

## CASE STUDY

# How Switched On Building Solutions ensures its staff get home safe and sound



### BUSINESS NEED

When Chris Hughes joined his family's business in 2004, there were five builders on staff. Things have changed. Switched On Building Solutions now employs 120 people across a range of trades, as well as office staff, in Christchurch and Wellington. Among them they share approximately 70 vehicles split between petrol and diesel.

Chris's team tackles a huge range of commercial and residential building and property maintenance services, which might involve a single tradie or a whole crew. At any given time, members of staff could be reattaching a door handle, fitting out an office or project managing a commercial renovation. That diversity makes for a correspondingly large number of jobs and covers a wide geographical spread.

Switched On Building Solutions gets a lot of after-hours call outs, often requiring just a single member of staff to be on site at a time. It's therefore important to know that staff members have returned home safe and sound for the evening.

### SOLUTION

Switched On Building Solutions has always had an eye for innovation. The company was quick to adopt GPS in its vehicles, and tracking technology is still crucial to the business.

"We get a lot of urgent work, so being able to track where the guys are to send the most appropriate person – that's one of the most important things we use EROAD for," Chris says.

But the main reason Switched On Building Solutions moved to EROAD, installing the system throughout its fleet, was because Chris spotted a company that could keep pace with the growth of his own business. "With EROAD we saw lots of development coming through, and continual improvement."

With its progressive philosophy, Switched On Building Solutions has been quick to enlist technology to ensure the wellbeing of staff, and the company is about to start using geofences to make sure workers get home safely.



"Just going the extra mile to see that the guys are safe is really important."

Chris Hughes  
Managing Director, Switched On Building Solutions



### Organisation

Switched On Building Solutions

### Industry

Property Services

### CUSTOMER BENEFIT

The new health and safety laws held no fears for Chris – Switched On Building Solutions has been waiting years for the rest of the country to catch up. In Christchurch, strict attention to safety regulations is the norm, and clients demand it. That's hardly surprising when you've experienced the very real threat of your home – or a building site – collapsing around your ears.

Safety on site is only part of the jigsaw, though, and Chris is enthusiastic about the idea of using geofences to check that employees are getting home in one piece. By drawing an electronic border around a defined area, Chris can know when one of Switched On Building Solutions' vehicles returns to base.

"I think it's going to be a cool thing," he says. "We do a lot of after-hours work, so the builders might get a call-out and they'll be by themselves. They'll have to go to site and meet with the tenant or homeowner to resolve a problem, then get home again.

"Being able to see when those vehicles have moved and make sure they have returned to where they're supposed to be will be handy. Just going the extra mile to see that the guys are safe is really important."

It helps in the pocket, too. To maintain its ACC accreditation, Switched On Building Solutions needs to show that it knows its crew gets home safely from the job. The accreditation equates to a saving of 20 percent in ACC levies – a five-figure sum for a company of Switched On Building Solutions size and Chris says it delivers an immediate return on investment.

"It's a huge advantage," says Chris. "For the amount the system costs, I don't know why people wouldn't have it, to be honest."