

NetMotion Mobile Performance Management Speeds, Streamlines Food Inspections

Agriculture is a cornerstone of the Dutch economy. More than half of the Netherlands' surface area is devoted to agriculture, and the country is a large and diverse importer and exporter of agricultural goods. Quality inspections of fresh fruits and vegetables, cut flowers and potted plants are the job of the Quality Control Bureau (Kwaliteits-Controle-Bureau, or KCB). The KCB relies heavily on technology, for which it is recognised as a model organisation within the EU. To give its inspectors reliable connectivity to systems that allow them to process and document their inspections quickly, they turned NetBoss BV, their mobile technology solution provider, and NetMotion Mobile Performance Management software.

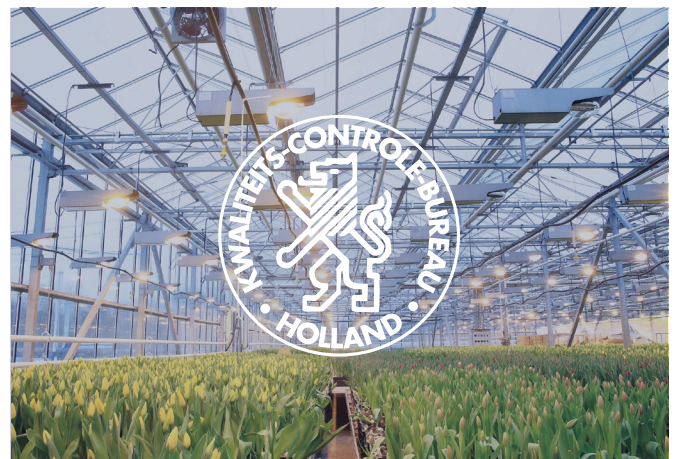
Inspection Completions Dependent on Connections

The KCB's 120 field workers use mobile devices to carry out their jobs, which involve checking products for quality and health concerns according to established EU regulations. Working out of four regional offices in the Netherlands, they perform around 200,000 inspections every year. Since delays in the inspection process and communicating approvals can interrupt the flow of commerce, reliable information technology and wireless connectivity play an important role.

"The inspection relies on different systems being connected to each other, with human action intervening at the end of the chain," explains Jac Kardolus, ICT project manager for the KCB. After completing the checks at the border, the inspectors send the approvals via a tablet that is connected to the Internet. If the final step cannot be performed, the whole import or export fails the inspection and the process comes to a halt. Therefore, a stable Internet connection is vital. "This is exactly what was causing problems for the KCB," declares Jac. It was a regular occurrence for the connection to go down. This meant that approval was not sent, and "This caused frustration and needless delays to the tasks that our inspectors had to carry out,"

Multiple, Repeat Logins — and an Answer

When the connection went down, contact was lost with the servers. Workers sometimes had to log in to the system again several times a day to perform the inspection in the right way. The IT help desk also then regularly faced complaints by phone from field workers. Jac adds: "In some cases, they even had to log in to the system several times an hour. It was definitely time for us to look around for a suitable solution. Finally, it was a partner that put us onto the options offered by NetMotion Mobile Performance software."



INDUSTRY:

Agriculture

OBJECTIVES:

- Maintain continuous, reliable connectivity
- Eliminate worker frustration with repeat logins

SOLUTIONS:

- NetMotion Mobility Mobile Performance Management software
- Mobile tablets

RESULTS:

- Implementation completed within days
- Reliable communication of inspection approvals
- Help desk calls reduced to near-zero

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Jac Kardolus | ICT Project Manager

Ensuring Seamless, Reliable Connections

NetMotion Mobility, an element of its Mobile Performance Management software, offered a simple solution to the problems encountered by the KCB. Mobility provides a seamless connection over the wireless network between the mobile devices and application servers. It also gives priority to the key application the inspectors rely on to receive inspection requests and complete their jobs.

Mobility operates like a virtual layer across all the connection options available to the mobile device, guiding the connections in the best direction without requiring management or intervention by the user. It connects the mobile device to the Internet via Wi-Fi and 3G/4G networks and if there is no connection available, it simply pauses applications until a connection is available again. At that point, the application session resumes, continuing from where it left off. This happens automatically, without the knowledge of the user or requiring additional steps. With the ability to ensure connection stability and optimum availability, “It soon became apparent that NetMotion met our requirements well at the KCB,” confirms Jac. “We went ahead with implementing the software.”

Quick Implementation Thanks to NetBoss BV

The KCB’s mobile solution provider, NetBoss, provided consultancy, implementation and management for the NetMotion solutions. First, a test was carried out on the KCB’s servers, after which NetBoss implemented the solution on all of the field workers’ devices within a couple of days. “NetBoss had a tight schedule for migrating each worker,” states Jac, “and ultimately, they managed to do it remotely, which meant that the inspectors only noticed it to a minimal extent. The software could be used straight away and there were no queries about it from workers.”

Big Benefits for Inspectors and IT

Using NetMotion technology means that workers at the KCB now only have to log in once at the start of the working day. The situation where workers contact the IT help desk several times a day to report a poor Internet connection is now a thing of the past. Since implementation, there has been virtually no contact any more from them about connection problems. “We don’t hear anything from staff any more, which is a very positive sign for us,” emphasizes Jac. As a result, implementing NetMotion not only had an impact on field workers, but the IT department can also focus again on its normal activities because of the decrease in the volume of complaints.

Field workers can now carry out inspections without any problems, and also give and send their approval. This eases the pressure and makes the job easier. The clear upshot of this is that less stress can be felt among the workers. With the system doing its job, workers can focus again on doing their job, which is carrying out their inspections.