



## Armstrong Repair Center, Inc.

Armstrong Repair Center, Inc. services commercial cooking equipment and is a certified parts distributor for more than 120 equipment manufacturers. The nearly 40-year-old firm employs 53 people with offices in Houston and Austin, Texas.

### OBJECTIVE

Armstrong needed to raise repair efficiency, streamline office operations and increase customer satisfaction. The firm realized it needed a communications system for real-time information exchange to achieve these goals.

Field service accounts for a large percentage of Armstrong's revenue. Because the company's service area covers most of Southeast and Central Texas, it was difficult for field technicians to get back to their shops on a daily basis.

For years, Armstrong relied on dispatchers to send out pages to the technicians with a service location and a terse job description. Technicians would do the work, handwrite the invoices and then get their next assignment. The paper invoices often stayed in the trucks for up to two weeks, so Armstrong couldn't initiate warranties or start the collections effort in a timely manner. Office employees had to verify and retype the invoice information into the accounting and warranty systems, making the work repetitive and more prone to errors.

Armstrong saw the potential efficiencies of arming its technicians with real-time, two-way communications that could tie directly into its office business systems. It also knew it could increase its "first-time fix rate" by providing technicians with customer histories, diagrams, service manuals and tips. A robust wireless data solution was needed.

### SOLUTION DESCRIPTION

In late 2005, Verizon Wireless referred Armstrong to Zumasys, a professional services firm. Off-the-shelf options did not fit Armstrong's business model, so Zumasys brought in Sierra Bravo to program a custom system to interface with Armstrong's existing database.

By April 2006, the wireless initiative was ready to be tested with three service technicians. Each tech was equipped with an HP Compaq nx7400 laptop with a Kyocera KPC650 EV-DO card running on the Verizon Wireless BroadbandAccess network. "Our business is so mobile that things like Bluetooth and Wi-Fi were just too limiting," noted CFO, Brad Miller, CFO of Armstrong Repair Center, Inc. "We needed the best coverage we could get, which was 3G wireless."



**ARMSTRONG REPAIR CENTER, INC.**

[www.armstrongrepair.com](http://www.armstrongrepair.com)

### COMPANY

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### OBJECTIVE

- Raise repair efficiency, streamline office operations and increase customer satisfaction through real-time communications

### SOLUTION

- Verizon Wireless BroadbandAccess (EV-DO)
- Zumasys professional services
- Sierra Bravo custom programming
- HP Compaq nx7400 laptops
- Kyocera KPC650 EV-DO cards

### RESULTS

- Freed office staff from re-entering data which allowed them to take on other tasks
- Expedited revenue collection
- Improved first-time repair success
- Enhanced overall technician morale
- Eliminated a key barrier to growth by allowing expansion into more distant markets that field-to-office travel time previously made infeasible

Once the system's functionality was confirmed, it was rolled out to more than 20 field technicians in early 2007. Now, Armstrong enjoys real-time data exchange between the office and the field. Trucks are equipped with printers to output invoices, wiring schematics and other manufacturer information. When an appointment is booked in the office, information is keyed in once and transmitted to the field laptop. The technician records what action he or she has taken and a completed invoice is sent back to the main office.

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*Brad Miller, CFO, Armstrong Repair Center, Inc.*

Technicians have easier access to inventory data now too. "The technician can view all the parts available on his or her truck, as well as those in the company warehouses in Houston and Austin, plus all of the other trucks," Miller explains. "So we can better utilize stock on hand, optimize ordering and move parts around to job sites."

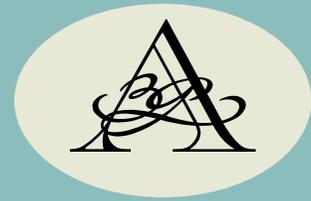
The company is currently preparing to deploy Palm® Treo™ 700WX smartphones for electronic signature capture, and potentially to function as the 3G wireless tether or modem for the laptops.

## RESULTS

Armstrong now inputs information just once, which has freed office staff to handle other priorities and at the same time has expedited the revenue stream. "It used to take up to two weeks from the date of service until the invoice was in the system and part of the collections process," says Miller. "Now we have that information in real time."

The solution also improved Armstrong's first-time repair success and reduced technicians' travel time. "Making the technicians come back was a waste of time and money. Plus it affected their morale," Miller acknowledged. "Technicians don't want to be processing paperwork. They like to fix things. This system helps them do what they do best and complete more jobs."

The 3G implementation also eliminated a key barrier to growth. According to Miller, "expanding our coverage area meant that technicians would have to drive further to and from the main office. Now we can hire a tech, give him a laptop and he can be up and running in another market in no time."



## 3G A-List Awards



ARMSTRONG REPAIR CENTER, INC.

**Armstrong Repair Center, Inc. is a 2007 winner of the 3G A-List Award in the Service/Hospitality category.**

The 3G A-List Awards recognize the leading builders of successful wireless data solutions based on 3G CDMA (CDMA2000 1X, EV-DO, and UMTS/HSPA) technology. **To learn more about the A-List, please visit [www.3galist.com](http://www.3galist.com)**

## SUPPORTING PARTNERS

The A-List also recognizes supporting partners for their enabling role in assisting with these wireless data deployments.

