

GAP Survey Equipment Hire Delivers with BigChange Mobile Tech



Surveying equipment hire company GAP Survey & Safety has deployed a cloud-based mobile workforce management from BigChange. The system has boosted the efficiency of GAP's operations by equipping field operatives with rugged tablets running a mobile app called JobWatch, which includes GPS black box vehicle tracking as part of the system.

GAP hires out specialist equipment to surveyors and civil engineers and stocks the latest total stations, GPS satellite network rovers, lasers and other precision instrumentation. [GAP Survey & Safety](#) is part of GAP Hire Solutions, the UK's largest independent equipment hire company. The survey division is growing rapidly and operates from 15 locations across the UK, employing 60 people.

The 5 in 1 [BigChange](#) solution allows completely paperless working, connecting to the GAP hiredesk in real-time to provide management and customer services with 24/7 visibility on deliveries and collections of equipment.

Evolving technology

The specialist equipment is not only expensive, but it is also being continually enhanced as the technology evolves. As a result, the hiring of equipment is increasingly popular, especially amongst civil engineers involved in set up at construction and infrastructure sites.

"We invest in the very latest surveying equipment, including costly instrumentation which is often supplied with a box full of accessories," says Jim Burke, GAP's survey & safety division manager. "In the past, we didn't have a way to provide proof when making a claim for damage or any missing accessories."

GAP uses BigChange to manage the whole operation with all hired equipment being accurately logged and tracked from the initial order, through the depot and workshop, to delivery and collection. The tablets are used to photograph equipment prior to despatch, on delivery and when collected with GPS location and time recorded automatically with each image. For added security, drivers can also photograph at handover so there is a record of the person taking delivery.

Damaged or incomplete

"BigChange has changed everything by providing indisputable evidence when equipment and accessories are returned damaged or incomplete. It's put an end to the challenging conversations we used to have - the digitally held records remove any doubts. Customers are much happier now we can show them tangible evidence for the first time. BigChange has eliminated what used to be a major management headache," Burke explains.

The 5 in 1 JobWatch app links to BigChange vehicle telematics fitted to GAP Survey's fleet of vans. Company cars are also fitted with the trackers so anyone can collect or deliver equipment, knowing that the system automatically records their activity. Drivers use their tablets in place of traditional hire paperwork with improved time and location stamped records plus additional photographs when required. The devices are also used for daily vehicle safety checks.

Operational efficiency

Apart from the paperless delivery and collection management application, BigChange is having a big impact on operational efficiency. All jobs are scheduled, routed and tracked using BigChange and this is improving resource utilisation and reducing unnecessary mileage. Hire controllers also have continual, real-time visibility of the fleet, allowing deliveries and collections to be managed better and dynamically - optimising resource utilisation and allowing a more responsive service.

"BigChange gives us the ultimate controllability over our operations," comments Burke. "The real impact of the system has yet to really be felt as it's relatively early on, but already it has boosted efficiency and is underpinning rapid year-on-year business growth. And the more accurate hire records have also certainly improved profitability and cash flow."

"GAP's mission as a company is encapsulated in what we call the GAP CODE; Communication, One Team, Dedication and Efficiency. BigChange is all that, so it fits in perfectly with the philosophy and aims of the business," Burke adds.

