

The Mobile Office

Location-based Mobile App Designed for the Sales Rep of the Future

ÖSSUR IS A GLOBAL LEADER IN NON-INVASIVE orthopedics. Their focus is on improving people's mobility through innovative technologies within the fields of bracing and supports, prosthetics and compression therapy. Össur is headquartered in Iceland, with subsidiaries in 13 countries. Together, Össur Americas, Össur Europe and Össur Asia serve more than 19,000 customers. Imran Rafique is leading a new initiative at Össur called Mobile Sales Solutions, which is focused on enterprise or workforce mobility. He has been tasked with integrating analytics, social media, and mobile applications to more effectively support the salesforce and to engage with customers, patients and employees. We spoke with Mr. Rafique about the role of location technologies in meeting his mission, in particular Össur's rollout of the Badger Mapping application.

LBx *Why did you turn to a location application to support your salesforce?*

RAFIQUE Traditionally, in the medical device industry a sales rep comes to understand their sales territory through excel spreadsheets, dashboards, and putting pins on a map. This process takes extensive planning and time, which is inefficient for the sales rep. Additionally, sales reps often have unexpected downtime in the field, whether a canceled meeting or layovers. We identified this as an opportunity to optimize their downtime and make it easier for them to fill their days, and discover new leads. A location-based mobile application enables a more continuous workflow, which enhances our selling process.

The sales process is evolving and supporting Össur's sales-

force consist of various applications on a tablet device. See *Figure 1*. The combination of analytics, digital media, reporting, and custom apps allow our salesforce to engage with the customer on a deeper level than before. That said, location is a critical component within the suite of applications provided to our reps. Prior to using location technology, our salesforce was struggling with visually understanding their territories.

Whether for new or senior sales reps, providing customer demographics, sales history, and leads in a consumable and actionable format wasn't feasible.

In order to get the most from our salesforce, we needed to find a way to make it simple for sales reps to access customer information in the field. To do that, we complemented our Excel spreadsheets and dashboards to provide a mapping solution that utilized Google Maps. A location-based mobile application allows our sales reps to understand their territories interactively. This ultimately improves their sales effectiveness and planning. Thanks to location technology, our salesforce can effectively reduce administrative tasks and increase productivity within their territory.



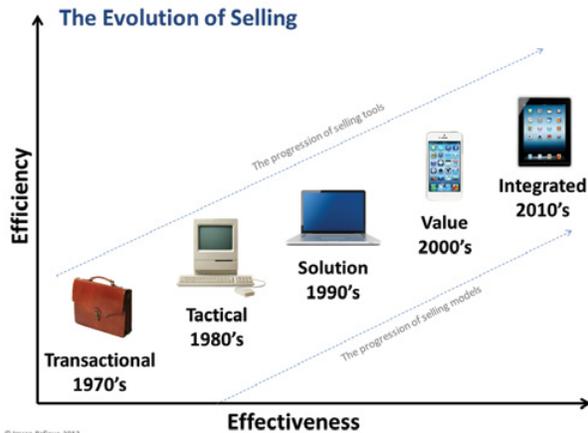
IMRAN RAFIQUE

LBx *What's the size of your salesforce?*

RAFIQUE Össur Americas has over 75 sales reps, which includes Canada, United States, and Latin America.

LBx *What type of location-based mobile application did you deploy?*

RAFIQUE There are many applications using location technology. We started by looking at the various options available—applications that were native to iOS and Web



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↑ **FIGURE 1.** This graphic illustrates the evolution of the sales process over the last 40 years.

apps. In our search we came across Badger Mapping Solutions. From the start, Badger showcased their skills and their understanding of how to integrate location technology within a mobile solution. The team was willing to collaborate on an application that modeled the sales process from beginning to end. They designed a simple-to-use interface that considered the perspective of a mobile sales rep. The architecture developed made the application available on tablets, smartphones and the laptop/desktop. This was critical to deploying an app that would gain adoption. Furthermore, the Badger team is responsive to Össur's feedback and is improving the app each day.

LBx What does the Badger Mapping app do?

RAFIQUE The Badger app takes customer data and plots it on a map. It provides three basic functions that enable sales reps to plan travel routes, identify new leads, and view customer information. See *Figures 2 and 3*. Together these features help keep the sales rep focused and productive. The goal is to help sales reps to understand which customer to visit next, and Badger is helping to solve that problem.

LBx Can you talk about the kinds of applications with which the Badger Mapping application needed to interact?

RAFIQUE Össur's mobile sales solutions initiative provides a suite of applications that deploy business information and tools to our salesforce. The focus with Badger maps was to utilize location-based technology to its fullest potential. Eventually, the application will integrate more with our internal infrastructure to provide an even better user experience. It is important to us that we provide a seamless transition from one application to the next. The more tightly integrated the applications are, the more value we can provide to our sales reps.

LBx Can you comment on the challenge of integrating consumer applications into the enterprise?

RAFIQUE The current buzzword for this integration is the "consumerization of IT" and it is an enormous challenge

EDITOR'S NOTE The trend of consumer apps being implemented within business was first identified in LBx Journal in Brady Forrest's column in our *Spring/Summer 2009 issue*.

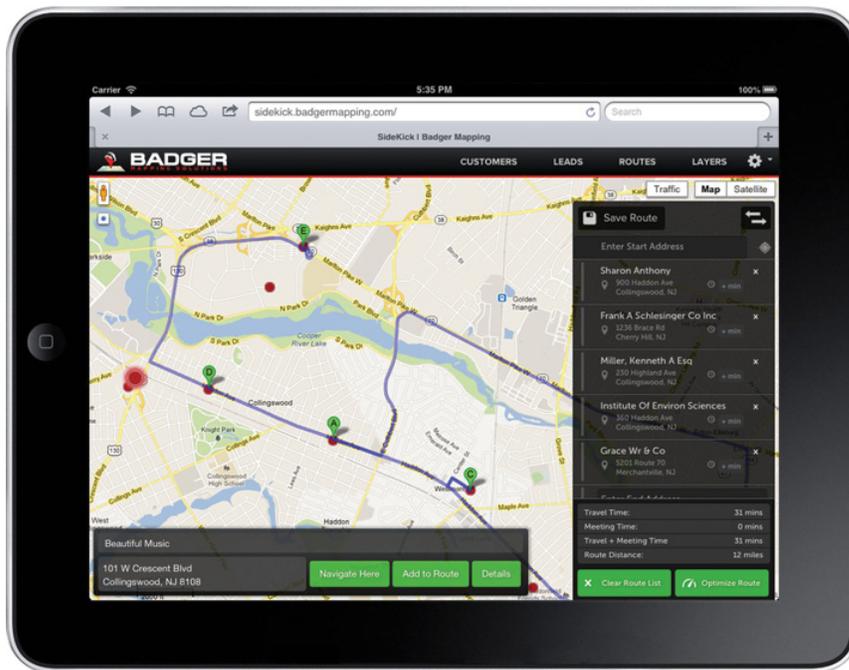
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for companies that build solutions to do it correctly. It takes a specific mindset to leverage what is successful in a consumer market and to introduce it within an enterprise. More often the issue stems from a technical mindset that is unable to fully understand the business needs, and vice versa; a more sales/market-focused mindset may lack the technical understanding of resource capacity and how to scale an app.

In order to foresee the challenges with integration, the balance is needed between IT and sales/marketing. We found that the best way to meet this challenge was to conduct extensive pilot programs and monitor them very closely. It is quicker and easier for a company to purchase an “out of the box” solution, which may or may not fall short of your objectives. Our approach was to do some field-testing with our sales team to craft a custom solution, which we call Mobile Sales Solutions. This way, we were able to identify consumer apps that our field reps were using and how we could create or find an enterprise solution.

// The more tightly integrated the applications are, the more value we can provide to our sales reps. //

↓ **FIGURE 2.** Route for a salesperson's customer visits shown on the map with details of one customer displayed at the bottom and route list on the right. By pre-planning routes, salespeople can fit more customer meetings into a day and make sure they don't miss important customers as they drive by.

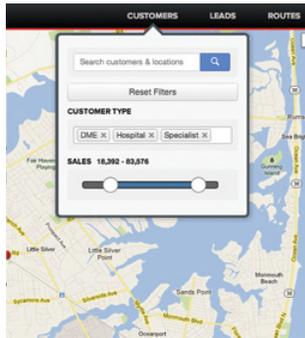


LBx How long was the implementation?

RAFIQUE The planning process and implementation was done within a year. We identified the solutions needed in early 2012 with a goal of launching in 2013. Together with the team, we vetted out the bugs and kinks before going live. As a result of all the due diligence we helped reduce our risk and increase adoption from our salesforce.

LBx How has the Badger Mapping impacted the organization?

RAFIQUE We are still early in the process, and are still learning about the metrics, but we are seeing significant excitement in the salesforce.



↑ **FIGURE 3.** Salespeople can use filters and search functionality to drill down to the customers that are important. This is important for salespeople who have hundreds or thousands of distributed accounts to manage.

“The current buzzword for this integration is the “consumerization of IT” and it is an enormous challenge for companies that build solutions to do it correctly. It takes a specific mindset to leverage what is successful in a consumer market and to introduce it within an enterprise.”

LBx Is there anything particularly unique about the health-care industry?

RAFIQUE The healthcare industry in general is not an early adopter of mobile applications in the workplace. The rise of consumer applications in the enterprise is starting to show, and I feel the industry will benefit heavily from mobile applications and devices.

Conversely, the regulations in the healthcare industry can limit the potential of mobile development because of compliance issues. Location-based apps have been around for a while, and are naturally evolving in the consumer market. However, real-time applications are not common in the healthcare industry from what I have seen. Frankly, most organizations are cautious about adopting location-based technology because they fear the security issues outweigh the benefits.

LBx What advice do you have for others embarking on adopting location-based applications?

RAFIQUE I’m continually learning and so from my experience I can suggest starting with an overall vision, and knowing what it will take to complete that vision. Focus less on what the trends are and spend more time understanding the issues or problems that need to be solved. Once you have a grasp of the issues, it’s easier to see how a location-based application will help. More than just mapping, location-based applications can connect your salesforce, provide real-time analytics, and track information. Those benefits will help a company make better business decisions. Lastly, keep things simple with your applications and Beta test before a full-scale launch. There is always time after the launch to add more features as your salesforce identifies what is needed. ☒

Imran Rafique

Imran Rafique is the Sr. Analyst, Enterprise Mobility at Össur and is leading the Mobile Sales Solutions program. His area of responsibility includes application development, social media, sales analytics and salesforce mobility. Prior to joining Össur, Imran held various strategic and analytical roles at Philips and Google. He graduated from the University of Southern California with a degree in Brand Management from the Marshall School of Business. In addition to his corporate work experience, Imran has been actively involved in advising, bootstrapping, and launching startup companies. He currently resides in Orange Country where he enjoys living a healthy active lifestyle. Imran can be contacted on Facebook, LinkedIn or emailed at irafique@ossur.com.