

IGNITING INNOVATION

How Iplex Optimizes with Appian to Support the Australian Water Industry

Introduction

The water industry in Australia is as complex as it is integral and few know it as well as Iplex. Since 1938, Iplex has been the leading provider of Australian water industry services, expertise, and innovation and today, as part of the Fletcher group of industrial businesses, its innovative solutions support local water authorities, rural and urban agriculture, and infrastructure projects across the country.

Iplex has always been on the lookout for new technologies that can enhance their services, reduce expenses, and provide superior customer experiences. But the old, familiar ways of doing some things—such as delivery planning, routing, and scheduling—can retain a powerful grip and cost the competitive edge.

Iplex wanted to evolve the way its fleet of vehicles serves customers, be faster, more agile and cost effective, and give employees the time they need to focus less on routine and more on innovation.

That's where Appian comes in.

The Challenge

Iplex is a multi-faceted company that specializes in providing governments, businesses, and individuals water-related goods—such as piping, treatment materials, reclamation technologies, and more—as well as water-related solutions—such as storm drainage, commercial plumbing, sewage management, and more. In addition, they provide pipe and packaging recycling services designed to help businesses meet environmental sustainability goals and produce new pipes and materials for their operation.

To facilitate this work, Iplex employs a fleet of nearly 100 heavy duty vehicles for deliveries, maintenance, and installations. These vehicles are constantly on the move and travel to many different locations throughout the country in any given week, often to work sites without a fixed address. Throughout the year, they make an estimated 5,500 deliveries of pipeline per month.

The team responsible for managing these activities long did so with traditional methods; planning schedules and tracking equipment and personnel by hand on paper and whiteboards. Over years, they had accumulated specific and personal knowledge of customer preferences, site

characteristics, route details, and more that had not always been recorded for the team's collective benefit.

But as its business continued to grow, Iplex was running into obstacles. Daily planning, scheduling, and routing tasks were becoming increasingly complex, introducing operational inefficiencies, and wasting valuable time. And as team members left or accounts changed hands, knowledge was lost that would have otherwise helped the business. Further, because their data and activities were so centralized with only certain individuals capable of authorizing decisions, it was difficult to be flexible and respond quickly to new, urgent opportunities.

Still, experienced team members were hesitant to move away from existing processes and run the risk of disrupting operations for a new, unfamiliar system and software. The problem was thus: How could Iplex find and on-board a software solution flexible enough for their specific needs, streamlined enough to enhance their operation without interrupting it, and advantageous enough to convince skeptical employees?



The Solution

Iplex knew there had to be a better way to manage their business's transportation work and they found a solution in Appian from Trimble Maps.

Appian is a comprehensive suite of highly configurable, end-to-end delivery and logistics tools designed to facilitate optimal fleet performance. It's built on an always-evolving routing algorithm that systematizes assets, customer information, operational data, and more, and then quickly calculates optimal schedules, routes, and asset utilization based on priorities and preferences.



Strategic Planning & Analyst Tools



Real-time Tracking & Visibility



Optimized Daily Routing



Delivery Time Window Optimization

Through a rigorous, collaborative onboarding process between the Trimble Maps and Iplex teams, the organization's customer data, operational data, and workflows were streamlined, checked for errors, and optimized for the Appian environment. With the transition the daily planning activities were moved off of whiteboards and into digital workspaces, providing fast and accurate route planning across multiple sites. The information is shared to their transport management solution (TMS).

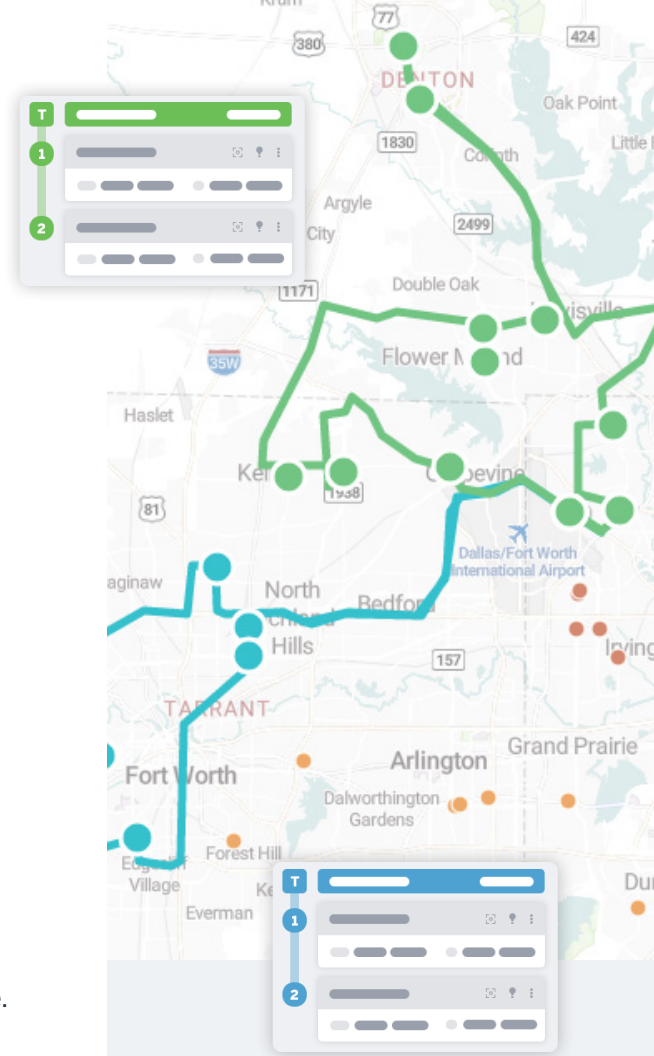
Vehicles, equipment, and drivers were organized in a flexible schedule that enabled the team to shift work as changes demanded. Up-to-date commercial maps made it easy to confidently plan routes with the most current data available. Key stakeholders were given the tools to delegate responsibilities and the Trimble Maps team created a comprehensive training program for Iplex staff. Trimble Maps staff were on hand to tweak settings and adjust the solution as needed to best fit the organization's needs or overcome challenges as they arose.

The Results

Implementing Appian helped Iplex streamline and optimize their multi-stop planning and dispatch in a way they never had before and they achieved numerous benefits as a result:

- **Reduced Costs** – By better optimizing their delivery schedules and routes, Iplex was able to reduce the number of vehicles they have on the road, make better use of their fleet, and increase revenue.
- **Improved Customer Service** – In addition to more consistent delivery in full and on time (DIFOT), Iplex can provide more accurate and reliable ETAs, and easily incorporate unexpected orders and emergency calls into their routes that would have traditionally disrupted operations.
- **Reclaimed Time** – Planning and scheduling vehicles' activities—work that would have traditionally taken several hours per day—takes only a few minutes with Appian, enabling team members to focus more on more productive work. Creating a schedule for the week is no longer a multi-day endeavor.
- **Reliable Partnership** – Instead of facing the challenges of their industry alone, Iplex now has a partner in Trimble Maps who will support their operation and suggest improvements wherever possible.

Efficiency is key to customer satisfaction. With Appian, Iplex has optimized their operation and achieved new growth, all while keeping their customers happy and helping team members make the most of their time. We're certain Appian's planning, scheduling, and multi-vehicle route optimization capabilities can do the same for your business.



“Instead of going on the route board and making choices, our planners now look at the map, avoid strange or inconsistent routes, and move the route according to their knowledge. It's brought speed and functionality to the fore, so we've evolved to where we should be.”

– Ronnie Smolinski, Logistics System Manager for Iplex

To discuss your business and schedule an obligation-free demonstration, get in touch with our solution specialists: info.maps.trimble.com/appianrouting