



## CASE STUDY

# DYNAMIC FIELD SCHEDULING SYSTEM FOR TARGETED PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT WITH FLS VISITOUR



**Velco has been involved in fire protection and in-house hazard prevention for over 50 years. Velco's service department maintains extinguishers, fire hose reels, and dry extinguishing lines. In addition to servicing extinguishers, Velco also services and provides training for emergency and escape route lighting, first aid kits, and automated external defibrillators (AED). Velco is based in the Netherlands and employs around 20 field service employees who can serve 10,000 customers.**

Velco's goal is to assist companies with disaster preparedness. With a nationwide technical field service, professional advisors, and experienced trainers, all field assignments are handled through a single scheduling team. 3 years ago Velco chose a dynamic scheduling system for appointment planning and routes for field resources.

### THE NEED TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY ACROSS THE ENTIRE FIELD SERVICE AND FIELD MAINTENANCE OFFER

The reasons that lead to this decision were numerous. Unnecessary kilometres were driven, wasting time and money; and there was simply too many human-powered calculations to realise any efficiency. Increasingly apparent was the also importance in safeguarding the knowledge required to schedule 'skills per assignment' (the technicians' skills and other restrictions in order not to be left open to the risks of staff turnover). Every field resource had their own region, which meant that the division of labour was not proportional and employees could not help each other. Management knew of the missed growth opportunities, and turned to real-time optimisation.

This decision brought Velco to trial FLS VISITOUR as their problem-solving dynamic scheduling system.



**VELCO**  
BRANDVEILIGHEID

**Industry:** Fire Protection

**FLS Solutions:** FLS VISITOUR

#### Requirements:

- Reduction of manual scheduling effort
- Reduction of travel time
- Improved work load across field resources
- Management information

#### Benefits:

- Continuous optimisation
- Planning data available for periodic inspections
- Intelligent acceptance of completed work orders
- Smart scheduling wizard

#### Outcomes:

- More efficient processes & improved customer service
- Improvement in meeting SLAs
- Reduction in kilometres driven
- Better strategic business planning
- No empty appointment windows in daily planning
- Improvement in cost calculation

**Meet the organisation:** [www.velco.nl](http://www.velco.nl)

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By switching to the FLS VISITOUR real-time platform, a lot has changed in the working practices of scheduling team, and the mechanics out in the field. The department used to consist of 2.5 FTEs and now consists of 1.5 FTEs spread amongst 6 part-timers. All in all, there is now a broader industry knowledge amongst all employees.

Even with fewer FTEs, we do have scheduling under much better control. Everyone is at the same level of industry knowledge, which is a huge cultural improvement for Velco.  
**Robbert Veltkamp, Managing Director of Velco**

Veltkamp continues: "For the mechanics in the field, there is now more opportunity to quickly respond to emergencies and they can serve more customers per week. That is a nice additional benefit. It happened almost every week that a technician arrived at someone's door and the customer was not there. Now, thanks to FLS VISITOUR, we can control this".

### REAL-TIME CUSTOMER BENEFITS

In terms of customer relations, there are also many benefits. Technicians no longer have the same customers, some customer relationships have been retained, but for the rest the concept of 'regular technician' has been abandoned. According to Veltkamp, this optimisation has brought many benefits. "More engineers now have a better idea of what is going on with the customer and the customer is not dependent on their regular field resource. In some cases, we have the option to spend longer at the customer site.

### SAVINGS—AND A CULTURE OF IMPROVEMENT

"There has been a lot of kilometres and time saved in recent years, but not to the extent Velco had hoped," says Robbert Veltkamp, "this is because we are attending more works".

The most important advantage Velco has gained is the timely maintenance at the customer site. "This is very important for us. FLS VISITOUR is unrelenting in this. I now dare to put a dial on our website to show how often we are on time and how often we are not".

Secondly, achieving SLAs (Service Level Agreement) for timely inspections is critical. FLS VISITOUR works in the background to achieve this better than ever before. Robbert Veltkamp; "A few years ago it was super efficient if a customer was on the route. We have 10,000 customers and we want to do well with everyone. This was not very clear and it meant that you faced a lot of expense if the customer was not on a planned route. We did not see this 'pain' before using FLS VISITOUR".

"We can make management decisions to agree with such customers that they will look for a local party to maintain their equipment. This means a better insight into our costs, and therefore a profit for Velco. FLS VISITOUR has taught us to ask ourselves the question: what does it profit us to keep certain customers. It sounds crazy, but if it is not good for both parties it is better to end the customer relationship. The time we gain back can be used to serve other customers. So we can conclude that SLAs are very important".

"We can still make periodic inspection appointments by telephone. And according to our wishes, we have increased the appointment window. Customers receive an e-mail about a week in advance with an appointment reminder to which they can respond, so that flexible planning is still possible".

"We now indicate to the customer that we will, for example, drop by between 8:00 and 12:00 for an inspection. Previously, we gave a fixed time. This wider time window now allows us to be more flexible and plan optimally. Behavioural change and guidance is very important. You want to maintain customer satisfaction as well as optimal planning".

"Our field operatives may now indicate when there is a problem, with a route for example. This is then discussed and solved internally without any lingering negativity. After all, it is important to maintain a good support base. There is now less overtime, and field staff can go home earlier with this tracked in the system. A win-win situation".

### MANAGEMENT INFORMATION FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

FLS VISITOUR provides true reporting data and insights. "Velco has achieved an important objective; we can answer whether a new resource should be employed. This was not visible before FLS VISITOUR. When a new order/customer comes in, its effect on future planning can be simulated in".



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