

Morgan Est goes electronic with scaffolding inspections at Olympics site

A highly successful implementation of the Safetrak electronic system for safer, more efficient scaffolding inspections and process management.

Return on investment summary

- Easy to use system, minimising the requirement for paper and administration
- Minimal paperwork generated – time can be used more efficiently (inspecting, not report writing)
- Improved planning of the workforce
- Programs the up and coming inspection dates – no missed inspections
- Improved management of scaffold equipment location
- Ruggedised handheld devices so inspections can be recorded in any weather conditions.
- Increased accuracy of information recorded at the point of inspection, the identity of the tag ensures inspectors are at the correct structure.
- Provides a step by step checklist of inspection tasks rather than relying on inspectors intuition
- Electronic copies so records less likely to get lost
- Auditable trail to comply with legislation – proof of inspections
- Instant access to current and historical data and endless options to manipulate it into insightful reports
- Accessibility of information to all relevant stakeholders – improved communication
- Added value to customers
- Ongoing support helped ensure a smooth implementation of the new technology



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Project background

To keep up with health and safety requirements, one of the UK's leading provider of infrastructure services Morgan Est, trialled a new electronic system from Scafftag to streamline the process of inspecting and decommissioning its scaffolding structures on three sites in the south east of England. The safety and efficiency improvements were so visible that the company has adopted it as a permanent feature and is looking at rolling out the system further across the company.

As testament to the success of the Safetrak system, Scafftag was announced runner up in the 'collaboration' category at the 2009 Morgan Est Supply Chain Conference Awards.

There is huge pressure for companies to be cost effective and achieve best practice and this applies to all aspects of business, especially to health and safety.




Morgan Est specialises in the design and delivery of complex engineering projects for the private and public sector. It also provides specialist and innovative tunnelling, utilities, civil engineering and mechanical and electrical services to the water, transport and energy sectors.

One of the company's highest profile projects at present, is the delivery of a £1.5bn project at Stratford City, which lies adjacent to the Olympic Park. In order to secure contracts Morgan Est needed to demonstrate a robust, efficient approach to safety, maintenance and identification to manage key issues specified in the Olympics Delivery Authority's (ODA) standards.

With a company of this size and complexity, being able to streamline processes to manage business requirements in a cost-effective manner is essential. To achieve increased efficiency, Morgan Est turned to the Safetrak system from Scafftag to help improve the inspecting and reporting process for its scaffolding structures. Furthermore, Scafftag has now developed purpose designed systems to help manage key issues specified in the ODA's standard.

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Safetrak is a unique electronic system designed to transform safety, maintenance and identification activities into paperless, efficient and simplified processes. Since adopting the system on a trial basis, Morgan Est has seen a significant reduction in the time taken to carry out inspections and complete reports, as well as a decrease in the potential for human error.

01 Plan	02 Execute	03 Record, report and review
		
<p>Scaffold inspections are planned on the Safetrak PC either automatically or manually.</p> <p>Work orders are then downloaded to operator's handheld computers.</p>	<p>Each scaffold is uniquely identified with a tag.</p> <p>Handheld device guides the operator through the work order, providing the location of each scaffold to inspect.</p> <p>Once a specific scaffold is scanned, the system directs the inspector through a series of questions and instructions collecting data accurately.</p>	<p>Upload records from handhelds.</p> <p>Compile and review timely and accurate reports from the Safetrak system.</p>

Before Safetrak

Before using Safetrak, like other construction companies, Morgan Est relied upon a paper based system to comply with legal scaffolding requirements.

Scaffolding is, by its very nature, difficult to control. With the constant turnover of scaffold jobs, knowing what structures are erected, inspected and decommissioned becomes difficult. This leaves a high potential for errors to occur.

Each scaffolding structure has to conform to the legal scaffolding requirements. For projects involving working at height, a risk assessment must also be completed to determine the appropriate equipment and provide guidance on the inspections.

Sally Keill, Business Improvement Delivery Manager for Morgan Est explains: "At Morgan Est one of our core values is that we have an 'uncompromising approach to safety' and will do all within our power to create a 'safe' environment for our employees. We already use the Scafftag visual tagging system on all of our scaffolding structures, which gives a very clear visual indication that the correct inspections have been carried out. However, legally we have to also ensure that this inspection process is documented in report format."

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The requirements for a scaffold structure demand that a report is prepared by a qualified scaffolder. The report is either completed during the site visit or on return to the office. A copy of the report is then filed and kept on site and a copy given to the site manager, which is retained for a period of three months from the completion of the work. If a scaffold fails inspection this must be reported by the person carrying out the inspection, to the person responsible for the scaffolding, as soon as possible.

Sally adds: "Although the paper process was adequate there were issues that meant that the system was not as streamlined as it could possibly be. It was a timely process that was reliant on the report forms being accurately completed and manually processed after the inspection.

"As a business we have a legal obligation to carry out weekly inspection on scaffolding and to produce a scaffold register, which is held at site. The Safetrak system has improved the distribution of this register as records are held electronically."

After Adopting Safetrak

With the introduction of Safetrak, paper reports no longer have to be filled out, filed or sent off. All relevant parties have instant access to information on each scaffold structure and can use Safetrak's simple report generation tool to compile all legally required documentation.

The Safetrak solution is made up of several integrated components:

- Scafftag visual tagging systems enclosing an 'automatic identification' chip (principally Radio Frequency Identification (RFID))
- Mobile computers
- Safetrak core software (planning and reporting function)
- Plug-in inspection software modules for managing specific equipment e.g. scaffolding, ladders, lifting equipment etc

A Scafftag visual tag is attached to each scaffolding structure. The electronic chip contained within each visual tag has a unique reference number to identify the specific structure. The unique structure references are entered into the Safetrak system and a current status report is created for each scaffolding structure.

Inspection routes are then planned using the core Safetrak software. These are downloaded to the mobile computers and given to the qualified scaffolders to take out with them in the field.

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The mobile devices then guide qualified scaffolders through planned routes, identifying the correct location. By scanning the visual tags, the correct specific structure can be confirmed. The required inspection checks that must be made are then specified, either for a weekly inspection (pass/pass with observations or fail), or a handover.

This means that for a report to be generated, the qualified scaffolder physically needs to be at the correct structure and scan the visual tag. This eliminates the risk of vital information being forgotten between being onsite inspecting and returning back to the office to write up a report - or a report being created without a qualified scaffolder being present.

The results of the inspection are recorded onto the handheld devices. Once the handheld devices are returned the office the data can be downloaded and recorded in the core software. This centralises all of the information collected in the field, providing the relevant managers with the latest status and an audit trail for all of the scaffolding structures. Any non-compliances are identified immediately, allowing them to be dealt with instantly.



Alan Barnes, Scaffolding Foreman, explains further: “My responsibility is to look after scaffolding structures on numerous sites, including Heathrow and the Olympics. In fact, especially with the Olympic sites, where we are working alongside numerous contractors, the system gives me a clear picture of where my scaffolds are and ensures that the weekly inspections tie in with the locations. I can also identify instantly any issues that I need to deal with and make sure that I either visit the site or speak to the site manager.”

For Morgan Est this is also a hugely beneficial system from a customer perspective. Sally continues: “Customers are able to access all of the relevant information instantly through the email that is automatically generated containing the scaffold register which ensures that all the scaffolding structures conform to the legislation. Demonstrating value for money to our customers is a very important to our business. Now we can show that our systems are as streamlined and effective as possible, whilst ensuring maximum safety compliance. It gives customers that extra piece of mind.”

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The trial has been well received, although slightly daunting in the initial stages. After training, the workers carrying out the inspections began to embrace the system. They were immediately able to see the benefits.

Key to the success has been the level of support and training from Scafftag. Sally continues: “The set up of a Safetrak helpline in the early stages meant that any problems were dealt with instantly which allowed the users to build up their confidence with the product. Explaining at the right level how the new system would work and its benefits was crucial to the system’s success and this is where Scafftag was invaluable. ”

The trial was so successful with Morgan Est that Sally entered the Safetrak system for an internal best practice award. It gained Highly Commended in the company’s internal Best Practice Awards October 2008 and runner up in the ***in the ‘collaboration’ category at the 2009 Supply Chain Conference Awards***. Sally adds: “This was a fantastic achievement for a new technology project and we were really pleased. During the six month trial a thorough evaluation was carried out and an assessment was made as to whether we continued to work with the system. It was agreed that it would be of a benefit to the business and so we have now invested in this Safetrak system.”

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Further information and free demonstration

For information on the Safetrak system and a free demonstration:

www.scafftag.com/safetrak

For specific information on Safetrak for scaffolding and a free demonstration:

www.scafftag.com/safetrak-scaffolding

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