



FAST FACTS

Company

Sprint Nextel Corporation offers wireless and wire line communications products and services. Its Wireless segment provides wireless mobile telephone and wireless data transmission services. Sprint Nextel is one of the largest wireless carriers in the United States

Industry

Mobile and Cellular Technology
- Sales
- National Retail

Geography

United States

Challenges

- Re-establishing its industry leadership.
- Provide management real-time information to improve customer satisfaction.
- Accounting for variables effective both Sprint and Nextel legacy systems

Solution

- AirMobility.Net™
- Blackberry 7520, 8703e, 8830
- GPS Tracking
- Private Extranet/Database Management

Results

- Over 100% increase in store visit compliance
- Increased efficiency and improved control
- Increased Customer Satisfaction

WESTLAKE SOFTWARE, INC.

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COMPANY

Sprint Nextel Corporation is in the highly competitive market place of wireless and wire line products and services. The sales force that manages their wireless business is broken up between two larger groups: direct to business and direct to consumer. Within the consumer division, segments include indirect dealers (owner operated stores), direct dealers (corporate owned stores) and wireless national retail (Best Buy, Radio Shack, Fry's etc.). Over 1000 indirect account executives, indirect sales managers, directors and executives track, manage and support Sprint Nextel's direct national wireless retail efforts nationally including the Virgin Islands and Porto Rico.

CHALLENGES

Wireless retail selling in the United States is a highly competitive landscape that includes advertising giants such as T-Mobile, Verizon Wireless and AT&T. Attracting new customers to your services that most customers are unable to differentiate between them is the primary challenge. The most effective strategy is face to face selling time which most carriers overlay their own retail field force to assist their national retail partners in selling their products and services. For carriers, this creates similar challenges that many of their customers share. Are your reps where they are supposed to be? Are they continuing to provide the proper training to the local reps at each retailer? Is inventory being accounted for correctly? Is the display in proper order or do items need to be replaced or removed? How are replacement items being reported? What is the status ongoing with local store management? Are reps being compliant with required store visits? Can a reasonable sound forecast be made? Are we historically improving?

Re-establishing its industry leadership position

Like many large companies, Sprint has competitive pressure. Although most technologists agree that Sprint's high speed network is among one of the best worldwide, growth has slowed do to a wide variety of reasons. Selling in the retail channel is one of the most competitive selling segments inside of Sprint. Reps are being required to do more with fewer resources.

Provide management real-time information to improve customer satisfaction

Tracking a widely distributed field force with paper based forms or a web based data collection system proved to be inefficient. This was not keeping up with varying demands between local, market, regional and national concerns. No standards were in place to fairly compare reps with one another, to compare groups of reps with others or by area or region. There was confusion as to the expectations of reps from store to store, area by area and region by region. A single consolidated application and service would provide management a better way to collect, analyze and react to problems that arise in the retail channel. No solution was in place to account for any form of qualitative or quantitative analysis.

Accounting for variables effecting both Sprint and Nextel legacy systems.

All large corporations that merge have challenges in consolidation. Sprint and Nextel were no exception. Both Sprint and Nextel had extensive back office systems in place to manage their growing retail efforts. Nextel supported a system called SIS in which holds critical data about their national retail efforts; Sprint supports ARMS which did the same. Adding additional complication,

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both systems were not located together nor could they be considered compatible. A system was needed to help make a smooth transition between the two to keep national retail on track.

Improve and standardize deployment and maintenance processes

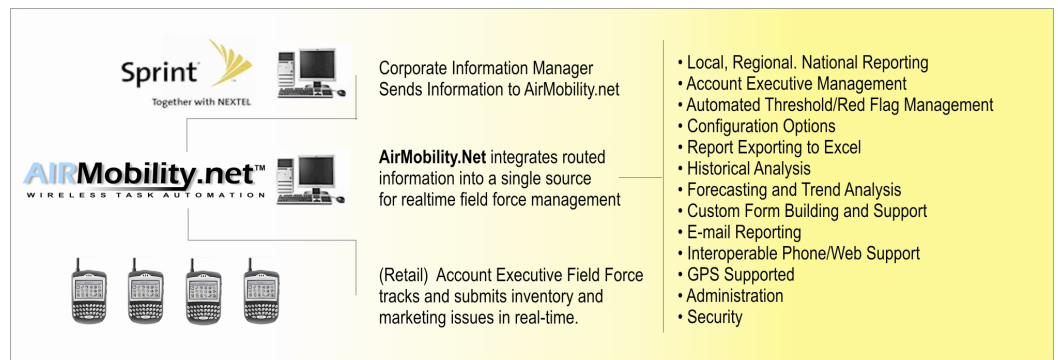
As like many organizations that grow quickly and by acquisition, implementation of corporate wide standards is a challenge. The company desired a solution that would further drive additional standards to their national field force.

SOLUTION

Westlake Software, Inc. proposed a comprehensive wireless integrated solution that would help Sprint Nextel overcome these challenges. The solution combined custom software, GPS tracking, back office integration, private extranet (www.sprintfts.net) reports, escalations, wireless and wire line access, in and out of wireless coverage functionality, dynamic wireless form generation, alerts, database change tracking, etc. The solution today supports over 500 features specifically designed to improve productivity, improve customer satisfaction, decrease costs, and contribute to new sales faster.

ARCHITECTURE

The application, both client (Blackberry) and server side are built on the **JAVA platforms**. By design, this has enabled Nextel and Sprint to grow and scale the usage of the application aggressively with virtually no down time or significantly re-work of the technology. Using J2ME on the client side of the solution enables users to work in and out of coverage. Store assignments are dynamically updated on each users handset and is cached. This allows the user to continue to do their work regardless of any trouble with the Internet, wireless network or the **SprintFTS.Net** server.



All relevant information about each rep, manager, director executive and all information about each retail location is stored on the **AirMobility.Net™** server. This includes territories, store assignments, store frequencies, customized forms to accommodate all retailers down to the individual retailer or store level, GPS data, phone models, training modules, and customizable user definable reports, triggers and thresholds. All users of the system are driven by hierarchy. Reps who log in online can see only their data; managers who log in can see only their rep data, etc.

Initially the architecture was set up to take in daily data feeds from the Nextel back office system SIS. When the merger between Sprint and Nextel became official, Westlake was asked to become the core database, to manage these systems for both Sprint and Nextel independently.

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FEATURES AND BENEFITS

Over 500 features have been created in detail to fit the organization's exact needs. The following items represent just a few core functions in which helps Sprint's field force to success.

Compliance is a core issue with any widely distributed field force. Sprint faced unique challenges in how compliance would need to be managed and tracked. Users are tracked monthly and are required to make store visits at a pre-defined interval. Set up much like a batting average for a baseball player, each new month is a new season. If a rep has 50 stores to visit within that month, they will be batting 90% if they are tracked to 45 visits. A running average calculates this progress by dividing their current batting average into the percentage of the month that has passed. This can place a rep ahead of schedule, on scheduled, slightly behind or well behind. This is graphically displayed for management to make quick and easy assessments of the progress required by each rep. Additionally, the program self-adjusts for each rep for any sick time, leave of absence or vacation noted in the system. A weighted average has also been included to create a category called rep effectiveness. This enables reps to account for time spent away from stores in which may change their ability to stay on target. For example, if regional meetings are required for an entire week, a rep may receive a "visit credit" for that day. The system tracks two statistics in this area of the program: **store visit compliance** and rep **(IAE) effectiveness**:



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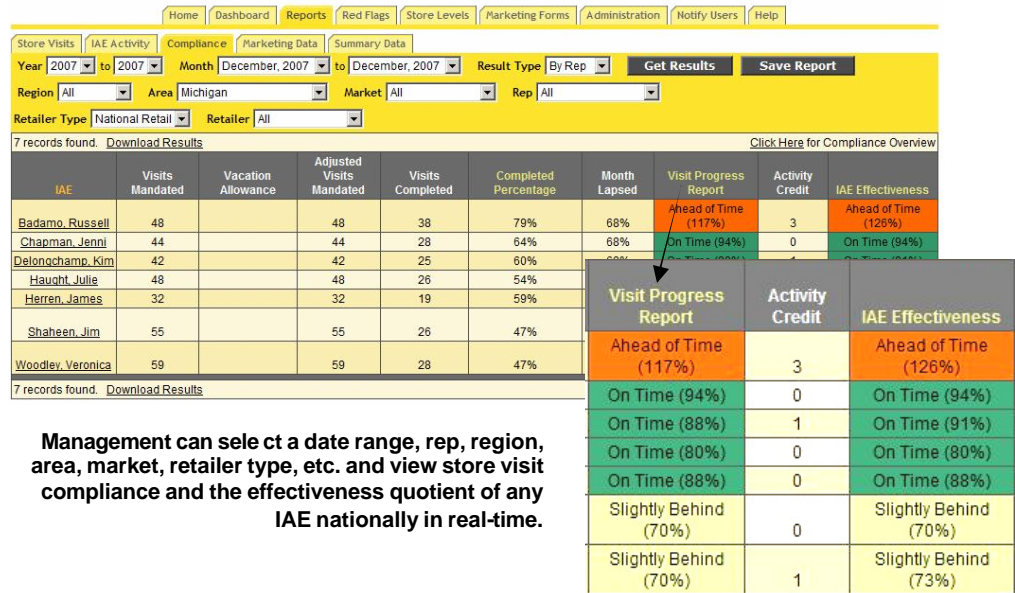
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Management can select a date range, rep, region, area, market, retailer type, etc. and view store visit compliance and the effectiveness quotient of any IAE nationally in real-time.

IAE	Visits Mandated	Vacation Allowance	Adjusted Visits Mandated	Visits Completed	Completed Percentage	Month Lapsed	Visit Progress Report	Activity Credit	IAE Effectiveness
Badamo, Russell	48		48	38	79%	68%	Ahead of Time (117%)	3	Ahead of Time (126%)
Chapman, Jenni	44		44	28	64%	68%	On Time (94%)	0	On Time (94%)
Delongchamp, Kim	42		42	25	60%	68%	On Time (88%)	1	On Time (91%)
Haught, Julie	48		48	26	54%	68%	On Time (80%)	0	On Time (80%)
Herren, James	32		32	19	59%	68%	On Time (88%)	0	On Time (88%)
Shaheen, Jim	55		55	26	47%	68%	Slightly Behind (70%)	0	Slightly Behind (70%)
Woodley, Veronica	59		59	28	47%	68%	Slightly Behind (70%)	1	Slightly Behind (73%)

Rep effectiveness is used to allow management at all levels to understand not only information about store visit compliance but if they are burdening any rep with either too many store visits based on their territory or region or if the field is being distracted by too many items not related to selling more goods and services.

"Westlake has helped us automate our entire field force which has now increased store visit compliance by well over 100%."

Bret Beveridge
Vice President of National Retail (former)
Nextel Corporation (now Sprint)

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These micro-statistics down to the rep level have also been formatted into a **national dashboard** for senior management. The dashboard is used as a quick and easy way to display historical improvements from region to region:



Home Dashboard Reports Red Flags Store Levels Marketing Forms Administration Notify Users Help

Year 2007 to 2007 Month December, 2007 to December, 2007 Retailer Type National Retail Retailer All

Get Results

Totals by Area									
Region	Area	Visits Required	Visits Completed	Visits Expected as of Today	Current Status (Completed / Expected)	Missing Demo Phones	Missing Dummy Phones	GPS Red Flags	Training Modules Serviced
Midwest		3267	1828 (56%)	2212	1828/2212 (82%)	246	216	65	2089
Midwest	Illinois-Wisconsin	930	278 (29%)	630	278/630 (44%)	38	14	20	343
Midwest	Michigan	431	191 (44%)	292	191/292 (65%)	10	6	0	485
Midwest	Ohio-Indiana-Kentucky	1118	759 (67%)	757	759/757 (100%)	102	88	23	539
Midwest	The Plains	788	600 (76%)	533	600/533 (112%)	95	102	22	712
Northeast		3098	1753 (56%)	2098	1753/2098 (83%)	292	196	51	3044
Northeast	DC Area	918	497 (54%)	622	497/622 (79%)	99	60	17	743
Northeast	New England	488	310 (63%)	330	310/330 (93%)	3	8	7	339
Northeast	NYC Area	846	514 (60%)	573	514/573 (89%)	142	118	6	1065
Northeast	PA-Upstate NY-South NJ	846	437 (51%)	573	437/573 (76%)	67	20	19	897
South		5017	2423 (48%)	3398	2423/3398 (71%)	656	394	74	3665
South	Carolina-Tennessee	914	576 (63%)	619	576/619 (93%)	116	77	18	771
South	Florida	988	762 (77%)	669	762/669 (113%)	83	108	11	1474
South	Southeast	637	431 (67%)	431	431/431 (100%)	83	75	24	1123
South	Texas-Oklahoma	2476	659 (26%)	1679	659/1679 (39%)	164	112	21	440
West		3374	1767 (52%)	2286	1767/2286 (77%)	266	176	27	2832
West	Desert Mountain	908	478 (52%)	615	478/615 (77%)	45	19	10	1232
West	North West	485	75 (15%)	329	75/329 (22%)	47	20	2	42
West	Northern California	650	488 (75%)	440	488/440 (110%)	167	83	7	554
West	Southern California	1334	726 (54%)	902	726/902 (80%)	77	38	6	704

This dashboard report totals compliance, red flag and training data compiled from store visits, broken out by region and area, for the date range, retailer and store level selected. Visits will only be marked as "missed" if the deadline has already expired, so if your date range only includes periods that have not yet expired, missed visits will show as zero. Color-coding is as follows:

Red Flags by Retailer		
Retailer	Missing Demo	Missing Dummy
Best Buy	296	165
Best Buy Mobile	0	0
BrightHouse Networks	0	11
Comcast	0	0
CompUSA	27	0
Costco	0	0
Cox Communications	0	0
Fred Meyer	0	0
Fry's Electronics	21	8
Home Depot	4	2
JV-Sprint Store	0	0
Micro Center	40	0
Nebraska Furniture Mart	0	0
Radio Shack	592	475
RS - KOI	53	34
RS - SCK	88	77
RS-Dealer	34	27
Sam's	3	0
Time Warner	1	8
Wal-Mart	294	116

Legend:
■ Fewer than 10 red flags
■ 10 to 19 red flags
■ 20 or more red flags

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The dashboard is also used to identify any ongoing problems or concerns in which senior management may have with a particular region. It has been correlated that retailers are experiencing more problems and challenges in areas in which reps are showing less compliance.

In addition to a set of core questions a rep is asked to complete at each visit (training, inventory, forecast, sales info, management met with, display assessment, etc.), the tool also supports **dynamic form generation**. This enables management at any level to add additional questions to the system and do so on-the-fly. For example, if Sprint were interested in the lowest price point of Verizon Wireless at every retail location nationally in where they compete together, this would likely be expensive data to aggregate with an outside firm; and probably changing to quickly to be of any real value to Sprint. Management can now simply ask the question, which will append to their core set of questions and gather this data using the exiting retail field force. Dynamic form generation includes the support for alphanumeric fields, numeric fields, drop down lists to select from, multiple choice, bar code support*, RFID support*, photo capture support*, signature capture support* and more (*proper equipment required).

In addition to a set of commonly used reports (store visits, IAE activity, compliance, marketing data & summary data):

Home Dashboard Reports Red Flags Store Levels Marketing Forms Admini

Store Visits IAE Activity Compliance Marketing Data Summary Data

Year 2007 to 2007 Month December, 2007 to December, 2007 Get Results S

Region Midwest Area Illinois-Wisconsin

The program enables management **dynamically create their own reports**. Reports can be directed to any **email** address as an **XLS** file to anyone in need of the reports. At Sprint, there are many

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dynamically created reports that have proven valuable enough for Radio Shack as a partner to take some interest. Reports have been configured daily to be automatically generated and sent to all the regional directors within the Radio Shack organization. Radio Shack has found so much value in this process, they have requested Sprint support their own unique store visit report when a rep visits their store. Dynamic reports are driven by retailer, region, market, etc. and can be set up for daily, weekly or monthly distribution based on any, all or combination of any item being reported on. For example, management can create a report to be sent to Best Buy in which displays all demo phones reported as missing for the Pacific North West and set this up to be sent weekly to any number of email addresses.

Step 3 - Frequency

Select Report Frequency

Daily: Send an email once a day with all the previous day's records.
 Weekly: Send an email once a week with all the previous week's records.
 Monthly: Send an email once a month with all the previous month's records.

(Data actually sent in each case is subject to filtering as defined in the "Filters" section.)

Time of Day to Send: Hour Minute

Time Zone for Form:

All reps are tracked to ensure they are where they are supposed to be when submitting a store visit using **Sprint GPS tracking** technology. When records are submitted, the GPS coordinates of their submission are sent along with the record and calculated against the known GPS location of the store (**geo-fencing**). If a rep is X miles away from a store when the record is submitted, their immediate management receives an email alert and is logged in the red flag section of the program (see red flags below).

Date/Time	Retailer	Store	AgentID	Monthly	Miles from Store	Submitted From	Type
12/03/2007 01:48 PM	Radio Shack	1886	0ARGA9BS	0.12	0.02	Handset	Merch
12/03/2007 01:46 PM	Wal-Mart	1959	0AALA01X	0.38	3.76	Handset	Merch
12/03/2007 01:45 PM	Radio Shack	9158	0ANG9SCS	0.23	1.52	Handset	Merch

To ensure each rep is managing the proper number of stores (not to few and not to many), direct rep management has control over all **store level visit frequency**. Sorted by either the type of retailer or down to the rep level, management can assign each store a monthly visit requirement from 1 to 8. Stores in a more rural area with low activity may only require a single visit each month; a high traffic store that has proven good for service conversions may warrant 8 in a month. By allowing management to control these settings, they can now balance each rep based on quota, customer's expectations and monthly volume over all.

Region Area Market

Rep Retailer

IAE	Retailer	Store	Monthly Requirement	Last Modified	Modified By	
Walker, Danielle	Best Buy	1165	3	Fri, Oct 5, 2007 04:06:25 PM	Jason (Jay) Weaver	<input type="button" value="Edit"/>
Walker, Danielle	Best Buy	1169	3	Fri, Oct 5, 2007 04:06:25 PM	Jason (Jay) Weaver	<input type="button" value="Edit"/>
Voight, Daniel	Best Buy	1170	1	Wed, May 30, 2007 11:06:32 AM	Nina Green	<input type="button" value="Edit"/>
Voight, Daniel	Micro Center	025	2	Fri, Oct 5, 2007 04:07:00 PM	Jason (Jay) Weaver	<input type="button" value="Edit"/>
Van Winkle, Shawn	Micro Center	151	2	Fri, Oct 5, 2007 04:07:31 PM	Jason (Jay) Weaver	<input type="button" value="Edit"/>
Dantzier, Cineura	Radio Shack	6846	1	Thu, Sep 27, 2007 09:58:28 AM	Nina Green	<input type="button" value="Edit"/>

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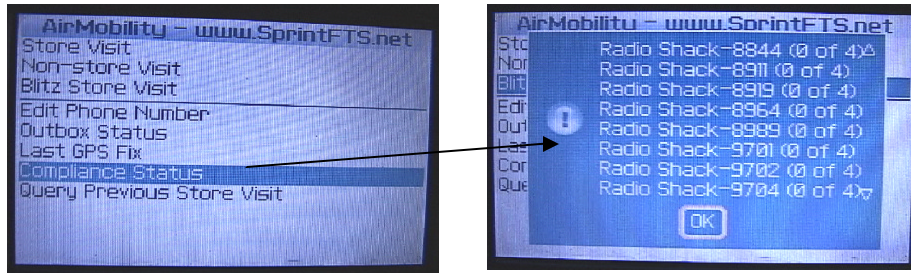


Red Flag Management (exception reporting) is a log of a wide variety of alerts in which the system can generate. This ranges from reps being out of compliance (both in store visits and in GPS range), missing demo or dummy phones, records in which a rep has escalated to their manager that may require immediate management assistance, etc.

fio Shack	6325	AVON, IN	Edwards, Susan	Missing demo phone(s)
fio Shack	6325	AVON, IN	Edwards, Susan	Missing dummy phone(s): (0)
fio Shack	6325	AVON, IN	Edwards, Susan	Not enough brochures, Flyers not displayed properly, Nextel book not available
fio Shack	1660	BINGHAMTON, NY	Cornell, Jason	Nextel book not available
fio Shack	6273	APPLETON, WI	Bernetzke, Dawn	Out of range: 32.34 miles from store.
fio Shack	4642	PIQUA, OH	Morris, Annette	Missing demo phone(s)
fio Shack	4642	PIQUA, OH	Morris, Annette	Missing dummy phone(s): (0)
fio Shack	4642	PIQUA, OH	Morris, Annette	Not enough brochures, Flyers not displayed properly, Nextel book not available
est Buy	1010	CLARKSVILLE, IN	Morris, Latanya	Flyers not displayed properly
est Buy	115	Murrieta, CA	Badouin, Brandt	Alert from Badouin, Brandt

Alerts are logged as well as escalated to all appropriate management and departments based on the condition of the alert. For example, missing demo or dummy phones are escalated to the personnel internally that would manage the replacement of these items.

Although there is a wide variety of client (Blackberry) functions available to the rep, one of the most valuable is **querying their compliance status**. A rep can click one button on their hand held and query the server for a quick report of their monthly progress. This function has served to help many reps stay on track and to ensure they will be compliant month in and month out.



At times reps do not have their wireless devices with them or they are in transition between two devices. All reps can log in online and submit their store visits entirely at www.sprintfts.net. This is an alternative to using the core J2ME application. In addition, if the rep is experiencing any trouble in loading the program or the device is struggling to support any or all J2ME programs, the user can temporarily use the Blackberry browser and point their unit at the server. The server auto-detects that this is a Blackberry attempting to connect and reformats the interface to support the proper dimensions of the Blackberry browser for better support and user experience.

To further the value of the **store and forward model**, the client side supports a virtual outbox. When reps submit records, they are not directly submitting records to the server but rather to the **“outbox”** on the hand held unit that manages the connection in the background. If the server is down, if the rep is out of coverage or if Sprint is having any trouble in that area with their wireless service, these troubles are seamless to the rep. Once the trouble spot has been resolved, the application in the background automatically re-establishes the connection and submits the records at that time. The record continues to store the GPS location and the date and time of the original submission. The effect of this outbox design is increased work flow for all reps.

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How Westlake has implemented support and **customer service** for Sprint is one of the top benefits of any feature mentioned. Deploying a wireless solution to any widely distributed field force has its challenges. Vendors will often find customers who have not provided training on the wireless devices and no central way to do so, varying degrees of technical capability on how to use the wireless device and technology as a whole and distributed management with varying support as to usage and compliance with a new solution. All were present within Sprint.

Although Sprint is a wireless carrier, they have the same challenges internally as any organization would in deploying technology nationally; even it being a wireless solution. Westlake's counter to this was to create an extensive **online help program** for all reps and management to use (including support documentation for the wireless devices), make the set up as easy as possible, both in the initial deployment and deployments of ongoing updates and upgrades. All set up processes are step-by-step using walk through wizard type interfaces. Support is provided by online form, e-mail and telephone 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Escalation directly to senior Westlake management is available and on demand at any time.

RESULTS

Upon initial implementation, the solution displayed thousands of problems and concerns down to the rep level, retail level and door level nationally. Reps who were either not doing their job properly or had little to no guidance of what was expected of them were either able to quickly turn a corner for the better or were let go. The solution also exposed management problems by regions in which also assisted senior management to make some strategic changes to this area of the organization as well.

Management can now accurately predict sales by forecasts, respond to store level management faster when there are issues, depending on the technology to keep track of compliance issues automatically, and access thousands of pieces of information on a real-time bases. Customer satisfaction in some cases is at an all time high (Radio Shack for example in receiving daily custom reports), in other cases management has a more clear road map of what needs to be done to improve an ever growing and challenging landscape in wireless retail services.

CONCLUSION

Westlake now stores over 10 Million pieces of current and historical retail information for Sprint that is accessible in real-time. Close to 1 Million visits in three years have been logged. The solution is now being used by other affiliate partners of Sprint to help them manage their own retail efforts. Sprint Nextel had an instant return on investment with the deployment and continues to receive exponential returns.

This case study has lead Sprint and Westlake to close other high profile users in adopting this solution as a similar approach on how to help manage, track, analyze and support a widely distributed field force deployment using the latest wireless technology available today.

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If you are seeking a wireless field force automation solution and are in need of a fresh independent view from consultants with a long proven track record of success, contact Westlake today. We assess each new project based on the final goal of your core requirements and work backwards to help determine the most effective wireless automation solution possible with today's technology.

Westlake Software, Inc. is lead by Alan Gould (President and CEO) who is considered an early pioneer in wireless data systems. Mr. Gould founded Silverlake Communications, Inc., which in the mid 1990's grew to become the largest wireless software firm worldwide with over 500,000 users in over 36 countries. Silverlake was acquired in 1998 by a Billion dollar publicly traded wireless carrier. Since that time, Mr. Gould has been a guest on CNN Financial News, written for Mission Critical Magazine, has participated in over 2500 wireless field force automation projects and runs the longest running wireless return on investment training seminar to date with over 30,000 in attendance.

Westlake Software, Inc. is a world leader in advanced wireless field force automation solutions. The company specializes in adapting high-end wireless data solutions into our customer's existing processes, tools and platforms which help them manage, measure and improve their productivity, decrease costs and grow their business faster.