



Success Stories

The Client

Michel's Bakery of Avon, CO had a big problem...Y2K. They were told by their route systems provider that they needed to upgrade to new software and hardware or face inoperative systems come January 1st. The new system, for this business with two delivery trucks, would cost between \$60,000 and \$80,000!

Michel's Bakery is a privately held, high-quality, French bakery based just outside of Vail. Their business is highly seasonal and they depend on their systems to be fast and reliable, especially during March, the height of ski season.

The Diagnosis

The bakery normally ran smoothly, with the owners very involved in daily operations. Pierre and one other driver would run routes starting at 4:00am and Maryse would come in and process orders in the morning...a job that would last all day long.

The routine was typical. The drivers would return before noon and "T-COM" their orders over to Maryse's computer (a serial connection based program to upload orders). This could take a while. After the upload, the orders were transferred to an old version of RealWorld accounting and statements were generated in this package. Then, on a monthly basis, the balance information was manually entered into Quickbooks from the RealWorld statements.

It soon became apparent that Michel's could use some automation.

The Strategy

In September of 1999, RB Consulting was contacted by Michel's Bakery for systems integration assistance. RB Consulting, a MCNI dealer, recommended Route Manager for their route delivery requirements.

While price was the number one concern for the bakery, Michel's also wanted to have their technology upgraded. The units they were using were old and hard to maintain when something went wrong. When a unit failed, the support personnel (for a fee) would dial in and attempt to remedy the situation, but typically a "work around" approach would be the only solution.

The MCNI Solution

Working very closely with Michel's, MCNI learned the bakery's business and what was required of a route system. Once contracted, MCNI installed the route software on the hand-held units and actually made a few 4:00am trips with Pierre to ensure that the software did what was expected.

The software installed on Maryse's computer ran it all. The Route Controller software not only streamlined the orders coming in from

the hand-held computers into Quickbooks, but it also automatically updated the hand-helds with new items and customers...a process unthinkable with their old system.

Maryse, who used to spend all day working on customer accounts the reconciliation of two systems, now enjoys managing one system and concentrating on customer service and new accounts. Granted, Michel's uses about a tenth of the features included in the Route Manager, but that tenth is exactly what they need. All of this at just over 1/6th the price of an upgrade of their old system.

The Software

MCNI's Route Manager runs under Windows/CE on Pocket PC's for Michel's routes. This integrates directly with Quickbooks 2002 using the QBFC XML Software Development Kit. The Route Manager Controller runs on their Dell Pentium IV. Michel's uploads up to 150 invoices each day from their hand-helds to Quickbooks using Microsoft ActiveSync 3.5. Total processing time for uploads averages one minute through a standard serial connection.

The Setup

In the delivery vans, Michel's uses standard Compaq IPAQ Pocket PC's and Microline standard carriage 320 series printers. Power is supplied with a 130-watt inverter plugged into the cigarette lighter.