



CenterPoint Energy

Utility leader adopts Adobe® solutions for faster delivery, completion, and processing of business forms from employees

CenterPoint Energy

- One of the nation's largest providers of electrical and natural gas delivery services
- Location: Houston, Texas
- Revenues: more than \$10 billion (FY2002)
- Year Founded: 1870
- Size: 11,000 employees

www.centerpointenergy.com

Industry

Utilities

Solutions

- Timesheets Recording and Approval
- Procurement Processing
- Forms Processing and Management

Products Used

- Adobe Form Server
- Adobe Form Designer

Organization Profile

CenterPoint Energy is one of the nation's largest publicly traded natural gas and electricity delivery companies, with nearly five million metered customers in six states.

The company employs more than 11,000 people; it has assets of approximately \$19 billion and annual revenues of more than \$10 billion. With Adobe solutions, CenterPoint is streamlining the delivery and completion of hundreds of business forms its employees use daily.

Challenges Faced

Centralize and streamline processing of business forms

CenterPoint relied on a complex network of more than 240 servers to deliver electronic forms to thousands of employees. Each server had electronic forms for business tasks such as completing timesheets, registering customer feedback, and ordering supplies.

With so many servers and more than 400 electronic forms, it was expensive and time consuming for IT and administrative staff to post and organize current forms on every server. As a result, employees often resorted to paper-based forms, which were easier to locate within their departments. Unfortunately, these forms were also frequently outdated.

Reduce administrative and IT costs of handling forms

Managing an extensive network of servers for delivering electronic forms cost CenterPoint Energy thousands of dollars annually in employee time. In addition, the company estimates that on average it took 30 minutes to complete and process a paper form, including the time spent filling in the form, routing it, and processing it by the appropriate department—this too resulting in substantial costs.

For example, each month employees submitted 250 procurement request forms, requiring approximately 125 employee hours monthly for processing the form on paper—at a soft cost* of more than \$32,500 annually for only one form. With hundreds of forms and thousands of employees, the company wanted a more efficient, cost-effective way to complete and process forms.

Deploy an easy-to-use, readily accessible electronic forms solution

For CenterPoint, deploying a solution that employees could use easily, with minimal or no training, was essential for speeding the adoption of more efficient electronic forms processes. In contrast to the extensive network of servers used across departments, the company wanted to deliver forms from a central Web-based system making it easy for employees to locate and complete any business form electronically.

"The benefits of using Adobe forms solutions are tremendous. We can automate our everyday business processes while improving the accuracy and availability of data across our enterprise."

Ken Starr,
Supervisor, corporate graphics
and forms management,
CenterPoint Energy

Success Strategy

With Adobe solutions, CenterPoint easily created electronic versions of 405 forms previously available only on paper. The newly created electronic forms were posted on a central Web server and made available to staff via an intranet-based application the company calls Web PowerForms.

To minimize mistakes employees may make in entering data into the forms, the electronic forms contain built-in functions that verify the accuracy of information in fields, as well as validate and calculate data. Based on an employee's log-in information when accessing Web PowerForms, form fields can be populated instantly with employee data stored in an Oracle database. Completed forms, such as timesheets and procurement requests, can be submitted electronically with data automatically saved to the database.

To further automate electronic form processing, CenterPoint is looking to deploy Adobe solutions that support digital signatures and electronic routing of forms for review and approval throughout the extended enterprise.

Business Benefits

- Reduced form processing costs by hundreds of thousands of soft dollars annually
- Improved accuracy of information submitted on forms
- Ensured employee access to up-to-date forms
- Adopted electronic form processes that are easy for IT staff to manage and for employees to use—even those resistant to procedural changes

Built around Adobe solutions, Web PowerForms delivers significant savings. Centralized delivery of forms and automated processing of data on employee forms result in hundreds of thousands of soft dollars in savings annually. In addition, the automated forms processes have enabled the Forms Management department to reduce staff from six employees to four, saving more than \$83,000 annually in hard costs.*

CenterPoint IT staff, who previously had to manage and update forms on 240 servers, can now devote more time to higher-value IT activities. And the utility's employees spend substantially less time looking for current versions of forms, and can complete and submit forms electronically in seconds.

Electronic forms also simplify everyday administrative tasks. For instance, employees can save completed electronic forms on their computers, rather than having to store paper forms in folders. Because employee data on electronic forms can be verified automatically, the speed of completing and processing forms is improved, as is the accuracy of information. In addition, there's no need for administrative staff to rekey information from paper forms into back-end systems, further streamlining form processing and minimizing errors that can occur with manual data entry.

"The benefits of using Adobe forms solutions are tremendous," says Ken Starr, supervisor of corporate graphics and forms management at CenterPoint. "We can automate our everyday business processes while improving the accuracy and availability of data across our enterprise."

** Soft costs estimate the expense of having employees devote time to one task, when they could be focused on other, often higher value-added, activities. Savings in hard costs relate to eliminating specific job functions from the payroll, reducing overall salary costs.*

Adobe Systems Incorporated • 345 Park Avenue, San Jose, CA 95110-2704 USA • www.adobe.com

Adobe, the Adobe logo, and Tools for the New Work are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Adobe Systems Incorporated in the United States and/or other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

© 2003 Adobe Systems Incorporated. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA.

95001691 0603R



Tools for the New Work™