

EnergySouth Reduces Appointment Window-Times for Customers While Increasing Technician Visits-Per-Day



The Company

EnergySouth, Inc., based in Mobile, Alabama, is a holding company for a family of energy businesses, with natural-gas distribution and storage representing the company's primary lines of business. EnergySouth companies are uniquely positioned to capitalize on a strategic location that brings together Gulf of Mexico production, interstate pipeline capacity, salt-dome storage as well as growing industrial and power generation markets in the southeastern United States.

The Challenge

EnergySouth needed a way to improve the efficiency of its field-workforce trouble-ticket management system while also reducing administrative costs and increasing customer satisfaction. The field workforce previously used a paper system to open, track, and close trouble tickets. Workers arrived at headquarters each morning at 8:00am to receive their trouble tickets for the day, a process that usually took about 45 minutes that otherwise could have been allocated towards on-site customer service time. The field crews then dispersed to call on their first customers.

After completing their first calls, technicians moved on to the next ticket. Quite often however, they didn't call in to officially close out the first ticket. This led to latency issues, and without real-time data, dispatchers didn't know what was going on in the field. In the best case, the hand-written data on the tickets was entered into the

KEY BENEFITS

- Technicians complete an additional **1.5 jobs per day**
- Customer scheduling windows reduced from **four to two hours**
- Emergency response times reduced by **50%**
- Service revenues increased by **18%**
- Overtime costs reduced by **22%**
- Clerical labour costs reduced by **50%**
- Office supply costs reduced by **33%**
- Job status and parts reports generated in **real-time**
- On-time arrival rate increased from **75-90%**

corporate system when the technicians returned to headquarters each evening. More likely, the information didn't enter the system for two or three days — much too slow for the company to react quickly to fluctuating service demands.



EnergySouth also had a scheduling system that didn't cope well with change. Located along the Gulf Coast, weather emergencies added to the daily emergencies that all gas companies face. Since paper tickets were handed out at the beginning of the day, technicians had to complete their usual workload plus handle any emergencies that might pop-up as the day went on. Imbalances in the workload inevitably led to a large amount of overtime work.



ClickSchedule ensures that EnergySouth assigns the best technician to each trouble ticket. When a trouble ticket is created in the work management system, ClickSchedule assesses the characteristics of the job to be done and dynamically optimizes the schedule, taking into account technician skills, part availability, location, drive-time, workload, and service level agreement to deliver the best possible utilization of all field resources.

The Datria component supports the drip-feed nature of the optimized schedule by allowing workers to update EnergySouth's work management system over the phone. Field personnel simply call a central number and talk to the system to report job status, parts used and any specific comments on the job. If the job is complete, the system responds to the technician with information on his or her next job.

"Several people were concerned about not getting paper orders. Within one week, most of them were closing out their tickets with no problem. Now the original skeptical employees would not want to go back to the old way."

- Alan Hobbs, Director of Customer Service,
EnergySouth

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- For more information on ClickSoftware see www.clicksoftware.com

Additionally, EnergySouth had soaring clerical costs, ranging from office supplies to the clerical staff needing to print, distribute, manage, and re-key the paper tickets.

The Solution

A combination of ClickSoftware's ClickSchedule workforce optimization software and Datria's voice-based Ticket Management provided the solution that delivered on EnergySouth's three primary objectives of improving the efficiency of its trouble ticket management system, reducing costs, and increasing customer satisfaction.

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