



Tideland EMC reduces call center traffic during outages and severe weather conditions by 95% using TextPower's SmartAlerts™ System

Business Situation

During outages and severe weather conditions, Tideland EMC was faced with an overwhelming number of calls to and from its over 19,000 customers.

Prior to implementing text alerts, if customers wanted to get regular updates regarding outages, the onus was on them to seek out the information by either calling Tideland or monitoring Internet and media outlets, and if Tideland wanted to send a mass message out to its customers during an outage, it depended on the county's reverse 911 system.

In both scenarios, the process took a long time, and it wasn't practical. They needed a low-overhead, cost-effective, and high-speed way to communicate with their members.

TextPower's SmartAlerts™ system quickly became the de facto communication tool followed by social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook.

Tideland started marketing the text messaging service to its customers urging them to opt-in to the program.

Their message: "Don't wait. Activate Text Messaging."



Text messages reach members within minutes, letting them know that Tideland EMC crews are working the line and when power is restored.

Solution

TextPower provided Tideland with a solution based on its SmartAlerts™ product. This solution consisted of a browser-based application, which Tideland operators can use with very minimal learning to send and receive Text Messages from its 19,000+ customers.

For Example: Recently a trash truck took out a main line. As a result, 1,693 members were without power. This happened at 6:45 AM. By 7:07 AM, a text message was sent out manually by a Tideland operator on the status of the outage to all affected members who opted-in to receive text messaging.

TextPower's SmartAlerts™ system is integrated with OMS systems like Milsoft. Tideland is looking at options to further reduce their overhead by sending text messages automatically to their customers not only for outage communications but for other purposes like peak notifications.

"We always knew the potential for text messaging. But we were surprised how quickly we had to use it," Smith said.

"When selecting a text messaging vendor, flexibility is crucial in a utility environment that changes as rapidly as the weather. TextPower is a service we can grow with as power requirements change to include peak alert notifications," says Heidi Smith, Tideland EMC's Manager of Corporate Communications.

Highest Level of Customer Service

"Our customers love getting updates through text messaging.

If we fail to communicate with them within 10 minutes of an outage, we get a text message from our clients asking why they haven't gotten a text message and if there's something wrong with their phone.

It's once again proven that the power of the written word provides more clarity.

It's not surprising how often we get a 'Thank You' back from our customers in reply to our informational or emergency text message."

Heidi Smith
Manager of Corporate Communications
Tideland EMC