

A Pacific Northwest Painting Co. Lowers Payroll Costs and Delivers Great Customer Service with VeriClock

- savings of over \$7,000 per year
- more time for customers

Background

Travis Kunkel is the owner of **Northwest Residential and Commercial Painting Co.** (NWRCP) of Seattle. Over the past 15

years, he's built a solid reputation in the residential and light commercial repainting industry.

The company's focus has always been customer satisfaction, and so they prefer to deal directly with end customers, never through contractors.

NWRCP is busy year-round, employing 6 full-time painters and often doubling that number during the peak summer months. An additional person helps out with administration and bookkeeping.

Travis estimates that 55-60% of his operating costs are spent on labor, so managing it well is critical to the success of his business.



The Problem

In the past, NWRCP used paper timekeeping to manage their weekly payroll periods. Travis spent most of his Fridays driving around collecting time cards and distributing paychecks. It was often the only time he'd see some of his employees during the week. In Travis' words:

"It was terrible. I would ask guys for their weekly time cards and stand there watching them fill them out in front of me. Of course I trust my employees, but I couldn't help thinking there had to be a better way."



Travis Kunkel (left) with some of his team

This highlighted two problems common to most small business owners trying to manage hourly, mobile workers: 1) having to put all your trust in your employees' time reporting; and 2) spending valuable time managing mundane payroll tasks – time which could be spent on growing the business.

"I easily spent 6-8 hrs. each week on payroll ... time I should have been spending meeting customers and preparing bids"

The VeriClock Solution

Travis knew there had to be some type of affordable technological solution available to solve his payroll problems.

In 2011, he began looking into electronic fobs and on-site time clocks, but was put-off by their complexity and cost. He also knew they wouldn't be a good fit for a business where workers often change job sites on a daily basis. He soon discovered web-based timekeeping – and VeriClock.

"When I found VeriClock, I was impressed by its simplicity. I also liked the pay-only-for-what-you-use pricing, which was important since my workforce can fluctuate a lot during the year."

Another factor in his decision was that his employees could use their own phones, so there was zero investment in hardware or software.

"I don't know what type of phones my workers use, and I don't really care. We've never had a problem with their phones not working."

According to Travis, implementing VeriClock at NWRCP was quite easy. The Time Guard feature helped at first – automatically notifying him when someone had forgotten to clock in or out. He also found it was easy to find and correct any mistakes that were made.

Results

After installing VeriClock, Travis' first discovery was that his previous 6-8 hrs. spent each week on payroll was now taking less than an hour.

"My time is valuable, and anything that isn't about servicing my customers is a bad use of that time. When I see one of my guys now, we spend time talking about the work, not trying to remember where he was on Tuesday."

The second discovery was realizing what paper timekeeping was doing to his bottom line. By Travis' calculations, simple rounding errors of 15-20 minutes per shift were costing the business about \$150 per week, or more than \$7,000 per year.

"For a small business, that's money I couldn't afford to be losing — and on such a simple thing."



Travis takes pride in his team of painters and trusts them to do a great job. On one occasion, however, VeriClock alerted him to problems with a new hire.

"I was getting Automatic Email Notifications of a new employee's clock in times, but I knew from other workers that he wasn't actually on site. It was pure and simple time card fraud, and a situation I might never have caught if it hadn't been for VeriClock."

The other feature Travis really likes is Custom Job Codes to track time and materials costs on change orders. It lets him show customers, down-to-the-minute, how changes have affected the original estimate.

"The more transparent I can be with a customer, the more trust we gain, and that just helps build our reputation and our business."



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