



## Vectren Case Study

### Energizing Field Service Performance

*Vectren Corporation is an energy holding company headquartered in Evansville, Indiana. Vectren's energy delivery subsidiaries provide gas and/or electricity to more than one million customers in service territories that cover nearly two-thirds of Indiana and west central Ohio. The utility supports its customers via 200 field technicians who routinely handle more than 2,000 calls per day, of which 20-30% are classified as emergencies or same day orders.*

*Vectren's utilities (operating under the name Vectren Energy Delivery) provide natural gas to roughly one million business and residential customers, and electricity to approximately 140,000 customers. The group distributes gas and electricity for commercial customers in a wide range of industries and residential customers in "tier 2" urban areas and rural areas. The corporation reported more than \$3.4 billion in assets for fiscal year 2005.*

#### Case Study

#### Vectren

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#### Challenge

The principal challenge for Vectren Energy Delivery was to find a mobile workforce solution that would help it standardize processes, reduce costs, improve resource allocation, and improve customer service and satisfaction. Vectren management also was determined to find a compatible solution suite that would seamlessly integrate with—and complement—its existing CIS and mobile systems. Meeting the utility's deployment goals was a key selection factor, so the chosen solution would need to address such critical areas as integrating real-time to mobile, optimizing schedules continuously, managing emergencies, drip-feeding work to field staff, and offering capacity-based appointment booking, as well as enabling technological upgrades.

After careful review of many solutions that were commercially available, Vectren chose the full capability of ViryaNet Service Hub for Utilities—including its Service Scheduler and Service Intelligence modules; best practices content, and robust functionality—as this

web-based solution provided everything needed to support the utility's plans for easily disseminating information throughout the organization.

#### Solution

ViryaNet Service Hub for Utilities was used initially to help Vectren move from traditional manual tracking and scheduling to a fully-automated appointment scheduling system. It also facilitated the move from decentralized to centralized resource planning, as well as from area-based work deployment to a much larger zone-based model. The daily number of true "emergency" work orders—which require significant manual intervention—also was substantially reduced. And work orders that used to be scheduled and delivered each morning for the full day, could now be "drip-fed" within a 45-minute window to each individual field technician, thereby allowing continuous optimization through the day as events warranted.

ViryaNet Service Scheduler, the advanced algorithmic optimizer component of Service Hub for Utilities, was used to schedule approximately 200 Vectren field service technicians across eight regions, delivering a range of services that included meter "turn-on" and "turn-off" services, credit and collections, asset management, and many more. It is now used to optimally schedule Vectren resources based on specific company goals and customer service requirements.

## Process

This was a project intended as one step in a broader, executive-led strategy, to standardize and optimize all the asset management functions of the energy delivery group.

For the primary purposes of evaluating the most suitable dispatch and meter order management solution alternatives and selecting the one that would be most appropriate to meet the company's stated needs, Vectren established an internal project team that included key members of its existing field force to help ensure that the final selection would serve to enhance what Vectren field employees already did best—that is, support their customers. Ultimately, Vectren selected ViryaNet because of the robust functionality of its solution, coupled with its ability to positively impact the utility's bottom-line.

Following acquisition of the required software license and professional services from GE Energy, a ViryaNet strategic partner, Vectren was quickly able to begin using ViryaNet Service Hub for Utilities to complement its existing suite of applications. This ultimately led to the ability of the organization to both improve customer satisfaction and significantly enhance operational efficiencies—all facilitated through the use of the fully-automated, web-based solution.

Vectren's project enabled ViryaNet to add significant product improvements to Service Hub.

## Results

Vectren, a customer since early 2004, has used ViryaNet's mobile workforce management solution in a number of key areas, resulting in:

- (1) reduced operational costs of approximately 10% as a result of an increase in the efficiency of its field force, reduced travel time and overtime, and less time spent on manual scheduling
- (2) greater control through better processes, as a result of better resource utilization and increased visibility of the geographic workload
- 3) centralized planning, focusing directly on field resources and technician route management
- (4) performance management based on robust performance metrics available all the way down to the operating center and technician levels.

The ViryaNet solution also provided Vectren with the ability to assign 98% of its calls—including optimal routes—via overnight batch, with all same-day appointments automatically assigned to each technician. Emergencies still could be assigned manually—at the utility's preference—but now with the dispatchers empowered with their new mini-optimization capabilities.