

# INTELEX

CASE STUDY



# CORY

Ensuring London Has a Safe,  
Clean and Sustainable Way  
of Managing Waste

Cory uses a river-based infrastructure to help London manage its recyclable and non-recyclable waste, making the city cleaner and safer.

Founded in the mid-late 1800s and incorporated 125 years ago in 1896 as W.M. Cory & Son, the company has evolved from a coal distribution company on the River Thames into one of the UK's leading waste management, recycling and energy recovery companies. Their vision is to be partner of choice for sustainable waste management throughout London and the South East of England.

With such a long history and presence, it stands to reason that, like many companies, some of the processes and protocols were overly reliant on paper-based forms and checklists, making it more difficult to meet current demands while planning an expansion of the business. These paper-based forms needed to be scanned and emailed to a central team who cut-and-pasted relevant information into an Excel spreadsheet for basic analysis.

This means that the data collected in these reports—whether it is environmental- or safety-related--couldn't be seen in aggregate or in context. In addition, the process to manually collect the required data was time-consuming and costly. That has changed with the implementation of Intalex software applications like SPI (Sustainability Performance Indicators), Safety Observations Management Software and Incident Management Software.

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**- Mark Greenwood, Director of Health, Safety, Environment & Quality Assurance at Cory**

## Low Tech Business/High Expectations for Growth

Cory operates four waste transfer stations in central London on the banks of the river Thames. The waste, which comes from London's homes and businesses, is placed in containers, loaded onto barges and moved by river to Cory's Energy Waste plant on the outskirts of London. The ash residue resulting from processing is then moved by river to another site, where it is reprocessed as building materials.

Altogether, Cory processes 765,000 tonnes of London's non-recyclable black bag waste a year, enough to fill St. Paul's Cathedral 12 times! As part of that process:

- 150,000 tonnes of carbon has been saved by not sending waste to landfills
- 731,000 tonnes of non-recyclable 'black bag' waste diverted from landfills
- 501GWh of electricity generated, enough to power 160,000 homes, and
- 100,000 trucks kept off London streets by using the river to move material cross a city, substantially reducing carbon emissions whilst providing an essential public service.



“The truth is, our business is quite low-tech in many aspects,” said Mark Greenwood, Director of Health, Safety, Environment & Quality Assurance at Cory. “We grade, sort, containerise and move material using a mobile plant, cranes and barges. Whilst there is potential for greater automation and digitisation, our bottlenecks are largely physical, not digital, so there hasn’t really been any great urgency to digitise every part of our business process. The opportunities for greater use of mobile, and analytics, are mainly around our support functions—HSEQ (Health, Safety, Environment, Quality), Finance, IT [and] HR.”

But Cory has ambitious goals, said Greenwood: “We have targets to hit net zero carbon by 2050, and when you model what this means for shorter timeframes, it is important to have reliable and accurate datasets for actual and historic energy usage.”

These goals, along with the senior leadership team’s interest in maintaining or exceeding compliance with all safety and environmental regulations, meant it was time to upgrade from paper spreadsheets and calculators. Today’s actual data is tomorrow’s historic data, Greenwood added, so having a strategy for organising that data is a precursor to future decisions about investments and innovation.

Any significant EHS incident, such as a fatality or pollution, attracts adverse attention from the media, from regulators and from enforcement agencies. Reducing the risk of EHS incidents frees up Cory’s capacity to concentrate on delivering services. “Our success is measured by feedback from our customers and suppliers,” said Greenwood. “We strive to ensure that these relationships are characterised by outstanding service, delivered responsibly.”

But there is another benefit from applying EHS processes and systems, particularly the ISO management systems, he added, which is that the organisation is more resilient and ultimately, more efficient, when processes are reliable, predictable and—where appropriate—standardized. “This thinking underpins our integrated management system, which is the foundation upon which all our EHS processes run.”



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## Pain Points: Visibility and Fostering Continuous Improvement

Pain points around fulfilling the company's EHS mission were two-fold. The first is having clarity and visibility about what is really going on in Cory's frontline operations. "It is simply not possible to be everywhere at once, so we depend on people reporting honestly and openly anything that could contribute to increased risk in our business," said Greenwood. "Collating this information in a timely manner is crucial if we are to anticipate and prevent accidents, rather than simply to investigate ones that have already happened."

The second pain point is related to the first—it is about fostering a culture of continuous improvement and awareness. This relies on trust between management and workers, Greenwood noted, and the transparency that rapid reporting and feedback on safety performance provides them is an essential component in winning and maintaining that trust.

Cory has ambitious plans to grow the business. These include investing in key infrastructure to address waste capacity issues and to support the UK's journey to net zero carbon by 2050. When these plans are combined with the requirements for continuous improvement and reporting, the need for streamlined data collection becomes apparent.

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## Why Intelex?

In addition to the need to track energy usage and meet environmental goals, the company's board and executive leadership place great importance on maintaining the highest levels of safety performance, so there already was an appetite to pursue projects to improve the awareness and increase the efficiency of Cory's safety management system. The ability to do more, and to increase the speed and accuracy of what they already were doing within existing resources, was extremely attractive.

Like many businesses, Cory feels that their mission is unique and special, and that any generic out-of-the-box solution would require customization. "We really liked that Intelex were happy to encourage us to become system administrators and to have ownership and control of the configuration. Having a system that allows us to have the flexibility in making the workflows and processes match those we were already comfortable with within our company was a key feature," said Greenwood.

For example, the ability to configure the incident types so as to align with the specific hazards and risks in their operations was important. Cory has a river-based logistics operation that has very specific reporting requirements than those required for the land-based sites they also operate—so being able to configure the system to accommodate both was important.



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## Implementation Tip: Engage Employees

There were two phases to the implementation of Intelex at Cory. The first was to digitise their existing process. The change management of this first stage revolved around getting user logons and permissions right and breaking the old habits employees had of emailing information to each other.

“It can be just as difficult to switch off an old process as it is to implement a new one, and this phase takes time,” said Greenwood. “We found that providing people with the opportunity to design the new tool was the impetus for a conversation about what they really needed.”

There were often assumptions about why data was in a particular format, for example, and inviting people to contribute to the design of the new tool forced them to justify why features were important, Greenwood added, but also made them realise that many aspects of what they were doing “weren’t all that important after all.”

Adoption of the mobile app has been good, and the number of hazard reports and safety observations is increasing—the number of safety observations made per month has doubled in the six months since the introduction of Intelex—which is an encouraging sign, according to Greenwood. He believes it will take some time for this to translate to lower incident rates, though.

The second phase was where the real value creation kicked in, Greenwood added. That was where they started to use dashboards in management meetings to drive decisions based on real-time and accurate information collected by the system.



## Results, Bumps in the Road, Optimism

Since implementing Intelex software applications like SPI (Sustainability Performance Indicators), Safety Observations Management Software and Incident Management Software, Cory's information management and analytics capability has improved markedly, as has their ability to analyse incident data to understand what has happened and why. Audit Management Software, Inspection Management Software and Job Safety Analysis (JSA) Software currently are in the process of being implemented.

The fact that the applications "speak" to each other has added to efficiencies. For example, inspections are one form of administrative control, and they are mandated through the risk assessment process. Being able to link records created in JSA with data in Audit Management and Inspection Management that demonstrate those controls are being applied and are effective is useful.

"We are excited about the JSA module we are just implementing now," said Greenwood. "This should streamline a time-consuming (but essential) safety process, and we are confident that this will increase and improve engagement in a process that works best when done collaboratively by HSEQ and Operations personnel."

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When Cory launched Intelex, the team set up user access and managed permissions. Initially, they noticed "many, many errors in reporting" that took a while to address through training and coaching. However, because they now can see these errors in real time, they are able to address the fundamental, underlying issues. In addition, they know the data they are saving and sharing with leadership is more accurate.

While the implementation team's workload initially increased, "the level of confidence that we will be in a good position to defend a future claim, for example, is arguably greater than it was before," said Greenwood. Reducing the administrative and information management overhead, whilst continuing to demonstrate compliance, "will be a very welcome improvement," he concluded.



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**INTELEX**

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