



CASE STUDY

Louisville Water Company Enhances Payment Services, Improves Customer Experience



Summary

Customer

Louisville Water serves nearly one million people in the Louisville metro area and surrounding counties, including 9 wholesale contracts and contracted operations to 2 water plants.

Challenge

Following their move to Customer Care & Billing, Louisville Water encountered challenges with its payment provider. A lack of communication from the payment provider, plus performance issues with the solution, began to erode the customer experience. Furthermore, employees could not reconcile accounts accurately without considerable manual effort. It was clear that a new payment solution was necessary.

Solution

After reviewing the marketplace, Louisville Water extended its partnership with Utilitec, a Doxim Company by selecting its Electronic Bill Presentment & Payment Solution for Utilities.

Benefit

Customer satisfaction improved, as customers have a variety of convenient options for bill payment. Enhanced reporting helps Louisville Water track all aspects of billing and reconciliation.

The Customer

Based in Louisville, Kentucky, the Louisville Water Company has been providing high-quality drinking water since 1860. Today, its footprint includes more than 1000 square miles in Louisville Metro and surrounding counties. Louisville Water's treatment plants are rated as two of the top 18 in North America, according to the Partnership for Safe Water. The company provides drinking water to nearly one million end consumers.



The Challenge

In 2015, Louisville Water moved to a new Customer Care and Billing solution. This change mandated a change in payment providers as well. Unfortunately, the payment processor Louisville Water initially selected did not live up to expectations.

Challenges with the new payment solution affected both external and internal audiences. Internally, Louisville Water employees noted a lack of proactive communication from the payment provider after go-live. When payment processing issues arose, employees could not access support in a timely fashion. A lack of reporting tools, coupled with a shift from batch to real-time processing, resulted in ongoing problems with account reconciliation.

Externally, end customers were experiencing headaches with bill payment, most acutely with the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) functionality and workflow for phone-based payments. Frustrated customers expressed their displeasure on social media and in person to Louisville Water staff members.

Louisville Water leaders pride themselves on providing not only great-tasting water, but also an optimal customer experience, and they were aware that this solution was not meeting consumer needs. It was time for a change.

The Solution

Louisville Water already had a successful partnership with Utilitec for bill printing, so extending that partnership was a very attractive option for the utility. The Louisville Water team recognized that Utilitec's dedication to customer service was second

to none. Following a comprehensive review of Utilitec's Electronic Bill Presentment & Payment

Solution for Utilities (EBPP), Louisville Water selected Utilitec as its new payment solution partner.

As a result of their suboptimal previous experience, Louisville Water team had a comprehensive list of requirements for a successful payment solution rollout. Utilitec reviewed these requirements, and created a comprehensive project plan for implementation, testing, and phased rollout. The two companies worked closely together to roll out the new payment solution without impact to the customer base.

"I always know what to expect with Utilitec. They had a comprehensive testing plan and defined responsibilities. They performed a soft launch on a small scale so we could identify issues early, and they were right there with us for go-live."

*- Meghan Starnes,
Finance, Louisville Water Company*

Following a successful go-live, Louisville Water is currently taking advantage of many key features of Utilitec's EBPP. The utility is offering several channels for customer-convenient bill payment, including Utilitec's Guest Pay for online and ACH payments, a streamlined and optimized IVR option for phone payments, and a new kiosk for cash-paying customers at head office. All these channels are backed by Utilitec's robust reporting, to help Louisville Water employees monitor payments, resolve problems, and provide an optimal customer experience.



Online - Guest Pay
with ACH and Credit
Card Payments



IVR
with Redesigned
Workflow



Kiosk
New feature



**Enhanced
Reporting**

The Future

Louisville Water and Utilitec are working together on several forward-thinking projects to further enhance the customer experience. As part of their commitment to their community, Louisville Water will be rolling out a donation platform, through which customers can make a donation to their local Water Foundation while paying their water bill. The Water Foundation provides assistance to customers who need help paying their water and sewer bills. Utilitec is assisting in bringing this platform to life.

Utilitec will also help Louisville Water company provide single sign on functionality for WaterSmart and Link services, so customers can monitor their water consumption and other metrics through a single, convenient portal.

And finally, recognizing that the utility customer of the future will expect more convenient, multi-channel payment options than ever, Louisville Water and Utilitec are working together to offer customer-convenient retail cash payments and SMS payment

functionality. These options will ensure that all Louisville Water customers can pay their bills through the channels that suit them best, improving their experience and reducing the billing cycle for the utility.

“Utilitec really listened to us and what we wanted, and made sure they were open to new ideas. They listened to their end users.”

- Meghan Starnes, Finance,
Louisville Water Company

“Utilitec treats our customers as their own. Whether they are going to get the credit or not, they are going to provide great service, and that has worked out well for our customers.”

- Meghan Starnes, Finance,
Louisville Water Company

Payments made simple, with an omnichannel solution just for utilities.



SEE THE UTILITEC DIFFERENCE

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