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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF THE
2006
COOPERATIVE
Innovators
AWARD



RECOGNIZING
EXCELLENCE
IN TECHNOLOGY
AND
MEMBER
SERVICE

Presented at the NRECA/Touchstone Energy®
Connect 2006 Conference & Expo
May 17, 2006
San Antonio, TX

2006 COOPERATIVE Innovators AWARD

People's Electric Cooperative

Ada, OK

*Electronic Work
Management
System*



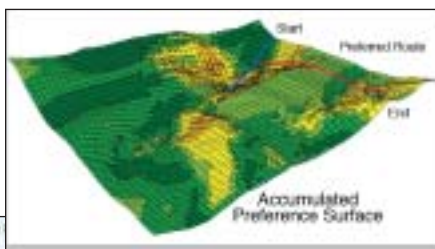
After years of fighting the inefficient flow of paperwork, People's EC needed a better way of getting data to and from the field. The answer was an Electronic Work Management System, featuring software developed by People's EC employees. The system utilizes the wireless IP network at the co-op's operations facility to get the data to and from the service trucks. Each time a service order request is entered into the co-op's customer information system (CIS), the data is sent to the Electronic Work Management System. The work is then reviewed and assigned by the dispatching supervisor and downloaded to the service trucks before they leave for the day. Field personnel have complete access to all service orders assigned that day. If an equipment (i.e., meter or transformer) change is performed, the system pre-enters the existing equipment information for the employee. With only minimal input, the employee is able to save all the information needed to complete the job request. The paperless flow of data allows the co-op to resolve meter issues very efficiently and has also aided in interdepartmental communications at the utility. Office personnel can, at a glance, view the assigned work as well as completed work information. The technology has allowed the co-op to arm its personnel with the information they need to provide the best possible service to members.

Contact: Kevin Wood, kwood@peoplesec.com

Georgia Transmission Corporation

Tucker, GA

*GTC-EPRI Overhead Electric Transmission
Line Siting Methodology*



High-voltage transmission lines are in high demand in the United States with growth of at least 20 percent expected in the next decade. But the selection of overhead transmission line routes is frequently difficult and can even be controversial when the process fails to take stakeholder input into account. Georgia Transmission Corporation worked with the Electric Power Research Institute to see if there was a better solution to these siting concerns. They developed a new siting methodology and geographical information system (GIS)-based siting model. Using GIS software called Corridor Analyst[®], the model maps all geographic features in a study area and allows stakeholders to set and assign numerical suitability values, apply engineering constraints and generate corridor alternatives using statistically sound algorithms. Then it can automatically generate reports summarizing the criteria used and values assigned, as well as alternative corridor options. The methodology enhances public involvement by enabling stakeholders to see quantitatively how their input was factored. The new methodology delivers a process that is consistent, objective and defensible for the co-op. As reported in the February 2005 edition of *Transmission and Distribution World*, "instead of shrinking from the security of siting decisions, company officials added their own scrutiny. Instead of confronting public advocacy groups and community stakeholders, [GTC] invited them in."

Contact: Jerry Donovan, jerry.donovan@gatrans.com

Bright Ideas

The Cooperative Innovators Award recognizes co-ops or services to improve mem

In May, the following three distribution co-

from Co-ops

Leadership in adopting new technologies, products and member service and satisfaction.

Two co-ops and one G&T received the 2006 awards:

Adams Electric Cooperative, Inc., was looking to expand the use of its SCADA system to include remote control and monitoring of line equipment. Specifically, the co-op wanted to automate remote line devices-e.g., reclosers and three-phase gang-operated switches-in a cost-effective manner. But purchasing lots of additional remote terminal units (RTUs), new radios or other communication gear would have broken its budget. Because of the remote locations, typical methods of communication were not technically feasible (no line of sight for 900 MHz radio) or were cost prohibitive (leased-line telephone or satellite link fees). Adams personnel found the answer almost literally in the parts bins. The co-op used existing analog technology and older retired equipment to develop a low-cost communications solution that eliminated the need for RTUs to be installed at each location. The system uses dual-tone multi-frequency (DTMF) signaling on an existing low-band radio system to the remote line locations. Standard control packages were installed at each control point and a single RTU and a radio hub were added at the corporate office. This approach met required performance specifications and the co-op's budget. The additional remote monitoring and control has improved Adams' member service by lowering outage restoration times and by reducing operating costs. The co-op learned a valuable lesson: A technology may be older, but it is not necessarily without value. The project gave an existing radio channel that was slated for retirement a new life and a new mission.

Contact: Brian Shearer, brians@adamsec.com

Since the early 1990s, Southside Electric Co-op has wanted to give field employees the same access to data that office employees have. Rapid improvements in communications technology put this goal within reach, and in 2004 the co-op started working with QUALCOMM's® OmniTRACS®, which is used primarily in the transportation industry. Southside Electric staff took the basic OmniTRACS® messaging system and developed its own macros or applications to create a complete utility solution that could integrate the field and office in real time. Today the co-op has macros for collections, service orders, outages, vehicle check-in and check-out, staking appointments, position locations, generators, member complaints, time entries, oil spills, weekly vehicle inspections and safety concerns. Each provides near-real-time database updates. Southside developed applications that allowed the office and field to communicate. Field employees can send any comment to any department. This is documented with date, user and time. Action taken is also documented. Due to the uniqueness of Southside's OmniTRACS® implementation, QUALCOMM® is now working with software vendors to make an electric cooperative solution commercially available. Southside's solution not only improves day-to-day operations but it enhances emergency response capabilities and ultimately lowers operating costs and gives members better service.

Contact: Linda Davis, linda.davis@sec.com

Adams Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Gettysburg, PA

Custom Remote SCADA Control via Low Band Radio



Southside Electric Cooperative

Crewe, VA

Cooperative Communication Now Routed Through the Stars



Certificates of Merit

Four certificates of merit were awarded to innovative co-ops to recognize their ingenuity in the application of new energy and information technologies that improve member service.

Northern Neck Electric Cooperative

Warsaw, VA

Data Access System

Northern Neck Electric Co-op's upgrade to its customer information system (CIS) turned out to be a much bigger deal for employees and members than the co-op had envisioned. The co-op eventually created a whole new Data Access System based on the feedback it received. Northern Neck initially created a Microsoft® Access™ database with web interface as a temporary member-support solution during a CIS upgrade and populated it with the contents of the old system. But the web interface was such a big hit with employees that the co-op was forced to make additional improvements. New interactive features were added and new reports enabled the co-op to provide a variety of information through the Data Access System's web interface. These included information about failed meters, inactive accounts, blink analyses and voltage monitor results.

Contact: Greg White, gwhite@nec.coop

Delta-Montrose Electric Association

Montrose, CO

Home Energy Makeover Contest

Delta-Montrose Electric Association (DMEA) wanted to show members that energy-efficient home improvements are a great way to deal with the higher utility rates sweeping the nation, so they created the Home Energy Makeover Contest. The contest identified members' homes-some of their worst consumer "energy hogs"-to serve as "makeover" models. DMEA worked with the Colorado Energy Science Center to screen the 134 applications received and to select 10 members ready to undergo the contest's home visits and detailed analysis. A home energy rater analyzed the data using the Department of Energy's TREAT software, and case studies were prepared and presented at a special Home Energy Makeover seminar. The top three winners were awarded \$45,000 worth of energy-efficient upgrades, all donated by local stores and vendors.

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Central Virginia Electric Cooperative

Lovingston, VA

Rural Broadband-Over-Power Line System

Central Virginia Electric Cooperative (CVEC) market research discovered that 70 percent of its members had computers but only 5 percent had broadband in their homes and businesses. CVEC looked to broadband-over-power line (BPL) technology for an answer. CVEC worked with International Broadband Electric Communications (IBEC) to resolve the technical challenges. BPL service was activated in July 2004 along two of the co-op's distribution circuits. This initial deployment allowed the broadband signal to travel from the injection point near a substation out to business and residential BPL members as far as 12 miles away. Utilizing RUS Rural Broadband Loan Funds, IBEC plans to provide BPL throughout the CVEC distribution system. Dozens of CVEC members have since expressed their appreciation for and strong interest in CVEC's BPL offering.

Contact: Greg Kelly, gkelly@forvec.com

Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative

Paxton, IL

Customer Management Database

Eastern Illini Electric Co-op (EIEC) makes it a practice to personally contact new members or those building homes or considering high-efficiency heating systems. The co-op aggressively tracks and promotes energy-efficient heating systems through its network of dealers. The co-op's marketing staff sought a means to store this wealth of member data with the ability to access it from anywhere. The co-op created a new Microsoft® Access™ database that could be viewed and edited remotely by a web service application. Now marketing staff can better coordinate home visits to promote efficient heating systems early in the member's decision process. A recent member satisfaction study conducted by Touchstone Energy® revealed that EIEC's highest ratings come from its newest members, the opposite of most other co-ops surveyed. The database project was also done completely in house, saving thousands of dollars over less specific commercially available applications.

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