

The problems the City of Columbus faced were fairly typical. But even typical inefficiencies magnify when multiplied, and Columbus is the country's 15th largest city. The information various departments needed was scattered all over the place, in multiple Access and Excel databases. Getting meaningful information into and out of various systems was a challenge. City officials knew they needed an intuitive, effective asset management software system.

Department of Public Service GIS Manager Rick Garrabrant wanted to find the right partner. Here's what he has to say:



City of Columbus, Ohio

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Relying on multiple databases was a huge time-waster for our staff. The same section of roadway might have data in four or five different places. Misspellings complicated it. Nothing was connected to GIS.

It took a ton of time and labor to find good information. Nothing was automated; everything needed a visual scan. But that information is important to our Mayor and our managers, so it's important to everybody.

We did an in-house study to understand what we wanted a work order and asset management system to do. We needed GIS integration. We wanted mobility. Our Department of Technology identified other departments that needed similar usability. So we reassessed and went out in search of software. Lucy was our first choice by a wide margin.

Everything we needed for GIS was there. The mobile product was very strong. The Lucy people were knowledgeable about our needs. It wasn't, "We can probably get that worked out." It was, "Yes, we can do it. We've done it and here's how."

Some other software systems start out empty. But Lucy has a framework in place, so you feel like you have a head start. They have modules for everything we need. We appreciate the preconfiguration, but we also appreciate the creativity and flexibility Lucy brings to the table when we need something more customized. Our implementer Ryan really listens to us and is intuitive enough to pick up on our specific challenges.

Now, all work orders relating to a segment of roadway are forever associated with a unique identifier. We can manage our crews much easier, and we have a readily accessible history of the work. And we're bringing all these capabilities to mobile too.

"Lucy picks up nuances, really listens. They are creative problem solvers, always giving us several options and solutions. The culture is such that it's not just okay to find different, innovative uses for the software, it's encouraged."

-Rick

We've already seen so many efficiencies. We have a lot of folks who aren't computer savvy and, frankly, are not very welcoming of new things. But we are already hearing that they like Lucy and see the benefits. That's unexpected and a great sign.

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Other departments within the City of Columbus are using Lucy to create a more efficient workday. Facilities was the first to come online. Their staff is already nimble, and they're finding out how adaptable and nimble the software is.

Parks and Recreation focused on mobile, allowing the team to capture GIS-integrated work order and tree data in the field. Before, staff would record information on paper and input data back in the office. The new, streamlined process offers huge time savings, allowing a greater focus on analyzing data and finding efficiencies.