

CASE STUDY:

Dial-A-Cab

Outsourced IBM iSeries Hardware, Software & Support



The Client

Established in 1953 by a small group of taxi drivers, Dial-a-Cab is a member's co-operative with firm commitments to diversity and social awareness. With its fleet of over 2,200 mobiles, Dial-a-Cab has grown to become the largest supplier of licensed taxis in Central London, providing individuals, small business and corporations with an efficient, reliable taxi service, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It also supports initiatives such as the Drink Aware Trust and Safer Travel at Night.

Dial-a-Cab are extremely proud of their reputation for innovation and advancement of computer technology, and since installing the first in-cab Mobile Data Computer in March 2000, they have continued to implement innovative and client facing solutions including a unique real-time taxi booking system, allowing anybody with access to the internet to book a taxi on account or using a credit card. Account holders also have access to a portal giving them real-time access to invoice details and management information.

The Situation



In 2003, Dial-a-Cab was forced to consider upgrading their financial system when it emerged the supplier intended to withdraw support for bespoke versions of the product. The additional modifications to the bespoke elements of the package would significantly add to the cost of the upgrade, without providing any tangible benefit over the existing systems.

Dial-a-Cab began to consider various possibilities, including the replacement of the application within the short to medium term. The decision was made to investigate outsourcing support to an alternative supplier while a suitable replacement system was identified.

In order to migrate support successfully, the business identified a number of key points that a supplier must satisfy;

- The supplier must demonstrate a clear understanding of Dial-a-Cab's business processes.
- Be fully conversant with the standard financial software modules currently utilised.
- Quickly develop the ability to support the business critical bespoke modules that had been developed, particularly the Interface with the V6 cab booking application and Drivers Ledger.

The Solution

Business and technical analysts from MNI Services were invited to visit the Dial-a-Cab head office in July 2003. During the visit, technical staff and end users were invited to provide information on exactly what functionality from the standard system the company used. In addition, bespoke elements were described and documented.

Using the information obtained, MNI Services prepared a proposal which performed a number of functions:

- Documented the various sections of the system.
- Highlighted problems with the current situation, points raised both by the users and additional ones identified by MNI Services.
- Stated the alternative courses of action that were open to Dial-a-Cab, i.e. inaction, upgrade or replacement.
- Proposed a series of recommendations, which compromised a range of short and long term solutions including additional training and enhancements, hardware upgrades and preparation of a plan to implement and eventual replacement.

The Outcome

MNI Services were awarded the contract in November 2003 and began to prepare to implement the service.

An action plan was created to maximise the benefits of the solutions, whilst minimising disruption to Dial-a-Cab's day-to-day operations. Dial-a-Cab benefited from an immediate cost-saving by outsourcing support of their iSeries hardware and software to MNI Services, whilst gaining peace of mind that their systems were being looked after by qualified and experienced professionals. By upgrading some key areas of Dial-a-Cab's hardware, MNI Services produced an improvement in system performance, and by tackling a number of issues that were identified by creating bespoke software, Dial-a-Cab were able to realise a number of business benefits.



For more information about how our support services could benefit your business, please call us on 01553 818520 and ask to speak to one of our specialists.

East Anglian House, Oldmedow Road
Hardwick Industrial Estate
King's Lynn PE30 4JJ

 01553 818520

Email: info@mnis.co.uk

Branston Court
Branston Road
Birmingham B18 6BA

 0121 248 4440

Web: <https://www.mnis.co.uk>