



Argano creates a priceless employee safety solution for Fresh Mark: “You can’t put a dollar amount on it.”

Client: Fresh Mark

Industry: Nutrition and Food Processing



Challenge

- Site visitors may be symptomatic for Covid
- Stringent health department/ HIPAA guidelines
- Slow, paper-based health-check process



Solutions

- Power Apps to create custom application
- Thermal imaging cameras to identify high-risk entries
- Azure, AI, and machine learning to capture and route data



Results

- Solution developed and delivered in 18 days
- False positive rate of 93% becomes accuracy rate of 96%
- More than 2m screenings at around \$.09 each



As a global player in nutrition and food processing — supplying bacon, ham, lunch meat, and other products to grocery stores, restaurants, and food service companies — Fresh Mark's line of business is nothing less than keeping people fed.

With its four production facilities in Ohio, Fresh Mark is a major employer in the state, with hundreds of personnel at each location, usually working in close proximity on production lines.

When the Covid epidemic landed in early 2020, Fresh Mark, like many other companies, had to quickly implement tools to provide the safest possible environment for its employees. Fortunately, Fresh Mark had just begun a working relationship with Argano, centered on an upgrade of its ERP systems.

While some technology partners focus solely on tech platforms, Argano has always made supporting a client's overarching strategy its focus and was well-suited to work with Fresh Mark as the company turned a strategic eye toward protecting its people while keeping its business operating.

The result was, according Dwight Jellison, Corporate Director of Innovation and Process Improvement, Fresh Mark Inc., something "you

can't put a dollar amount on," a Covid screening solution to help ensure the safety of thousands of employees

From a standard upgrade to an upside-down world

Fresh Mark came to Argano in need of an upgrade from AX 2012 R3 to Dynamics. Its legacy system was no longer able to keep pace with its evolving business needs, but — due to Covid — its needs were about to drastically change.

Because while the pandemic allowed some businesses to either pause operations or pivot to remote working, Fresh Mark's business had to keep going and is hands-on, requiring staff on-site. The goal was providing a safe working environment for its employees, which meant reducing person-to-person interaction during the work check-in process and ensuring regulatory compliance of Covid screening.

"We decided to address [the pandemic] proactively," said Jellison. "We sought input from the health department regarding its guidelines and set-out to create a solution that would meet or beat those guidelines."

Whatever Fresh Mark and Argano came up with had to be proven to satisfy health department guidelines, too. "We had to have systems in place that would

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Corporate Director of Innovation
and Process Improvement
Fresh Mark Inc.

satisfy the health department request to prove we were operating safely, so we could stay open and keep operating. We also wanted to provide employees, each time they enter the building—and we have more than 3,000 entries some days—with a feeling of safety and comfort."

Enter Argano to realize Fresh Mark's "crazy ideas"

In its first attempt at staying open during Covid, Fresh Mark was using a paper-based, manual person-to-person process to conduct health checks. This was challenging for numerous reasons including language barriers, close contact, and reporting the information back to the health department. Fresh Mark needed an easier and faster process.

The company considered developing an application with a custom development team in-house, but quickly realized that the eight-week timeline (minimum) was much too long and costly. They turned to their upgrade partner, Argano, for help, and a new project quickly gathered speed.

"Charlotte [McCormick, President, Microsoft 4 Argano] was someone I could go to with my crazy ideas,"

said Jellison. "We spit-balled a lot of solutions, came up with a lot of ideas, and when Charlotte said, 'Why not look at PowerApps...?', we finally found an idea that worked."

Jellison "dreamed it up," creating a couple of design documents (using Lean Six Sigma tools), including HIPAA requirements and data layouts, and, after a series of calls, meetings, and brain-storming sessions, a framework for Fresh Mark's dream application was in place, and Argano delivered a working solution — Safe Screen — in only 18 days.

Safe Screen: Developed for Fresh Mark; ideal for any business

With a combination of thermal imaging hardware, Microsoft Power Apps, Azure Cognitive Service, Machine Learning, and other technologies, Safe Screen helps identify employees who may be at

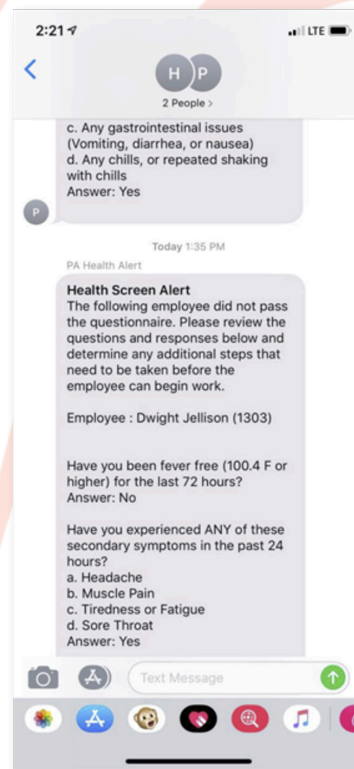
high risk and protect those who aren't.

It automates and reduces time of screening of employees, minimizes person-to-person contact, and increases detection of COVID-19 symptoms. The system automates most steps connected to securely routing critical information and protecting employee privacy.

The application manages health checks daily, enabling employees to use a kiosk to answer a list of screening questions that are adjustable to comply with evolving health department guidelines. It takes a picture of the employee, scans their badge, provides a list of health questions to be answered by the employee (in many languages) and has them complete a temperature check through a thermal camera—all without any physical person-to-person interaction.



But collecting information is only part of the equation. Acting on it is next. Safe Screen also allows Fresh Mark's HR team to follow up on any positive screenings, send and receive emails and text alerts, and get all the details they need on a mobile app.



More than 2 million screenings, and flipping the script on false positives

According to Jellison, “The solution is a key component to keeping our employees safe and secure while at work. We have yet to experience any of the major shutdowns that so many other companies in food processing have had to grapple with and a big part of that has been our ability to screen people at the point of entry.”

Additionally, Argano was able to fix another challenge Fresh Mark faced: an alarming rate of “false positives,” employees who screened positive for Covid symptoms, but in fact had none.

During screenings, thermal cameras in kiosks were triggering false alerts for “fevers” caused by hot objects such as coffee cups, shoes, earbuds, etc. Argano deployed cognitive services and machine learning models, which quickly reduced the number of false alerts (and HR’s time attending to them). In fact, the script was almost entirely flipped, moving from a false positive rate of around 93% to accuracy rates of 96%.

Since its implementation, the solution has screened more than two-million entries into its corporate offices and production facilities, and “caught” nearly 2,000 people with fevers.

“This was a true partnership,” said Jellison. Asked to put a dollar amount on the project and its efficacy in risk mitigation for the company and its personnel, he said simply, “You can’t put a dollar amount on it.” But you can put a cents amount on it, as the cost per screen was approximately \$.09. Jellison added that that was “... pretty good for a system designed, developed, tested and deployed in four weeks.”

Today, Fresh Mark is still running at top speed, having barely missed a beat during the tumult of the global pandemic, and Argano Safe Screen is now a featured application in the Arbela suite of extensions for Microsoft Dynamics. A true partnership, indeed.

To learn more contact us today at microsoft@argano.com.



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