



# Arch Wireless Streamlines Field Operations with Mobilize Commerce™

## Automating order entry process using two-way pagers saves over \$1.2 million annually, with time-to-payback under 3 months

Arch Wireless, Inc.  
North America's largest wireless messaging and mobile information company with revenues over \$1 billion annually.

Industry  
Communications

### Situation

- More than 1,600 mobile sales representatives working from over 200 offices.
- Highly competitive marketplace with customer choice driven by superior service and price.
- Need to reduce errors and costs associated with calling-in orders to customer service centers.

Mobilize Commerce  
Solution

- Allow orders to be captured, validated and transmitted directly from the field using Arch's current Motorola 2-way pagers.
- Provide clear migration path to supporting PDAs in the future.
- Integrate with Arch's back-end order entry, fulfillment and billing systems.

### Results

- Improved customer service and shorter sales cycles because reps can now quote accurate price and inventory, or suggest appropriate substitutes, while on-site.
- Order entry cost savings of nearly \$800,000 annually.
- Order reject rates slashed by over 90%.
- Reduced field-stocked inventory.
- Inventory reconciliation cost savings of over \$430,000 per year.

Arch Wireless, Inc. (NASD: ARCH) is a leading two-way Internet messaging and mobile information company with annual revenues of over \$1 billion. Based in Westborough, Massachusetts, Arch has rapidly expanded its customer base through major acquisitions and internal growth, becoming the largest wireless messaging company in North America with 13 million units in service, more than 200 offices and a 1,600-member sales force.

The wireless messaging industry is highly competitive with companies like Metrocall, SkyTel, Verizon and many others striving for market share. Even with stiff competition, Arch continues to grow rapidly and differentiate itself with new offerings and superior customer service at the point of contact. As a company that enables its clients to operate more productively using anytime, anywhere communications, Arch felt it was essential that their mobile sales teams be able to interact with customer information and enter orders while on the go.

“We wanted to create a truly seamless field order process that allows us to deliver better customer service than our competitors, at a lower cost,” says Kris Brigham, Vice President of Business Development. To accomplish this goal, Arch identified four critical areas for improvement:

- Faster customer response times by enabling sales reps to provide accurate product, price, inventory and substitution information while on-site.
- Reduce call center expenses associated with order processing.
- Lower order reject rates and revenue delays, caused by errors.
- Lower the amount of inventory stocked in field offices and reduce monthly inventory reconciliation costs.

Arch's sales reps are responsible for servicing new and existing business accounts and typically close over three orders each week, with seventy percent of these orders coming from current customers. To place an order, sales reps called a customer service center and gave information to a service representative, who in turn entered the data into Arch's BOSS order entry, fulfillment and billing system.

### Arch Challenges

Due to numerous products, multiple service options and high order volume, placing orders was time consuming and expensive, resulting in annual call center costs of over \$800,000. This labor-intensive process also inserted errors,

causing over 10% of orders to be rejected by the billing system. Rejected orders forced service reps, sales reps and customers into a re-verification cycle that cost time, money and customer goodwill.

Orders could also be rejected because of insufficient inventory, information that was unavailable to the field rep. Under this scenario, the service center would inform the sales rep of the inability to process the order, often after the rep had left the customer's site. The service center would then provide the sales rep with an expected delivery date or suggest a viable substitution, and the sales rep would then re-contact the customer and relay the choices. In the best case, this only resulted in a delay in closing the sale, but unfortunately this situation also opened the door to competitors who could meet the customer's needs today.

"Like most sales organizations, a lot of problems can be traced to manual processes associated with capturing and entering field orders, or relaying inventory status and approved substitutes to a mobile worker," observed Steve Shields, Regional Vice President and project leader for Arch.

Another problem area was the amount of inventory carried in the field. Typically, Arch field-stocked units at their offices to support those customers who needed faster order fulfillment, typically overnight, than the company could reliably guarantee.

Field stocking of inventory also carried a monthly reconciliation burden. Because it was difficult to always tie orders to specific stock, satellite office administrators had to research missing order information and reconcile the inventory every month. Monthly reconciliation took three days on average for each team of ten salespeople, at a total cost of over \$717,000 annually.

## The Arch Vision

Arch wanted to replace their call-in order entry process with a mobile commerce solution that automated order entry in the field and checked for errors before transmitting the order over Arch's wireless data network. The system needed to work with their current two-way pagers from Motorola™, but accommodate moves to Visor™ handhelds from Handspring™ in the future.

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Arch believed that increased order efficiency and accuracy results in higher customer satisfaction, so critical in the competitive wireless messaging market. Being the customer-service leader supports Arch's business goals and directly translates into greater market share and higher revenues.

With mobile commerce, sales reps put accurate information into the hands of the customer faster. Service centers are relieved of processing called-in orders, and costly errors and reject rates are reduced, allowing sales reps to focus more energy on building customer relationships and generating more revenue instead of fixing order problems. Plus, as the overall speed of order processing rises, there is less need to manage large inventories in the field to meet customer delivery expectations.

## The Mobilize Commerce Solution

Arch decided to deploy Mobilize Commerce™ to their field sales force to streamline their field operations and improve customer service at the point of sale. Directions from Arch were to keep it simple, with ease-of-use and user acceptance considered keys to success. After initial deployment to thirty sales reps, Arch is rolling out Mobilize Commerce to their more than 1,600-member field sales force.

As Arch deploys Mobilize Commerce, the company will have a secure mobile order entry and tracking system that works both online or offline. The application operates on the Motorola 2-way pagers Arch uses today, and will easily support Arch's move to handhelds and other mobile devices in the future. Just as important, Mobilize Commerce integrates with Arch's order entry, billing and fulfillment system, and like all Mobilize applications, can accommodate changes to back-end information systems and coming advances in wireless and wireline networks.

### Instant Customer Response Delivers Competitive Advantage

Because most of Arch's customers can choose from multiple vendors of wireless data services, winning and keeping business hinges on providing superior customer service. With Mobilize Commerce, sales reps can view the subset of customer accounts they own and enter orders for transmission over Arch's network. "Telling customers that you need to 'get back to them' isn't good enough anymore," says Shields. "Mobilize Commerce gives us an edge. Our sales reps now respond faster to customer requests and they always have access to current account information."

Arch's reps now place orders and receive confirmation while still on-site, allowing them to handle order exceptions in a manner that secures the client's business. For example, if inventory is insufficient to fulfill a customer order, rather than reject the order outright, an alternate delivery date or valid substitutions are suggested that meet customer requirements. In any case, customers get the information they need to make decisions without delays that invite competing offers.

### Lean and Efficient Field Order Processing Saves \$800,000 Annually

By deploying Mobilize Commerce to its entire sales force, Arch is creating a new way of conducting business in the field that not only improves customer service, but also results in huge cost savings that directly impact the company's bottom line. By giving sales reps the ability to enter orders electronically and receive confirmation from their mobile devices, Mobilize Commerce does away with the costly and error-prone procedures associated with calling-in orders to customer service centers. Brigham explains:

"We have over 1,600 sales representatives. Before automating order entry in the field, we were annually spending \$500 per rep to process their orders. Mobilize Commerce is eliminating this expense and letting us focus our service centers on tasks that more directly impact customer satisfaction."

## Driving Order Reject Rates to Zero

Mobilize Commerce eliminated the mistakes that were inherent in Arch's "high-touch" process of entering and confirming field orders. Now the pager's on-board business rules get the order right the first time by quickly guiding reps through product configuration and order entry. Orders are automatically checked for accuracy and completeness before being transmitted over Arch's wireless network so nothing falls through the cracks.

"We expect order rejection rates to fall from one-in-ten to practically zero," says Brigham. "A nice bonus is the menu-driven structure of Mobilize Commerce which prompts reps to suggest add-ons."

Fewer order rejects result in efficiencies throughout the sales and service organization. Gone is the round-robin of phone calls, email and accompanying frustration spent trying to reconcile problems and confirm customer choices so Arch is able to close more transactions sooner.

## Improved Inventory Management Frees Cash to Grow New Markets

Automating the order entry process has reduced the total time needed to process orders from "sometimes hours" down to a few minutes, allowing Arch to ship more pagers on the same day the order is received. With this ability comes the opportunity to significantly reduce the amount of inventory carried in the field. States Kris Brigham,

"With more orders shipping same day, we tie up less money supporting large field inventories."

Along with money freed up from warehousing physical inventory around the country, Arch estimates annual cost reductions of over \$430,000 in managing the field inventory because office administrators are now spending less than half as many days each month researching missing order information and reconciling the on-hand stock.

## Arch Wireless and Mobilize Working Together

"We chose Mobilize to streamline our field operations," says Brigham. "The company is highly professional and is helping us change the way we conduct business in the field. We're looking forward to working together to continue building our mobile enterprise using Mobilize's applications and services."

For more information, please contact Mobilize at 1-888-469-3223

For more information on Arch Wireless, visit: [www.arch.com](http://www.arch.com)

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