

inVentiv Commercial

HP iPAQ Pocket PCs enable medical field sales staff to track, report on physician visits



"The HP iPAQ Pocket PC is the best match for our needs. It gives our field sales staff a durable, compact tool with all the functionality they need."
Vincent Fernicola, Senior Director of Field Sales Technology,
inVentiv Commercial

HP customer case study: inVentiv Commercial equips field sales staff with iPAQ Pocket PCs to make the most of one-on-one physician meetings

Industry:
Pharmaceutical/
medical

Objective:

Provide pharmaceutical field sales staff with a compact data tool for physician office visits.

Approach:

inVentiv Commercial has standardized its field sales staff on iPAQ Pocket PCs.

IT improvements:

- Ability to gather electronic signatures eliminates need for paper forms.
- Representatives sync their iPAQ to the inVentiv Commercial database using a standard Internet connection (typically a wireless network).¹

Business benefits:

- Small form factor doesn't get in the way of interactive conversations.
- Representatives can quickly update physician profiles using simple touch-screen interface.
- Durable design stands up to most day-to-day field use.

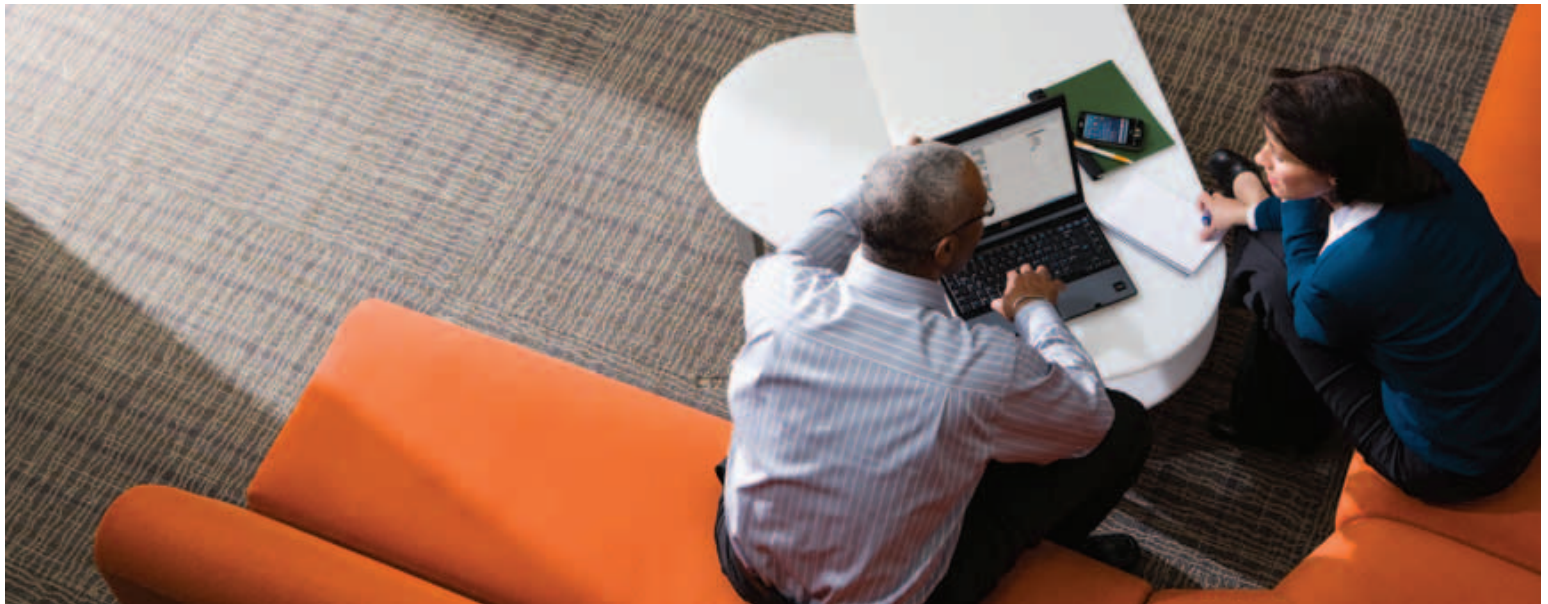


When a pharmaceutical sales representative visits a physician's office, he or she needs an electronic tool for tracking the visit, jotting a few notes, and often collecting a signature (when a sample is left behind).

"Smaller is almost always better. Our representatives are in the office to make contact with the physician. We want them to have a one-on-one, interactive experience. We want them to maintain eye contact," explains Vincent Fernicola, Senior Director of Field Sales Technology for inVentiv Commercial. "The HP iPAQ Pocket PC is the best match for our needs. It gives our field sales staff a durable, compact tool with all the functionality they need."

Best technology for field sales

inVentiv Commercial, a division of inVentiv Health Inc., provides services that pharmaceutical and biotech businesses need — from strategic planning and data analytics, to developing sales programs and materials, and perhaps most importantly, recruiting, equipping, training, and deploying outsourced sales forces to meet with physicians and other medical professionals.



A typical sales representative visits physicians, educates them on the benefits of a new product, leaves samples, and conducts follow-up visits on a regular basis.

"HP has helped to keep our field staff well equipped and productive. It's a relationship that works well for both of us, and we trust it will continue to for years to come."

Vincent Fericola, Senior Director of Field Sales Technology, inVentiv Commercial

Today, the company supports 36 sales teams deployed throughout the country — about 3,200 sales representatives in all. They all use HP iPAQ Pocket PCs to track their visits and upload reports to the appropriate team's database at inVentiv Commercial headquarters.

"Imagine a sales representative visiting 10 physicians a day, collecting signatures on paper, and sending in those signatures and written reports for every visit. That's how we used to work, and it was very resource intensive from an internal perspective," Fericola explains. "The iPAQ has completely transformed the field sales staff experience and reduced the internal resources required to process all that paper."

Now, sales representatives use the iPAQ Pocket PC to develop a daily route plan by sorting a list of physicians based on their ZIP code and address. During each physician visit, they will discuss new products with the physician, offer to leave samples, and collect a signature electronically on the Pocket PC. Occasionally, they might play a short video on the iPAQ of a key opinion leader discussing their views of a product.

Either in the office or just afterward, they will click on a list indicating which products they discussed, record what products (and lot numbers) they left behind, and update the physician's record with profiling data. They may also add some quick notes about the call, or add in a request for a white paper or some other document as a follow-up.

"Durability has been a big plus with the HP iPAQ."

Vincent Fericola, Senior Director of Field Sales Technology, inVentiv Commercial

When they return home at the end of the day, they will transmit the updates from their iPAQ-based SQL database to inVentiv Commercial using the Pocket PC's secured Internet connectivity, often over a wireless network.¹

“Sales representatives tell us they gain credibility with the physicians because of the HP iPAQ. They’re able to maintain eye contact during a conversation with the physicians, which is important in sales”

Vincent Fernicola, Senior Director of Field Sales Technology, inVentiv Commercial



Why iPAQ?

Why iPAQs? Fernicola says that Target Software, which developed the application for inVentiv, first demonstrated it on the iPAQ Pocket PC. “We determined that the HP iPAQ Pocket PC was the most functional and durable for our needs,” Fernicola reports.

inVentiv Commercial is now in its third generation of iPAQ Pocket PCs, the most recent being the HP iPAQ hx2490 Pocket PC. Each generation has offered improvements, Fernicola says. “Obviously, processor speed and memory have both improved. And we like the persistent memory on the new models instead of volatile memory. We don’t have any concerns now about losing database updates and the application.”

He says the new iPAQs have a longer battery life, and a more durable cradle for syncing the iPAQ with a desktop PC.

In the rare event of failure, representatives are never without an iPAQ for more than 24 hours. inVentiv Commercial’s help desk performs software fixes, and ships any units requiring warranty repair directly to HP under an HP Accidental Damage Protection service contract.

Easy to use

New sales representatives get a basic iPAQ orientation as part of their initial sales training. But the need for device-specific training has declined over time. “It’s really a very intuitive device,” Fernicola says. “And today, most of the younger sales staff, and those who

have been in pharmaceutical sales, have used some kind of mobile device already.”

The flip-up screen protector prevents the screen from being scratched while it’s kicking around a briefcase. “Durability has been a big plus with the iPAQs,” he says. “We have a pretty low failure rate, and most of those are due to outright abuse — they’re dropped, or stepped on or something like that.” Fernicola’s favorite story involves an Oklahoma-based representative who sent his iPAQ in for replacement. It arrived in pieces. Investigation revealed that it had been stepped on by the owner’s horse.

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Vincent Fernicola, Senior Director of Field Sales Technology, inVentiv Commercial

He says the Microsoft Windows® Mobile operating system works very much as any desktop Windows user would expect it to. “There’s not a lot of training needed for navigating the iPAQ itself; we concentrate our training on the application and procedures for updating our database.”

HP recommends
Windows Vista®
Business

HP recommends Windows Vista® Business

inVentiv Commercial prefers the small form factor of the iPAQ Pocket PC for physician visits. "It's less bulky and typically faster for what our sales force needs to do," Fernicola says. "Sales representatives tell us they gain credibility with the physicians because of the HP handheld. They're able to maintain eye contact during a conversation with the physicians, which is important in sales."

The ability to quickly capture signatures, which are required to dispense pharmaceutical samples, is a firm requirement for inVentiv Commercial's field sales staff.

The iPAQ Pocket PC is typically loaded with the mobile SFA application, as well as Microsoft Outlook for calendar and contact applications. Representatives are also equipped with an HP notebook PC (most recently, the HP Compaq 6910p Notebook) loaded with Microsoft Office for standard productivity applications. The HP 6910p notebook provides sales representatives with all the computing capability they need for other tasks including correspondence, email, database and spreadsheet work, as well as full Internet functionality.²

The company typically upgrades iPAQ Pocket PCs in the field every two years. Fernicola says HP marketing gathers input from his staff on existing models for future product development, and shares information on new models before they're available.

"We want sales staff to have a one-on-one, interactive experience with the physician. We want them to maintain eye contact. This is possible with the HP handheld."

Vincent Fernicola, Senior Director of Field Sales Technology, inVentiv Commercial

"About every six months, we get a roadmap of the future products they're building. It helps us plan and keeps us abreast of new product benefits," he says. Such give-and-take, he says, is part of inVentiv Commercial's continuing relationship with HP. "HP has helped to keep our field staff well equipped and productive. It's a relationship that works well for both of us, and we trust it will continue to for years to come."

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Customer solution at a glance

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¹ A standard WLAN infrastructure, other Bluetooth-enabled devices, separately purchased equipment, and a service contract with a wireless airtime provider may be required for applicable wireless communication. Wireless Internet use requires a separately purchased service contract. Check with service provider for availability and coverage in your area. Not all web content available.

² Wireless access point and Internet service required and sold separately. Availability of public wireless access points limited.

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