

Cleaning up with new digital solutions

Steve Cheam, CEO of Campaign Complete Solutions, together with Aaron Lee, CEO, Gabkotech Innovations, discuss how new technologies have brought a breath of fresh air into the cleaning and facilities management sector.

Cleaning up operations with new digital solutions

Established in 1986 as Campaign Cleaning Services, Campaign Complete Solutions aims to deliver professional cleaning and facilities services solutions to its clients. To this end, they strive to keep abreast of new technology trends and methods in cleaning and facilities services for total customer satisfaction.

As part of their efforts, they worked with Gabkotech Innovations, a provider of smart solutions for the building and facilities management sector. The results have been encouraging: they have overcome the obstacles to digitalisation common to SMEs like themselves, have been able to provide services more effectively, and have stayed resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Looking back at a manual age

Campaign CEO Steven Cheam shared that prior to their digitalisation efforts, many of their operations and workflow were both labour- and time-intensive. “Work attendance and task assignments

were carried out and recorded manually,” he said.

“Cleaning and maintenance activities were conducted routinely and recorded via physical record cards placed at checkpoint locations. Hard copy report cards or books were used to record working hours and track routine checks.”

These led to problems with productivity, efficiency, and accuracy. Cheam recalled that performing tasks manually raised the potential for inaccuracies due to human errors. “Our overall business cost also went up due to the rising labour cost in Singapore,” he shared.

These issues are not only faced by Campaign alone. Aaron Lee, CEO, Gabkotech Innovations has also witnessed first-hand how labour-intensive the daily workflow can be in the building and facility management sector. This motivated him to found Gabkotech in order to harness “the boundless capabilities of mobile technology, to help our customers automate their processes and workflows for improved productivity and efficiencies, and a lower total cost of ownership.”

However, for Campaign to make the digital leap – especially as an SME – was not without its hurdles. According to

Lee, although Singapore is considered a mature and advanced market for digital transformation among large enterprises, “the adoption of smart digital solutions among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) here has been slow despite the fact that they have plans to do so.

“The lack of internal digital knowledge and champions, perceived high cost, low awareness of incentive and support schemes provided by the government which they could tap, and the COVID-19 outbreak, were some of the factors hindering their digitalisation plans,” he explained.

This was certainly the case with Campaign. As Cheam shared, the primary challenge they faced was a lack of employees skilled in digital or automation to lead the transformation effort. “Many of our employees were unfamiliar with or had no prior experience in working with infocomm technology,” he said.

Cleaning up processes to go digital

Campaign went paperless with the rollout of Gabkotech’s iREP Workforce system. This has helped them eliminate redundancy, streamlined their workflow, and has also allowed them to be alerted immediately when unforeseen circumstances arise at the customers site. This way, said Cheam, “corrective actions can be organised and performed immediately. The system helps fill in the gaps of our manual operations and enables us to cover for any lapses in between routine cleaning.”

Beyond allowing them to provide their services more effectively while enjoying efficient and streamlined workflows at lower cost, digitalisation has also played an essential role in empowering Campaign to operate

safely during the pandemic. “The iREP Workforce system implemented has allowed for work to continue without any unnecessary physical contact,” shared Cheam. “Monitoring of work attendance and completion could also be carried out from a distance.

“The system was especially crucial in minimising physical interaction and contact among employees and users during the pandemic. Human traffic and cleanliness could be monitored remotely which means our staff only needed to perform adequate cleaning when it is necessary,” he added.

With these results, the company has plans to digitalise the maintenance portion of their business, as well as their client feedback system. “Currently, feedback is gathered either through the managers or through our hotline and email. While it is effective, it may not be efficient in the long term,” said Cheam.

Effective collaborations moving forward

Instrumental in the successful transformation of the business was Gabkotech’s keen interest in their client’s needs. Cheam shared his appreciation working with them, as an SME with “limited resources and digital knowledge”. Moving forward, Cheam stated that Campaign will continue to explore and uncover whichever other aspects of their business can benefit from digitalisation, so that they can “stay relevant and thrive in the digital economy going forward.”

Lee sees the Internet of Things (IoT) and 5G as the basis of digital solutions that can help companies achieve much more with less resources and cost. “The automation of processes and workflows, which otherwise have to be done



manually, can help provide companies significant savings in cost and man-hours, and free up their time for more strategic tasks,” he shared.

“These advantages are especially vital in the new normal where social distancing, virtual meetings, and other forms of safety measure would be introduced to the workplace. Without these innovations in place, organisations will find it a daunting challenge to improve overall productivity and stay afloat in the long term.”

IoT, as a technology enabler for smart cities and nations, is a particularly fertile field. Lee shared his predictions that “in the near future, IoT sensors and management systems will be deployed heavily for transportation, public health premises and facilities, waste management, and water treatment.

“It’s going to be a very exciting space to watch.” ■

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