



Large Utility Gains Control of their Information Technology Contracts

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The large public utility company has deployed a Web-based contract management solution – UpsideContract – to better control their information technology (IT) contracts. The solution streamlines the contracting process while formalizing the management of contracted service and product delivery.

Situation

The customer is a large regional electric utility company in North America with operations covering generation, distribution and retail.

As part of its efforts to streamline its operations, the company outsourced its IT services to an external vendor. During the life of the outsourcing agreement there have been numerous issues and problems related to service delivery. Many of these issues can be traced back to poorly established contracts, and to a general lack of performance monitoring.

Another major challenge facing the IT group was the management of their IT assets including computers, peripherals and software.

Solution

After an extensive evaluation of a variety of contract management tools available in the North American marketplace, the company selected UpsideContract, a solution from Upside Software.

Before rolling out its new solution, the company worked with Upside Software to map out the business requirements of the system and plan the software configuration, integration and deployment activities. The system had to be integrated with a number of internally developed systems that tracked project activity and financials, and asset disposition while many other systems that were used in this same area were rendered obsolete by the contract management system and were subsequently decommissioned.

At the end of a 60 day project that included the conversion of a large number of existing contracts from various formats and the integration of the system with a number of other systems, the new solution went live in early 2003. The system, being available on the corporate intranet, has made all IT contracts accessible and visible and has demonstrated immediate value with its vendor performance management capabilities and as the primary repository for contracts pertaining to equipment purchases and maintenance.

Solution Overview

Customer Profile

Large North American public electric utility with operations covering generation, distribution and retail.

Business Situation

Customer needed a system to help manage their IT contracts, monitor the performance of vendors, including their primary IT outsourcing vendor, and support their asset management function.

Solution

Customer deployed UpsideContract, a Web-based contract management solution.

Outcomes & Benefits

- Streamlined contract creation and subsequent project initiation.
- Formalized performance monitoring capabilities that has driven vendor performance improvement.
- Streamlined asset management processes

Scope of Deployment

The system was deployed in the company's head office with only limited use by field staff outside the head office location.

Deployed Software

- UpsideContract 3.2.1
- Neevia Document Converter Pro
- SA-FileUp

Points of Integration

The system has been integrated with home-grown systems for project management and project-based financial management, as well as asset management.

Hardware

The production environment has multiple servers in a load-balancing configuration.

Project Timelines

The system implementation project was approximately 2 months in duration.

Benefits

Increased Efficiency

The new solution has streamlined contracting and activity monitoring processes to reduce effort and operational costs.

Superior Scalability

Within its load-balanced configuration, the system has demonstrated excellent performance scalability and has met all performance requirements during high use periods.

Automation of standard processes.

Standard contracting and activity management processes have been automated to ensure the appropriate steps are taken to monitor contractor performance and manage equipment and software licenses .

Consolidated contract databases/repositories.

The system provides the organization with a single, consolidated view of its contracted services and asset management requirements, improving reporting and overall management in the area.

Eliminated duplicate entry and 'shadow' tracking systems

By consolidating all IT contract and asset management information on a highly visible platform, the system enabled the organization to remove a number of parallel tracking systems that had required duplicate entry of information.

Improve reporting

The consolidation of contract information provided an opportunity to easily improve their management reporting, and in many cases the effective user portal eliminated the need for some reports .

Involves contractors.

The system enables contractors, and specifically the primary outsourcing vendor, to easily access their contracts and to report on their activities and progress to service levels . This has helped streamline contractors' efforts and improve information sharing.

Enabled effective compliance and performance monitoring.

UpsideContract's compliance and performance management capabilities have allowed the company to establish, measure and report on key contractor compliance and performance metrics, helping provide a significant improvement in contractor performance and value.

Enforce policies.

With its automated workflow and business rules, the system enforces corporate and business unit policies and procedures with exceptions being quickly and easily identified and escalated.

More Information

For more information about Upside Software products and services, go to:
<http://www.upsidesoft.com>

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