SOSMobile Case Study: Midwest Energy, Inc.

SOSMobile's Long History at Midwest Energy, Inc.

An SOSMobile client since 2002, Midwest Energy, Inc. (MWE) headquartered in Hays, Kansas, is a consumer-owned electric and natural gas company serving approximately 92,000 customers in central and western Kansas.

An early adopter of mobile technology, MWE's techs initially used SOSRemote (a component of the SOSMobile suite) on PalmPilots to collect data in the field. Now, their Panasonic tablets underscore how far technology has come. And SOSMobile has certainly kept pace.

When MWE transitioned from E-CIS to Cayenta in 2012, SOSMobile was up to the integration task. In fact, upon go-live their then 60 plus service techs weren't even aware of the change. Initially MWE had planned to consolidate all their computing needs with Cayenta, but soon realized that giving up SOSMobile's functionality, logical design and stability was not an option. It had been the perfect solution for their remote service territory where connectivity is an issue, as it allows their techs to work in disconnected mode.

In 2014, MWE expanded their use of SOSMobile by implementing its Email Monitor. Now their 500+ per week 811 line locate email notifications, are automatically turned into electronic orders based on content. These orders are stored in the SOSMobile Server where they are scheduled, dispatched, and sent to the field for completion and closing—just like those orders generated by Cayenta.

And since SOSMobile continually evolves and innovates, more ways it can increase efficiency at MWE are in the offing.

"When it comes to technology, there are a lot of moving parts at a utility of Midwest Energy's size. SOSMobile is one piece of our technology puzzle that runs consistently day-in and day-out. It was a great investment!"

- Tim Flax
VP Information Technology
Midwest Energy, Inc.

Quick Facts About Midwest Energy, Inc.

Meters: 50,000 Electric
42,000 Gas

Employees: 288

Service Technicians: 80

Remote Devices: Panasonic Tablets and a few Dell Laptops

Service Area: Vast and remote—serving 40 counties in central and western Kansas

Started Using SOSMobile: 2002

CIS: Cayenta

SOSMobile Modules Used:

- SOSMobile Server (required)
- SOSRemote (Windows version)
- SOSDispatch
- SOSMobile's Email Monitor

Key Benefits Gained:

- Increased efficiency by closing orders electronically in the field with a reliable, proven solution.
- Automating Dig Safe notifications
- Unsurpassed support and advice from the InsightAtlast team.

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by InsightAtlast

Field Force Automation Made Easy
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More on how MWE uses SOSMobile.

SOSMobile captures service orders generated by MWE's Cayenta CIS, downloading them to field devices on the appropriate date. Although SOSMobile has robust scheduling and dispatching capabilities, MWE currently opts to have the InsightAtlast team pick up schedule dates, times and assignments from the Cayenta system.

With SOSMobile's Email Monitor, MWE's 811 email notifications are automatically turned into electronic orders—with original emails attached—where they're available to view in the SOSDispatch application. These orders are sorted to territories representing field offices. From there, office supervisors dispatch the orders to the entities doing the work using SOSMobile's Calendar Window. Map-based and list view dispatching are also available within SOSDispatch.

Line locate orders stored in SOSDispatch

Orders generated from any source—in MWE's case Cayenta and 811 locates—can be viewed and assigned within SOSDispatch. Filters allow individuals see only those orders pertinent to them.

MWE uses the SOSMobile Calendar Screen to view, dispatch and reassign orders.

In the field on Panasonic devices running SOSRemote, Closing Wizards step techs through the closing process for each particular order type. These Wizards typically emulate a utility's existing processes, and use spin boxes, drop-down lists and edits wherever possible to enhance the user experience. Once the order is closed, information is updated in back-end systems in real-time whenever a connection is available.

The layout of MWE's Wizards remain consistent between order types and services to aid field tech entry.

MWE also utilizes SOSMobile's document handling capabilities. Documents and images can be attached to an order from both the office and the field.

SOSMobile automatically forwards these files to MWE's Document Management system.

At InsightAtlast we know that each Utility is unique. No matter size, integration needs or business processes, SOSMobile with its flexible design and sophisticated features can be tailored perfectly for any Utility.

Built for Utilities. Delivered with Competence.