. Their job is to fix vehicles. They open NetMotion, hit connect, it says connected. It's as simple as that."



INDUSTRY:

Field Service

OBJECTIVES:

- Deliver secure, reliable connectivity over 2G/3G/4G

SOLUTIONS:

- NetMotion Mobility
- Apple iPhone 6
- Custom-developed in-house software

RESULTS:

- Greater safety for roadside-assistance patrols
- Complete information for serving the customer and documenting response
- Secure and more-reliable connections, especially in peak seasons and rural areas
- Successful mobile-first initiative

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Mark Dawson | Transformation Programme Manager

Safety and Connectivity

As Dawson explains, the combination of the iPhone and NetMotion Mobility is also a safety issue for the patrols. “We want them to provide us with real-time updates — when will they complete the job, what the next-best actions are for that job. They often work in vulnerable situations, out in the motorway lanes where the vehicle has broken down. In the past, they have had to carry the equipment as they walk to and from the vehicle. Instead, we encourage them to carry the iPhone with them at all times, which they do. With the iPhone and Mobility, they can update in realtime, without having to walk back to the vehicle.”

NetMotion also provides some reassurance that connections will be reliable, even in areas where coverage is marginal. “In the UK, Devon and Cornwall are very popular places for summer holidays,” says Dawson. “During peak seasons in April through September, we know from experience that we struggle there to maintain a data connection. That’s where we rely on NetMotion as a VPN that maintains data integrity, and the connection between our app and call centre systems. On the iPhone with Mobility, we see the full connection maintained at all times, with no breakages. In rural locations and in peak holiday seasons, that’s where NetMotion comes to the forefront for us.”

Panasonic Partnership, Proven Product

Panasonic, a longtime NetMotion partner, provides the ToughPads that AA uses in the docking stations in the patrol vehicles. The partnership played a big role in Dawson’s decision. As he tells it, “We’ve had strong ties and relationships with Panasonic for many years. Their endorsement of NetMotion told us it must be very good.” And, as a result, “There was never another option for us. That’s a testament to how well the product has been perceived in the UK. I took everything I’ve read and the good news stories from other organisations, plowed right in and bought it. It does what we want it to do.”

A Vision, Realised

Dawson shares the big picture of what AA wanted to accomplish with its initiative: “We had a vision where we foresee IT and the business working alongside to complement each other.” It includes a new CRM system, the custom software and new mobile devices for the patrols, and apps for the customers. And, while the call centres are still a major point of interaction for the AA’s members, “We’ve gotten to the point where 20 percent of our customers’ interaction with us in a breakdown situation uses our app interface, to report the call or to track our patrol attendants.”

And NetMotion Mobility’s role? “NetMotion has allowed us to significantly shift to being an Internet-first company by removing boundaries and maintaining an on-demand connection. Our experience in our first 18 months is that NetMotion Mobility does what they say it does. Therefore we’ve had no implementation issues, no troubleshooting issues, we haven’t had any issues around connections. No issues whatsoever.”