

APTIM chooses Locus's robust and flexible EHS software to transform a \$2.4 million/year waste disposal program for a large national retailer.

CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

Introduction

APTIM is a top ten environmental management firm tackling sustainability and resilience challenges for energy, waste, water, and other resources. The company provides integrated services and solutions to government agencies, commercial, industrial, and energy customers with complex and ambitious environmental objectives. By pairing its consultants with industry-leading technologies, APTIM delivers customized, cutting-edge solutions to each of its clients. Case in point: a national retail chain experienced recurring challenges with its waste program and engaged APTIM to identify and resolve the root causes.

Challenge

The environmental, health, and safety (EHS) department for a large, national retail chain had been self-managing the logistics, tracking, and reporting related to waste disposal for 850 stores in the US. The in-house team managed the relationships with waste haulers, scheduled and verified pickups, and responded to unforeseen waste overages at different stores. The retailer's processes could not scale to the quantity of locations and variables, nor did their system provide reliable insights to respond to issues or optimize operations.

Dispersed stakeholders and disconnected data sources: The retailer's waste program spans **850 locations** and involves input from store managers, waste haulers, TSDF vendors, and EHS staff at the home office. There was no central database to manage the program or to store the quantitative and qualitative information collected.

Spreadsheet limitations: The retailer had been struggling to use spreadsheets to track tens of thousands of datapoints including approximately **7,800 waste pickups each year**. The local waste hauling vendors submitted their own spreadsheets with details about completed pickups, waste volumes, and waste profiles. The in-house team struggled to efficiently unify and standardize these various streams of data.

Annual Highlights

850 locations

1 million tons of waste

7,800 pickups

\$2.4 million budget

Data was inconsistent, incongruous, and unclear: Feedback from store managers didn't always line up with data in the spreadsheet. For example, store managers might report missed pickups and overflowing dumpsters, yet the hauler's spreadsheet indicated the pickup had occurred as planned. It became difficult to objectively evaluate vendor performance and hold them accountable, much less achieve a consistent level of service.

Unable to identify trends or capitalize on opportunities for efficiency: Spreadsheets did not provide adequate data transparency – making it difficult to spot trends that could maximize efficiency and reduce costs. Dumpsters weren't always full, but there was no easy way to capture that information and adjust the program accordingly. If they'd had access to more complete data, they could schedule right-sized pickups, adjust the frequency of pickups, and group pickup locations based on similar rates of waste accumulation. The team suspected there were opportunities for significant efficiencies and cost savings, yet they lacked clear data to execute.

Difficult to respond to unforeseen, ad hoc circumstances: Pickup schedules were driven by historical data and assumptions about the volumes of waste produced by each location. When stores had an excessive amount of waste or an unexpected waste profile that warranted special handling, the retailer could not easily adjust the program to satisfy ad hoc needs.



The retailer's 850 stores were generating approximately **1 million tons of waste** each year. APTIM confirmed that the system for managing and tracking waste pickups was impeding the retailer's objectives and sustainability goals. They sought purpose-built powerful and flexible software to underpin and streamline this complex engagement.

“Locus was fully capable of taking on such a large project, managing 7,800 pickups annually for over 850 stores. Their program is dynamic enough to adapt to a client's changing needs, including schedule realignment, and service level accuracy. This allowed the client to save more than 5% on an annual budget of a \$2.4 million waste program.”

- Keith Bottum, APTIM solid waste planner and project manager

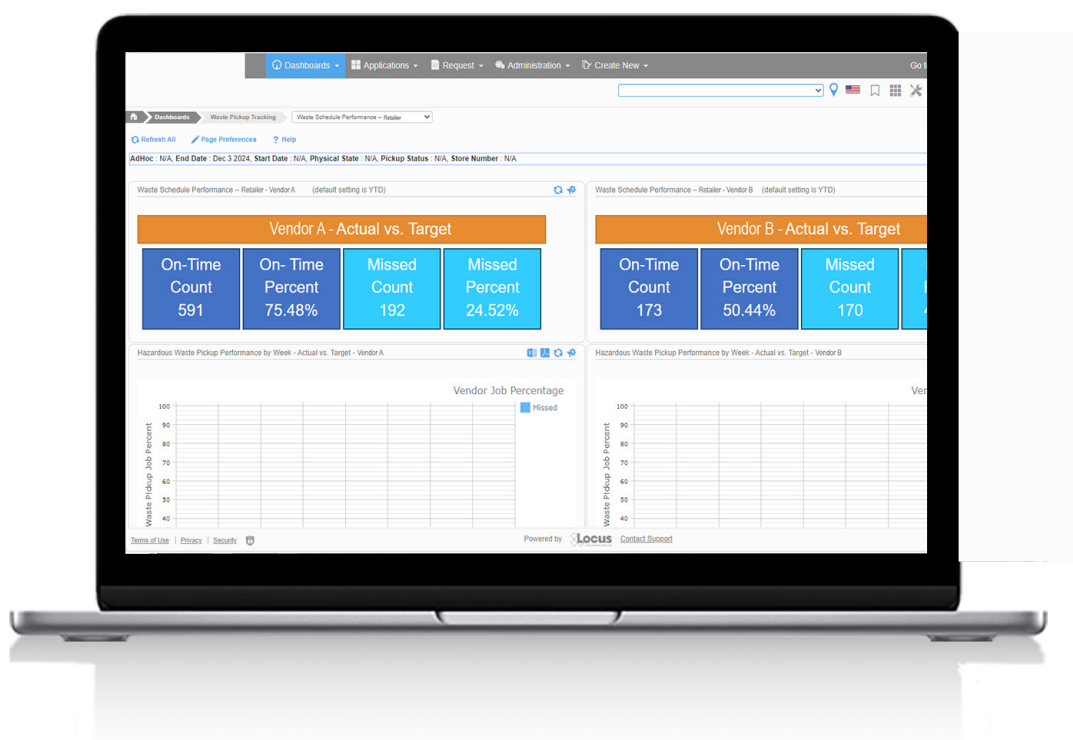
Solution

APTIM developed a strategy to revamp the retailer's waste program and derive business intelligence, streamline pickups, minimize costs, produce accurate vendor scorecards, and dovetail with the retailer's compliance and sustainability programs. APTIM knew that infrastructure would be pivotal to project success, specifically waste management software with integrated task management.

APTIM's buying committee evaluated 5 waste management software products and assessed their respective capabilities in 5 key areas:

- ◇ Accessibility and collaboration,
- ◇ Configurability,
- ◇ Data collection, validation, and transparency,
- ◇ Simple but powerful scheduling and tasking, and
- ◇ Analytics, data visualization, and dashboards to continually monitor and optimize the waste program.

Locus Technologies was selected as the ideal technology partner to support APTIM's strategy. Locus Waste Management software fulfilled every technical requirement, and it also provided unparalleled configurability and adaptability for potential project expansion.



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Centralized, cloud platform shared by the project team

All stakeholders can securely access the Locus platform via role-based permissions. Team leaders log-in to administer the entire waste program. Store managers can log in to view their pickup schedules or request service adjustments. And waste haulers submit their data on a weekly basis for quick import into the system. The retailer's EHS department has access to dashboard summaries and trends.

Comprehensive, accurate, and transparent data

Locus software provides a consistent structure and automation to ensure all required data is collected and verifiable. Locus manages every detail related to the waste program, including fixed values like store locations, vendors, store managers, and dumpster capacities, plus variables like scheduled pickups, completed pickups, and volumes of waste by location. Together, these connected entities provide a near real-time view of the retailer's waste program. APTIM and the retailer can now confidently verify service levels and hold vendors accountable.

Robust scheduling

The APTIM project team uses Locus software to administer their Master Waste Hauler Schedule for 850 stores. The schedule can be previewed within the Locus calendar or integrated with Microsoft Outlook® calendars.

With Locus, the team sets the frequencies, recurrence, and dates for waste pickups, and easily adjusts for new locations, new vendors, or ad hoc pickups due to excessive waste at a store. Additionally, the project team can adjust schedules based upon the business intelligence derived from Locus. For example, the team can quickly analyze load sizes and the calendar to group pickups and reallocate resources. This smarter approach to scheduling reduces costs for the retailer.

Business intel to drive program efficiencies

The APTIM project team uses Locus dashboards to monitor the key metrics for program success. With Locus software, APTIM tracks important variables across all 850 stores, such as on-time and missed pickups by store and by hauler. The team analyzes the data to gain clarity about hauler performance and produce vendor scorecards. These accurate insights have helped to elevate vendor performance across the waste program. Vendors are held accountable to fulfill the schedule to which they agreed.

APTIM uses Locus to identify priorities for new efficiencies at each store. For example, Locus helps the team confirm that dumpsters are emptied at appropriate levels according to the rate of discard for each store. Plus, Locus

“ I really enjoyed working with the Locus team – they are a great partner. We had an aggressive timeline, and the Locus team was quick to interpret the retailer's pain points and objectives, map them to the software, and help our project team dive in and get started with the new solution.”

- Keith Bottum

quickly earmarks the stores that have frequent ad hoc pickups, indicating the need for further investigation and possible adjustments to its program.

Integrated tasks and notifications

Locus software provides APTIM with deeper insights into the health of the retailer's waste program. APTIM can quickly identify areas that warrant follow-up from a member of the project team. Those assignments are managed by Locus software.

APTIM uses the software to create any type of task, including audit or inspection events at specific stores. They can easily divide tasks between users, route assignments to stakeholders and regional resources, and schedule connected or dependent actions. Locus automatically notifies users of their assigned tasks and configures audit trails to ensure accountability. Automated notifications and reminders keep everything moving forward.

“*Locus went above and beyond our expectations. Not only does Locus software do exactly what we asked, it has enabled us to deliver value to our client in ways we hadn't expected.*”

- Keith Bottum

Configurable software fulfills adjacent program requirements

APTIM chose to partner with Locus because the company demonstrated it could tailor the solution to APTIM's needs, using Locus's powerful Configuration Workbench. APTIM anticipated expanding its scope of work with the retailer and subsequently having additional software needs. APTIM valued the convenience of potentially activating other Locus software modules to handle the broader scope, such as waste permits, compliance, and RCRA biennial reporting.

Results

Locus Waste Management software enabled the APTIM/Retailer project team to elevate hauler performance and optimize program efficiencies beyond expectations. Using the analytics from Locus, the retailer confidently ended contracts with low-performing vendors and reduced costs by \$120,000 in the first year. The retailer was pleased with the outcome and awarded additional scope of work to APTIM. Adjacent (and integrated) Locus software applications will be utilized to help APTIM execute the broader scope. APTIM intends to replicate the proven solution for its other large retail clients. ♦