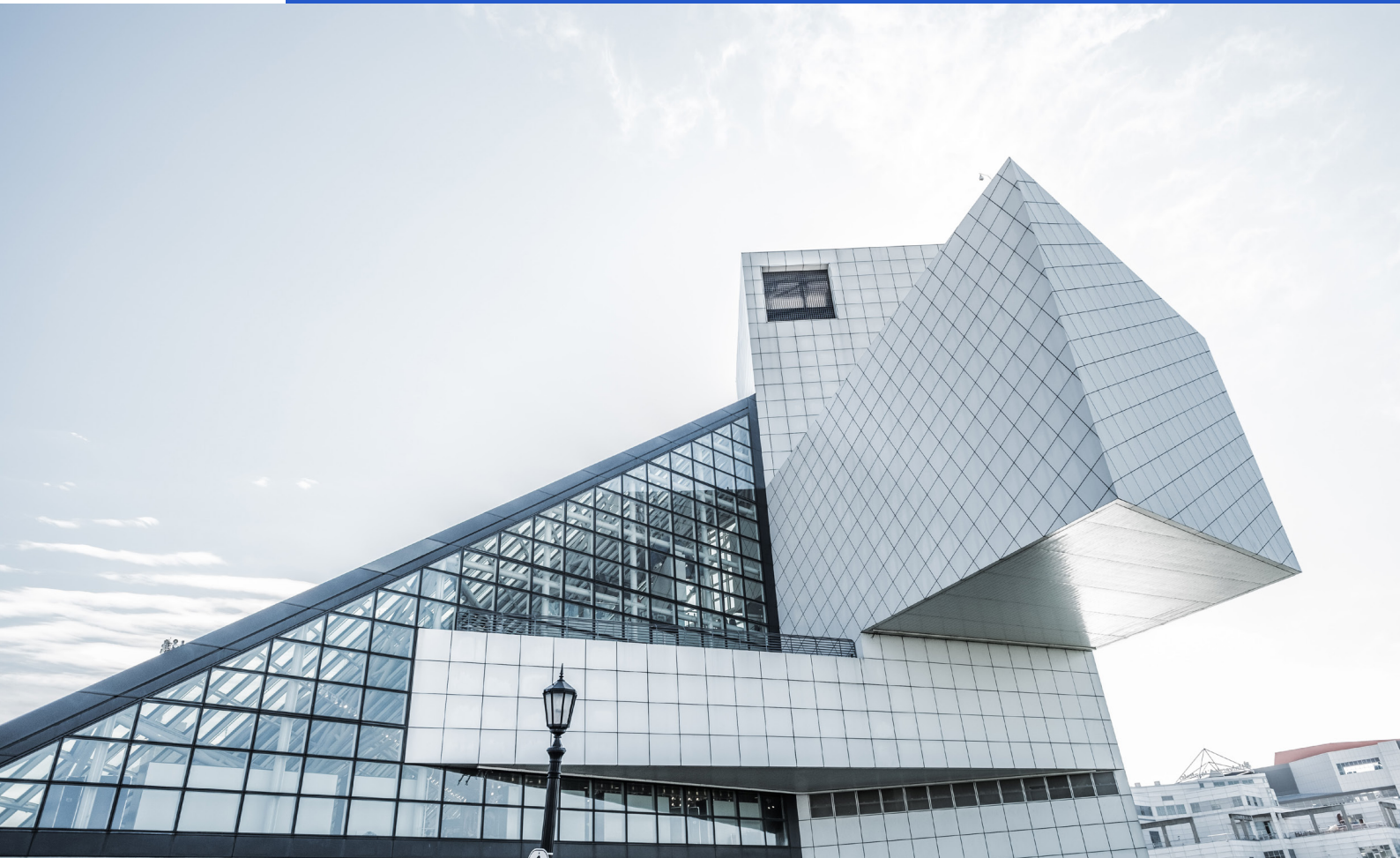
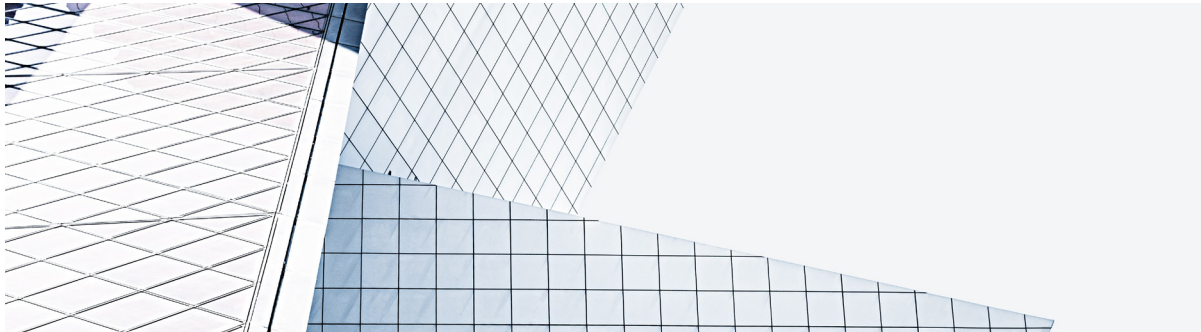


CASE STUDY:

# SERVICE STREAM COMMUNICATIONS



## *ConSol procures and manages Service Stream's to field services contractors*



### *The challenge*

Service Stream Communications (Service Stream) is one of Australia's largest and most experienced field services providers and is involved in sourcing, engaging and managing installation and maintenance contractors for major telecommunications clients across the country. The company has over 20 branches across Australia.

Each week, the company's subcontractor workforce completes over 1,000 projects, requiring scheduling and dispatching multiple technicians to a vast number of different locations. For the past two years an internally developed tracking system was used to manage this enormous task. The system was labour intensive and relied on Service Stream's management allocating and managing work either by email and telephone. Service Stream also relied on the company's workforce ringing in or emailing their work completion data, 'as-built' drawings, changes to plans and contractor invoices. Information was then manually entered into the tracking system by Service Stream's administrative staff.

Often information got delayed, was incorrectly communicated or on other occasions contractors couldn't be reached, resulting in more telephone calls. Also because of the highly regionalised nature of Service Stream's business, processes differed from location to location, which meant inconsistencies from region to region. This ad hoc approach to managing staff in the field often resulted in work costing more than anticipated, squeezing the company's tight profit margins.

What the company needed was a web-based system that was accessible to all, allowing for standardisation of work practises across the country and greater visibility out in the field. Service Stream needed a mechanism for optimising the productivity of its sizeable workforce and making its subcontractors more accountable for their actions.

### *The solution*

In 2009 Service Stream contracted field services' solutions pioneer, Yarris, to implement its field services management system. Customised and configured to Service Stream's requirements, ConSol was provided as a Software as a Service (SaaS) offering. It was piloted in Victoria for a year before being rolled out to Service Stream locations across the country in 2010.

ConSol is a web-based, real time solution which is capable of managing the complexity of the field services work process, from order creation to order acceptance, through to job variations, job close out and contractor invoicing. ConSol is also capable of selecting and engaging sub-contractors and matching them to the job by factoring in their location, availability and past performance. ConSol's configurability enabled Service Stream to manage all aspects of the contingent workforce, including contractors from a wide variety of service types, sizes and locations.

Service Stream contractors have direct access to ConSol, enabling them to log in daily and check what work has been allocated to them and provide their acceptance on line. ConSol also enables them to enter the status of work in progress, load as built drawings and post invoices once the job has been completed, effectively creating a work hub for the company and the subcontractor contingent workforce.



## The outcome

According to Service Stream’s Executive General Manager, Stephen Ellich, because contractors are now required to enter all relevant information into the system, the process is no longer as labour intensive which means the administrative staff members are able to manage significantly greater volumes of work. “We now have a similar number of staff managing over 20 per cent more work than they did under the old system.”

Another key benefit of ConSol is that it provides Service Stream management with greater transparency of project work which drives greater workforce accountability as subcontractors are no longer able to hide behind the non-receipt of emails or missed telephone calls. Every entry made into the system is there for all to see, providing Service Stream with a valuable audit trail.

Greater sub-contractor accountability has also been driven by the fact that KPIs have been built into all subcontractor activities, with all cost or time related over-runs now being tracked.

Ellich says the system has also been enormously beneficial to contractors themselves. “It has helped them become more efficient in the way they do engage with our business, eliminating unnecessary double-handling and providing them with much greater control over their work. For example, instead of preparing their invoices and awaiting approval, they now receive system generated invoices which are automatically loaded for on-time payment once they have fully completed the work and attach their as-built drawings. This means the contractor has far greater control and visibility of their payments.”

For Service Stream management, the system has provided real-time visibility of work performed by the business’s regional and national teams, providing an invaluable snapshot of what is

happening across the country at any given time. Data and reporting give an accurate indication of progress, results and forecasts. Ellich says visibility has not only been created in terms of where projects are at but also in terms of where potential risk lies. “One of the major risks we face is the inaccurate recording of costs and revenues for completed work. ConSol has provided enhanced visibility and accuracy in this area of the business, thus reducing potential risk.”

Ellich believes the built-in automation of the system has also forced users (both management and contractors) to follow certain processes and sequences, ensuring standardisation of work processes across the country, which is critical to a large organisation with such as an extensive geographic spread.

Finally, he says, the system has also enabled Service Stream to automate its communication with clients, which were once handled manually.

“We’re now able to automatically send invoices, as-builts and other project documentation to our clients. What this means is that our clients are receiving information closer to real time than ever before and with greater accuracy than before.”

