

CITY OF PORTLAND MODERNIZES LABORATORY OPERATIONS WITH METAFIELD



Portland's Lab Sees **91% Faster** Reporting After MetaField Adoption

In the engineering industry, the accuracy and timeliness of laboratory testing are foundational to the safety, quality, and success of public infrastructure projects. Materials testing plays a critical role in ensuring that roads, bridges, parks, and utilities are built to withstand environmental pressures and meet regulatory standards. For municipal agencies like the City of Portland, the ability to deliver reliable test results quickly and manage operational data efficiently is essential to supporting the work of various departments and ensuring public trust. Yet, outdated systems and manual processes can severely hinder these efforts.

The City of Portland's laboratory team, responsible for materials testing services across various bureaus, faced growing operational inefficiencies due to a legacy system that was becoming unstable. Acknowledging the need for a reliable, long-term solution, the city proactively sought a software partner that could deliver ongoing support and streamlined workflows without disrupting operations. Discover how the City of Portland chose MetaField to resolve long-standing challenges and usher in a new era of efficiency and operational excellence.



BACKGROUND

The City of Portland's internal lab provides testing services supporting various departments. For more than eight years, the lab relied on a custom-built system using Microsoft Access maintained by a single employee, Andrew Weiher, the Interim Supervisor for the Materials Testing Laboratory. Although the system was tailored to their specific requirements, maintaining it became more complex after Microsoft discontinued support for Access.

This led to frequent system crashes—sometimes lasting up to six hours— that regularly disrupted operations, forcing staff to fall back on pen-and-paper documentation and manually re-enter lost data.

The burden of maintaining the system rested solely on Andrew, who was often called upon to troubleshoot issues during vacations or after hours. Managing the system also included manually creating and maintaining over one hundred forms, a process that was timeconsuming and often required duplicating forms to accommodate different record states. This unsustainable setup highlighted the urgent need for a more stable, efficient, and supported solution.

GOALS AND REQUIREMENTS

The City of Portland sought a new platform that would not only reduce its reliance on manual processes and individual system management but also modernize key operational areas. The primary objectives were to streamline scheduling, improve reporting speed, and ensure mobile accessibility—features that would make the system easier to use in the field and across departments. Equally important, the lab needed a partner that could offer configuration flexibility, standardization of forms and reporting, and enhanced tools for managing field data effectively.

WHY METAFIELD WAS CHOSEN

After evaluating several solutions, the City of Portland selected MetaField for its mobile-first design, intuitive user interface, and robust customization tools. One standout feature was the platform's dynamic form-building capabilities, which allowed Portland's team to create project-specific forms independently or with expert assistance from MetaField's support team—at no extra cost.

MetaField also eliminated the need for outdated workarounds like RSA tokens and remote desktop sessions. Field technicians could now enter data directly from job sites using mobile devices, improving both speed and accuracy. For the City, MetaField delivered a cost-effective and scalable solution that aligned with both operational goals and budget constraints.

DEDICATED SUPPORT

The implementation of MetaField was marked by clear communication and a well-structured onboarding process. While the transition to a new system naturally came with a learning curve, the Agile Frameworks team delivered responsive and hands-on support that made adoption smooth and manageable. Staff quickly acclimated to the platform, aided by effective knowledge sharing that helped new users ramp up efficiently.

Post—go-live, whenever support was needed, the experience remained just as positive. Support tickets were typically answered within hours, with timely solutions that minimized disruptions. Staff appreciated being able to speak directly with a real person—someone who not only acknowledged the issue but proactively communicated that they were already investigating a resolution.

OUTCOMES AND IMPROVEMENTS

Since implementing MetaField, the City of Portland has seen dramatic improvements in operational efficiency and data accuracy. Report processing time dropped from approximately **200 minutes per week to just 16.66 minutes—a reduction of over 91%**. On a perreport basis, time dropped from two minutes to just 10 seconds, enabling faster turnaround and reducing administrative overhead.

Reporting has also improved on the client side. Through MetaField's Client Portal, stakeholders now receive a single, consolidated email granting access to all project reports—eliminating the need for multiple individual emails. The City of Portland can effortlessly add new recipients to the distribution list, giving clients immediate access to both historical and current project data with just one click.

Specimen labeling was another area of major improvement. Previously, mislabeled or illegible tags created data errors and delays. Now, the lab uses label printers integrated with MetaField to automatically generate stickers with critical information such as ID numbers and break dates. This ensures consistent and accurate labeling, reducing human error and saving time in post-processing.

Scheduling for the City of Portland became significantly more efficient with MetaField's drag-and-drop functionality, allowing assignments to be made in just a few clicks. Technicians receive automatic notifications with real-time updates, ensuring everyone stays informed.

Training management has been streamlined through integrated written and performance exam tracking, and equipment calibration tracking is now more efficient with the ability to hyperlink calibration documents directly into the system for easier third-party management.



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CONCLUSION

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By replacing its outdated, unsupported system with MetaField, the City of Portland transformed its laboratory operations from a fragile, manual process into a resilient, technology-driven workflow. Freed from the limitations of a legacy platform and single-person management, the City of Portland now benefits from a robust, mobile-enabled system that delivers measurable efficiencies, enhanced data accuracy, and seamless communication.

MetaField remains a trusted partner in the City of Portland's mission to deliver safe, high-quality infrastructure—empowering its team to operate with confidence, precision, and future-ready capabilities

Agile Frameworks® provides comprehensive software-as-a-service solutions that integrate corporate, field, and lab data for business process automation across architecture and engineering disciplines. We transform workflows, create high-value data, and deliver outputs you can trust, resulting in industry-leading productivity and profitability.



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