Getting the Most out of your Property Management System

Do you realize how many easily-movable, valuable, or potentially dangerous assets your organization controls that can be lost or misplaced through neglect, or due to the benign or malicious actions of users? Organizations are often responsible for maintaining "unconventional," yet easily movable and valuable assets, and many do not believe they have the means or the technology infrastructure to do so accurately. But how do you track a canine, or a sensitive document like a personnel file, or even vials of biological agents, such as anthrax? Many will impulsively purchase a new system that specializes in managing one of these specific types of assets. An introspective look, however, may reveal that your organization's current property management system is already performing the functions necessary for managing these unconventional assets, but for more traditional assets instead. **By looking at the core property management functions that can be performed in Sunflower Assets, one can see how the software can be effectively utilized to manage and maintain all types of property, not just traditional assets like computers and laptops.**

Canines, personnel files, and vials of biological agents aren't what we would consider "traditional" assets, yet like traditional assets they require surveillance, monitoring and care. Let's take a look at the special requirements associated with each one of these non-traditional assets and examine how Sunflower's core property management functions can be easily utilized to accommodate them.

Various ways Sunflower Assets can track unconventional assets.

Canines and their unique characteristics. Most traditional assets are "fixed" and usually reside with their respective owners. But canines are highly mobile; they are taken out on duty, for exercise, or they could potentially free themselves without the assistance of a human. Unlike other assets, canines are truly capable of getting up and walking off on their own, rendering active location tracking absolutely essential. Ad-
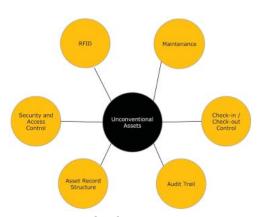
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ditionally, canines have special training and health concerns that must be tracked and recorded. Details such as vaccinations, health status, and specialized training are critical pieces of information that any handler must understand about a canine companion. Here's how Sunflower can track these necessary elements:

- **Maintenance Functionality:** Sunflower contains maintenance scheduling and work order functionality, usually associated with maintenance for vehicles or components of IT equipment. This same functionality that is used to schedule events such as oil changes and warranty renewals can be used to schedule veterinary visits, training, or daily exercise.
- **RFID Technology:** Sunflower's RFID solutions are utilized for highly mobile and highly sensitive assets that may have unique needs, and canines fall right into this category. RFID readers can be placed throughout the areas where the canines live, eat, and rest while off-duty, and RFID tags can be inserted into each dog collar. When a canine leaves a designated area, Sunflower can generate and send an automatic email notification of the movement.
- **Check-in/Check-out Control:** A canine on assignment can be "checked-out" in Sunflower and recorded as being "in-use". When the assignment ends and the canine is returned, it can be checked back in and the status updated accordingly. This kind of tracking will allow your organization to consistently know the location of the canines, as well as view trends about the most frequent canine assignments. Based on the canines that are utilized the most frequently and training levels recorded for these animals, your organization will be able to determine the most beneficial training classes for the canines as well as the most cost-effective number of canines to have at any given time. **Not only can you utilize an existing system to help keep track of these "assets", but you can also analytically determine the most cost effective business processes surrounding asset management or in this case, canine management.**

Volatile and dangerous substances – such as vials of biological agents. Unlike canines, vials cannot move without human intervention. The safe keeper for these items does not face the same logistical issues as the safe keeper for the canines; however, the logistical issues for these items focus around preventing them from being lost or stolen, which could potentially cost individuals their safety, their security, and possibly their lives.

- **RFID and Check-in/Check-out Control:** An RFID tag can be placed on the door of the container holding the vials of fluid, and Sunflower can send an automatic email notification each time that door is opened. Or, if a hazardous material must be removed from its secure container for testing, the item can be classified as "checked-out" in Sunflower with additional details recorded such as when the item was removed, who removed it, and when the item is expected to be returned. When the item is checked back in to the secure location, the check-in details can be recorded.
- **Audit Trail:** Knowing who is in possession of sensitive and potentially dangerous items is as important as knowing where they are, and Sunflower's historical timeline feature provides a full audit trail by ensuring that all events are recorded as well as relevant details such as who recorded the event in the system and when it was recorded.

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Personnel files containing sensitive and/or classified information. Personnel files can be tricky to manage as they contain information that is sensitive, and, in many cases, classified, requiring that they be maintained differently than other conventional assets and access be tightly monitored.

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- **Asset Record Structure:** Personnel files are generally composed of a master set of data about an individual (name, address, DOB, SSN, etc), and many supporting details and documents, including medical status, performance evaluations, benefits elections, awards, commendations, and reprimands. This master data can be compared to the manufacturer, model, and serial number information that makes up a conventional asset record in Sunflower. Since it's just a matter of storing different data sets, personnel files can easily be set up like any other assets.
- **Security and Access Control:** Inherent security and access controls within Sunflower can be utilized to ensure that only authorized individuals can access or view the personnel files. Using Sunflower's role-based system privileges, viewing, reading, and writing capabilities within the personnel files can be based on organizational structure and granted roles. Designated persons could have full access, while others might have query and view-only rights, while still others may not have the ability to search for records or the knowledge that those records even exist in the property system.

As your organization examines the specific requirements associated with special classes of assets, you will discover that Sunflower Assets can accommodate these requirements and can assist with the overall management of items that are unique to your business. The few examples identified above illustrate how Sunflower can be utilized to track virtually any kind of non-standard asset in any organizational environment. Sunflower's open architecture and robust asset-tracking functionality renders the need for multiple types of asset-tracking software obsolete; one system can truly house them all. Lower your risk and increase your savings by adapting Sunflower to meet your ever-evolving asset management needs.

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