

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

BloomNet—a division of 1-800-Flowers—is a world-class business solutions provider, supporting a large floral order and delivering network. They enable worldwide ordering and delivery of flowers and related products, and they help retail florists succeed by providing innovative in-store technology for business management, point of sale, delivery management and tracking, and mobile commerce. BloomNet offers high-quality services and products, industry education, and business support to its network of florists, helping them thrive in a highly competitive business.

BloomNet needed a system to help its retail florists manage local deliveries. Applied Visions (AVI) delivered a solution that integrated an existing application into BloomNet's current Point of Sale (POS) Business Management System (BMS). The result was a Local Delivery Management system that saves time for retail florists, making shop management simpler and far more efficient.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

POS systems for florists must meet unique challenges with a wide operational scope. In a typical florist's POS system:



Orders are captured and routed to a designer.



The arrangement is created.



The item is marked as "waiting for delivery."



The delivery is added to a route and assigned to a driver.



The driver's route is mapped out with all scheduled deliveries for the day.

Florists need to know as soon as possible when a delivery has been completed, or if it needs to be rescheduled. Shop owners have traditionally had to wait until a driver returned from their route to find out which deliveries were completed and which had failed. **Florists were waiting several hours before they could mark orders as complete or reach out for rescheduling. This was an inefficient process—and potentially a costly one, as many florists can be penalized if they do not confirm deliveries in a timely manner.**

BloomNet needed to provide its retail florists with a solution to these delivery tracking issues. The company had two goals for its project:

- ▶ Provide florists with timely and accurate information about deliveries.
- ▶ Offer a solution that is extremely easy to use.

THE SOLUTION

AVI created a Local Delivery Management solution that optimizes delivery service, with real-time information and automatic updates, right from the driver's smartphone. The Local Delivery Management solution automates the delivery management process. It vastly improves delivery operations, maximizes delivery driver efficiency, and improves customer service. It eliminates the hassles of manually sorting deliveries, grouping them into routes, and managing drivers.

The system is also intuitive, because it integrates with and supports the typical delivery workflow. The system:

- ▶ Uses barcodes to automatically create trip sheets.
- ▶ Quickly assigns routes to drivers.
- ▶ Marks orders out for delivery.
- ▶ Syncs trip sheets with drivers' smartphones in seconds.
- ▶ Provides real-time delivery attempt notifications and status updates.
- ▶ Allows easy information input by shop owners in just a few clicks.
- ▶ Quickly assigns and optimizes routes.
- ▶ Sends alerts to drivers on their smartphones with all of the details.

Route4Me is a third-party mobile app that provides route optimization for deliveries. This is a great standalone tool, but it could only add value to BloomNet if it was integrated into their POS system.

AVI performed the integration work, adding hooks into Route4Me so users can perform primary routing operations directly from the BloomNet BMS. Integrated operations include creating a route for a driver, canceling a route, and adding new orders to an existing route.

AVI also added endpoints to the POS system to allow Route4Me to inform the POS system when key events take place, such as a delivery confirmation or failure. These events are recorded in near real-time, resulting in fewer penalties for the shops and swifter rescheduling for failed deliveries.

AVI added the capability to collect delivery information from Route4Me so users can view signatures and proof of delivery photos directly from the POS system. These images are directly associated with orders inside the POS system, so all information is in one centralized secure location.

WHY BLOOMNET WORKED WITH AVI

BloomNet has had experience working with both onshore and offshore software developers during the initial development of its products. Marc Grezskowiak, Vice President of Technology at BloomNet, recognized that while offshore is initially cheaper, the process always required multiple iterations to get it right. Offshore developers did not have the expertise required for a comprehensive approach that includes the business side of application development. This dragged out time to market, and erasing any perceived cost-saving.

BloomNet needed developers who not only understood technology, but who also understood their business and the issues they were looking to solve.

BloomNet has worked with AVI on several projects, and AVI has maintained the same person as the main point of contact. This level of continuity across multiple projects is extremely valuable. As new individuals were brought in for specific tasks, they were immediately brought up to speed by the main AVI point person. This saved a significant amount of time and money that would otherwise be wasted.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ An integrated system made the capabilities of Route4Me available within the BMS POS system.
- ▶ Automates the delivery management process for retail florists.
- ▶ Shop owners save hours daily by automating manual sorting and order assignment.
- ▶ Optimized routes save drivers time, so they can deliver faster.
- ▶ Near real-time updates on delivery confirmations and failures reduce penalties and allow for faster rescheduling.
- ▶ All information is then stored in a central, highly secured system.
- ▶ Improved customer service increases retention and loyalty.

The solution delivered by AVI enabled BloomNet to empower retail florists to better manage their business. BloomNet is now able to deliver a cutting-edge solution to its shop owners, saving them time and money. AVI is committed to delivering a successful product to our clients, delivering a continuous and positive experience throughout the duration of a project and beyond.

ABOUT AVI

AVI is a software development company focused on creating visual software solutions to solve complex problems. Our team provides innovative solutions in cyber security, business applications, and command-and-control systems to government and commercial customers worldwide.

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At the end of the day, I do not look at AVI as developers or programmers. They are developing a solution, and to do that, you need to understand the underlying aspects of the business. AVI sees the situation in more than black and white. They understood our objective and helped us think through the business problem.

Marc Grezskowiak — Vice President of Technology, BloomNet

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