

KeyData delivers 'cool' automation solution for Aged Care Deloraine



Recognising the shortcomings of manually monitoring the refrigeration essential for food safety and medicine storage, Tasmania's Aged Care Deloraine looked to KeyData for an automated 'TracknAct' Internet of Things solution. With the rapid configuration and delivery of a suitable solution over mere days, KeyData has equipped the care provider with an around-the-clock accurate data feed, alleviating staff members from the tedium of temperature checks while improving food and medicine safety. During the deployment, the accuracy of the new sensors even exposed a faulty thermostat in a large refrigerator, contributing

to corrective action avoiding potential further consequences of temperature deviations.

The success of the initiative has led to Aged Care Deloraine evaluating additional sensor deployments and automations in the interests of improved facilities management, contributing to the comfort and health of every resident.

Aged Care Deloraine was established in 2007 as a merger between St Marks Court and Grenoch Homes. The not-for-profit organisation provides holistic care for the aged and disabled within the Deloraine, Tasmania community.



SITUATION

A self-confessed 'big fan of taking manual processes and making them digital', Deloraine Aged Care Project and IT Manager Michael Duniam explains the fridge landscape. "These include 20 industrial units in common areas, while we also have fridges in the independent units and common areas. Temperature monitoring is essential for compliance with applicable standards and regulations – including HACCP and QCPP."

Prior to KeyData's involvement, temperature monitoring took place twice daily, with staff members taking down numbers on a clipboard. Once collected, the data entered into a spreadsheet.

"While this is very important, it tends to be low on priority for our staff members, who are generally more concerned with looking after resident needs," comments Duniam. "There's always a lot to do, and taking a fridge's temperature isn't all that appealing – despite the importance to food and medicine safety."

With 20 'industrial fridges, the twice-daily routine was also something of a time-sink. And doing it by hand didn't only seem analogue and outdated, but quite unnecessary.

"There's always a lot to do, and taking a fridge's temperature just isn't that appealing a task – despite how important that data is in terms of food and medicine safety."

– Deloraine Aged Care Project and IT Manager Michael Duniam



SOLUTION

Duniam turned to Google and found KeyData. The company offered a willingness to understand not only the problem at hand, but the organisation seeking the solution. “Just about every provider wanted to license every device with an ongoing cost in perpetuity – and that made what was a good idea, essentially unaffordable for a not-for-profit running tight budgets. KeyData instead suggested a solution where we’d buy the devices outright, then pay only for the connectivity and visualisation costs that matched our budget,” he explains.

Prior to delivering the TracknAct solution, KeyData sent over multiple devices and equipment for Aged Care Deloraine’s experimentation and evaluation. “This was fantastic. We ‘sandboxed’ and saw what was likely to work, how it might work, and got to understand any issues. This included one property where connectivity isn’t great; it meant prior to the installation of KeyData’s TracknAct, we had a better idea of what we wanted which led to the successful solution delivery.”

That solution is TracknAct! Tive beacons deployed in every fridge constantly track temperature, providing a steady feed of data to the cloud every 15 minutes for comprehensive and consistent record-keeping – and if temperatures move outside of the customers specified range, an alert drives immediate corrective action.

“Once the hardware arrived on site, onboarding the solution was a matter of days,” says Duniam. “In fact, I was surprised at how simple KeyData made it for us, with their technical staff hugely helpful in getting everything programmed and remotely deployed in just 3 days.”



RESULTS

One of the major ‘wins’ was the discovery of a fridge running outside of specification owing to the scrutiny applied in deploying sensors. “We replaced one of our large fridges at one of our sites thanks to the TracknAct system picking up an aberration. Turns out the old-style probe was reading 4 degrees higher,” says Duniam.

While an immediate (and unanticipated) benefit, the ongoing advantage is improved food and medicinal safety for Aged Care Deloraine’s residents. Temperatures are constantly monitored, and any deviation is addressed without delay. This eliminates temporary issues such as an accidentally open fridge door, as well as addressing equipment failures. “Our safety just got better,” confirms Duniam. “There’s no chance of errors, and we can plot temperatures and fix problems before they cause downstream consequences.”

Not only has KeyData solved an immediate problem, but its approach of providing an ‘organisation-specific’ and suitable solution means Duniam has his eye on additional automations and monitoring opportunities within the Aged Care Deloraine facilities. “The sensors are inexpensive, so we’re looking at putting one into each resident’s personal fridge, so they don’t have to worry about that particular risk. And it can get quite cold in winter, so we’re also looking at introducing sensors in the hallways and other common areas, so we can improve comfort for our residents. And there are dozens of other potential applications for this technology – particularly when we can accurately budget, use the same cloud console, and not have ongoing opex per device.”

He has praise for KeyData. “It’s been a great experience. They’ve listened, taken on board suggestions, and responded brilliantly.”

And as a seasoned technology professional, he finishes with a quip, “I wish everything was that easy!”

“Our food safety just got better. There’s no chance of errors, and we can see a plot of temperatures that went over and for how long, and we can fix problems before they cause any further downstream consequences.”

– Deloraine Aged Care Project and IT Manager Michael Duniam