How SimpleCrew Helped Door & Window Guard Systems (D.A.W.G.S.) Inc. Scale their Business 500% Through Better Photo Management

Industry

Field Services & Property Preservation

Location

Chicago, Illinois - with teams across the United States

Schedule a demo

Highlights

Stats

- 557,000+ lifetime photos uploaded to the app
- Scaled business 500% by making a repeatable process with SimpleCrew

Challenges

- Google Drive and DropBox weren't scalable enough to manage his photos
- Other solutions he tried weren't easy to use

Solution

- Brandon manages his team more effectively without having to visit work sites

D.A.W.G.S. Inc.

D.A.W.G.S. Inc. is a security solutions provider for vacant buildings and properties. They use steel panels to cover door and window openings on vacant buildings to eliminate break-ins and many of the other problems associated with vacant properties.

Property investors, property managers, housing authorities, rehabbers and real estate professionals trust D.A.W.G.S. to keep their vacant properties secure.

The Challenge

The D.A.W.G.S. team needed a way to track the work their installation team was doing in the field. They'd been using Google Drive and DropBox to manage tens of thousands of photos, but needed an easier way to organize and share them with clients.

> *"The only way to prove anything is with your app. **In our business, photos are everything**."*

Brandon Buhai
Owner
D.A.W.G.S. Inc.

For that reason, among others, Brandon chose to use SimpleCrew as a photo management tool for his business.

> *"When we looked at you guys all those years ago, that was a really big deal for us because we'll send a guy to do an inspection, and if there's nothing wrong we don't need a guy to make a SimpleCrew folder. **But if there is an onsite problem, he can make a folder for it and we can see it back in the office, and that's a really big deal for us too.**"*

When Brandon founded D.A.W.G.S. in 2009, managing his field team through photos was a nightmare.

> "We had a combination of digital cameras out in the field and cell phone cameras. I had guys taking pictures of the jobs. We tried using Google Apps and Google Drive to get photos in there and share them to customers. And I had customers asking me all the time 'Is this done?' 'Can I get pictures of them?'. **We were downloading them and then emailing them to customers, and it was literally photo hell.**"

When he read about SimpleCrew in an article online, it ticked all the boxes for him right away.

> "**With SimpleCrew, we are a lot more efficient and as a result, require fewer people**. If I had to manually manage all these photos, I would have to download them, pick the ones I want, clean them up, zip them up, put it in Google Drive, then try to share them through Google Drive. And sometimes those shares don't work great if your client isn't a Google Apps company."

Brandon was completely aware that managing the photos the way he was doing it before was unsustainable.

> "Not only that, but the other concern was security. We eventually stopped sharing and just started sharing zip files because **we weren't sure if sharing all this access to our Google Drive with these people was something we'd be able to do long term**."

Manually managing the photos took precious time that he could've been spending focusing on his core business.

> "When we started we were using digital cameras and I would take the little card and upload that at the end of the day to a PC, figure out which properties were which and then send them to the customer. **Time consuming would've been an understatement**."

But the act of taking photos in the field wasn't the problem, it was in managing the photos in a way that made them actionable to the business.

> "It has changed since then because our phone cameras have gotten so much better and now you can take a photo and send it. **But now the frustration is not in taking the actual photos, it's in the organization of the actual photos**."

Brandon has built an entire business on photos, and SimpleCrew makes managing them easier than any tool on the market.

> "If I didn't have SimpleCrew, I'd have to send my guys out with digital cameras, take a bunch of pictures, somehow share them with me, and I wouldn't even know which properties they belong to. Figure out how to manage them. And then frustration number two would be figuring out how to share those in any meaningful way to my customers and knowing that my customers were able to access them. **It solves a lot of problems for us where there aren't a lot of options for how to solve those**."

The Solution

To solve these challenges, Brandon uses SimpleCrew as an easy-to-use photo management tool.

> *"We've done thousands of properties. When we measure the property that's 20 pictures. When we put it up there's probably 40 pictures. Anytime there's a service call there's 30 pictures. And when we take it down there's another 20-30 pictures. And then we do probably 2,000 to 4,000 properties per year."*

Since he very rarely finds himself on-site, he uses the app as to manage his teams remotely.

> ***"My customers don't have anyone on site****. It's the guy who painted, it's the guy who cut the lawn, it's the guys who do the roof. There are vendors for everything. Most of the time our clients aren't at these properties and they need some proof that the work is done."*

He never worries about getting any clients the photo proof they need for any job.

> *"We have some clients that have crazy photo requirements. Like a picture of the crossroad signs when you get there, or a picture of the house number. I made a pdf of the instructions, took a picture and then uploaded it to SimpleCrew so my guys know what to do."*

And it's not just photos. His team members regularly add context to the photos with notes and comments.

> *"Our guys take a lot of notes on the photos as well. We can get those really easily to the office and get those to customers as well."*

Above all, they say the main part of why they love SimpleCrew so much is because it's so easy to use.

> *"The thing that makes your product stand out from anything we've ever used is how simple it is to use."*

They've tried other tools but struggled to get everyone to use them.

> ***"As much as I'd love some of that other functionality, if it adds complexity, it's not for us.*** *We don't even have training. We basically say, 'Hey guys, go to the site, take a few pictures' and they're good to go."*

Brandon says his top driver has always been how easy SimpleCrew is to use for his team.

> *"The simplicity of SimpleCrew is a really big deal for us. And my partner who's in charge of operations always says to me that he loves the app. He just raves about it because he doesn't have to hold their hands in the field.* ***They can just get going right away. And that for us is the number one driver. And it always has been****.*

The Result

The most important goal Brandon has been able accomplish since using SimpleCrew is scaling his business.

> *"When I started using SimpleCrew, my business was a fraction the size that it is now. Maybe 10-20% the size it is now.* **I don't know if my business could have grown to the size it is now without your tool***."*

He says that if he'd stuck with other solutions, his business wouldn't have grown to the size it's grown to.

> *"Without your tool, I would've had to use one of the other tools I found. I did find other tools that could do some of the things SimpleCrew does, but* **without a photo management or photo extension tool, the business couldn't have grown***."*

He's since added more workers and manages field employees all over the country.

> *"With all the people in the field and all the people in the office and the customers that interact with it, I don't know how you would grow the business."*

He says other generic or complicated tools just don't make the cut.

> *"We manage thousands of properties now.* **That'd be impossible to manage with Google Drive or DropBox.***"*

He has complete confidence in handling any client disputes or project updates by providing photo proof.

> *"We've never been in a situation where we couldn't get the customers the photos they needed in a very timely manner."*

He even uses it in conjunction with other tools, like Salesforce.

> *"We built a management system in Salesforce.com, and we actually copy your shared URLs into our system, and a lot of times the communication that goes out to customers is automated, so we don't have to send out the same thing over and over again.* **One of the fields that's automated in that is your SimpleCrew URL***."*

Day in and day out, Brandon and his team blast SimpleCrew URLs all over the country to keep their customer communication fully optimized.

> *"One of our biggest customers is a real-estate fund in California, for example, and they never ever go to any of these properties. We tell them 'when we secure it you'll get photos before and after and when we send you the price we'll send you a couple of links to show you how we're going to do that.' We do that all the time."*

When asked what his life would be like without SimpleCrew, he said he would not have been able to grow and scale the business to the point where he has without it.

> *"It's a very easy to use tool, where if you need to take a lot of pictures, and share those with customers, this is the easiest tool I've seen on the market to do that."*

Brandon relies on SimpleCrew to manage the constant flow of photos internally and with clients.

> *"If we didn't have SimpleCrew, we'd have to use another tool. We would survive, but it would be costly, and more time-consuming because I'd need to have more people to manage the photos. It just wouldn't be as easy to do."*

SIMPLECREW

D.A.W.G.S.
DOOR & WINDOW GUARD SYSTEMS

Spending too much time managing your crew's photos in Google Drive or DropBox? We can fix that.

Schedule a demo

Let us show you how SimpleCrew can help you manage your field team's photos, without taking away from your core business.