



Advisicon Inc. Case Study Portland General Electric

Abstract:

Portland General Electric (PGE) needed to make significant changes to its infrastructure in order to remain competitive as well as meet growing consumer demand. Given the size and scope of the project, it commanded the attention of the state of Oregon in addition to the corporate executives. Advisicon deployed a successful solution utilizing Microsoft technology to provide a flexible and scalable project management structure as well as detailed reporting functions. Additionally, Advisicon curriculum was used for training and education to create a supportive organizational environment.

Portland General Electric (PGE):

Portland General Electric (PGE) was on the precipice of change. Faced with growing energy requirements, a need to install a two-way communications system and the ability to collect and process this data, a new system needed to be implemented. The changes and systems needed to meet these demands were required to be fast, efficient and effective.

For PGE, deployment of advanced metering systems was considered the next step in the quickly evolving utilities sector. Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) describes the automated collection of meter data over a fixed communications network (sometimes called automated meter reading AMR). With more than one-third of all electric utilities in North America already having this type of system, PGE was positioning to provide demand response and direct load control programs to its customers. Considering that by 2010, experts project 40% of utility customers in the U.S. will have “smart metering”, the conversion was also of tremendous interest to the Oregon Public Utility Commission.

Business Situation:

Upon conversion to the AMI system, PGE would become one of the largest deployments in the U.S. with approximately 850,000 meters installed. The rationale for installing an advanced metering system included:

1. Cost savings
2. Elimination of inaccurate, missing or problematic reads
3. Improved customer service

The PGE mission was to “design, construct and operate a two-way advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) that provides a communications and control platform for valued customer services, process efficiencies and the collection and use of interval data.”

Solution Delivered

Advisicon evaluation and analysis revealed two main areas that needed to be addressed to ensure deployment success.

Technological Issues:

- Identify project controls, office portfolio and program needs and plans





- Identify existing architecture for supporting project and resource management
- Create a project and resource scheduling roadmap for software implementation

Organizational Issues:

- Identify organizational and cultural sticking points and adoption roadblocks
- Document, summarize and present the plan for review by key stakeholders allowing approval to move forward

Benefits

PGE was able to reap the benefits of a well defined project management system by taking full advantage of the functionality of Microsoft technology. Implementation of these tools allowed the development of a successful AMI system to be launched.

Overall, PGE was able to realize:

- Effective project portfolio management standards and workflow reporting on projects, resources, deliverables and cross project dependencies
- Detailed project planning and ensured timely collection and interpretation of schedule data
- Supported organizational adoption through training and other educational efforts to expand user knowledge and leverage tool performance

Deployment of the new system resulted in clear, measurable operational improvements for the organization. The enhanced reporting functionality gave opportunity for better interpretation of the data ultimately resulting in more efficient utilization of resources across the board. Importantly, the system was able to provide:

- Timely information on project tasks, risks, resources and statistics allowing for enhanced visibility into the organization and more effective decision-making
- Simple data entry with easily accessible reporting functions designed to pull data accurately and without human error
- More efficient resource allocation and better visibility into the organization.

Software and services

- Microsoft Office Suite
- Microsoft Project 2003
- Microsoft Access
- Advisicon curriculum for Risk Management and Project Training

Key users

- Project Managers
- Sponsors
- Directors
- Managers
- Resources

