



CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

The Clubs at St. James Plantation Manage Amenities with the Help of Dude Solutions

CLIENT

Clubs at St. James Plantation

GEOGRAPHY

Southport, North Carolina

VITALS

- › Coastal residential lifestyle community featuring three amenity centers with tennis, golf, indoor and outdoor swimming, and a central sales center
- › Seven technicians

CHALLENGES

With seven technicians relying on phone calls for requests, the plantation struggled to organize their work orders and break out of reactive maintenance.

RESULTS

Dude Solutions elevated their operations management to a proactive focus and helped them save money on assets with repair vs. replacement data.



WORK AND ASSET

The Clubs at St. James Plantation is an expansive private residential community in Southport, NC. Situated on the coast, the club has award-winning amenities for its guests that include tennis, golf, swimming pools and fine dining, as well as a marina on the Intracoastal Waterway. The casual and coastal lifestyle and mild year-round climate makes St. James Plantation the number one-selling community in the Coastal Carolinas.

With such a reputation for excellence in the area, it's no surprise that the club strives to maintain its grounds and facilities in peak conditions. But keeping everything in order without a computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) created extra work for the team.

Struggling to Find Order

The Clubs at St. James Plantation have just seven technicians on staff, so optimizing their time is of the utmost importance. In order to do so, the club first needed a way to properly manage all of their requests. Prior to Dude Solutions, the maintenance team received their work orders for the day via phone calls placed to Terry Gottshalk, Director of Horticulture and Facilities.

"My role is to go around and make sure that everything is proactive instead of reactive," Terry said. "We handle all the work orders that come in from other departments, plus any planned maintenance."

The call-based system was a problem for many reasons. For one, there was no regulation on permissions, meaning that anyone could make a request, resulting in faulty information and, at times, no history on what work had already been completed. Requests that were approved by Terry and his team could easily fall through the cracks. As the team was spread over the full acreage of the club each day, there was little ability to track order completion and limited visibility.

"I resisted it at first because I'm an old school kind of guy, but [the software] really helped a lot and I wouldn't want to be without it now."

Creating Organization

The Clubs at St. James Plantation brought Dude Solutions on board, and two years later they've taken a renewed focus toward preventive maintenance. Plus, with a central portal for requests, Terry was able to set up permissions to ensure that work orders came through managers before their submission. In turn, the technicians are more efficiently using their time, and they have more time in the field.

"I resisted it at first because I'm an old school kind of guy, but [the software] really helped a lot, and I wouldn't want to be without it now," said Fritz Schellhaas, Terry's Lead Associate.



In addition, they were able to use the platform on their mobile devices, reducing windshield time for the technicians.

"We're out in the field all the time," Terry said. "I have the app on my cell phone. The lead associate has a tablet, and there is an iPad that is shared for completing work orders. [With Dude Solutions] based where they're at for what they're doing, it's very flexible for all of them."

Forecasting for Future Replacements

One of the important aspects of maintenance is not only ensuring that assets are up and running, but also knowing when they'll fail. Inevitably, any piece of equipment will reach the end of its useful life – but rather than waiting for failure, Terry and his team are able to prepare in advance. Anyone can look at an asset's history, including work order maintenance previously performed and any parts that were ordered, so they can get an idea of any upcoming issues.

"With Dude Solutions, we know if something is going to fail, and we know when we're getting to end of life," said David Flinchbaugh, Assistant General Manager.

Furthermore, they're able to justify asset replacements with their data. With proper planning thanks to the capital forecasting tool, David is able to predict when equipment could fail and if it's better to replace or repair. This data recently helped them create a space in the budget for a new dehumidifier.

"Its original cost when it was installed in 2010 was about \$58,000," David said. "It has a reasonable life of about 10 years, so we're only about seven years in, but I can see that we've already put \$30,000 of repairs into it all tracked through our system. We can then say, 'Okay, we need to budget for a replacement because we're getting to the point where we can't throw money into it.'"

"There's a lot to do here; the program helps with keeping the building maintenance department organized."

Set Up for Success

To date, they've amassed a total of 1,500 work orders. Although the work orders sound like a large amount, Terry is happy with how much it's helped them organize.

"The program has made my job much, much easier," Terry said. "Any information that's provided to me for planned maintenance or new purchases is sent through the program. There's a lot to do here; the program helps with keeping the building maintenance department organized."