

## VSP Approach to Improve Customer Service

The District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (DC WASA) has entered a Vertical Service Provider (VSP) partnership with ORCOM to replace its current water billing system. In addition to the base VSP services, ORCOM will provide assurance services and bill print services.

DC WASA currently is operating a homegrown water billing system that was not designed to provide the level of customer service required in today's market. With green-screen technology focused more on the meter than the customer, DC WASA's current Customer Information Solution (CIS) is limiting the staff's ability to easily capture and access basic customer information. Supporting this system has become resource intensive, especially in a time when IT resources are in scarce supply.

The Enterprise Customer Information System (E-CIS), the core of ORCOM's VSP offering, will allow DC WASA to provide a customer-focused service versus the traditional meters- and properties-focused service. DC WASA also will be able to offer new products and services, provide personalized service through features such as interactive voice recognition technology for its call center employees and quickly generate business reports that support operations.

Additionally, features such as ORCOM's Internet Access System and Electronic Bill Presentment and Payment (EBPP) will web-enable many of DC WASA's CIS and billing operations—supporting greater customer self-service.

"E-CIS is a robust product," Beaman said. "The DC WASA Core Team has been duly

*Improved customer service and efficiency are critical for success.*

*However, utilities first must focus on their core competencies at the same time they reduce risks and control costs.*

system will position us to integrate all of our customer-related operations, including metering and water and sewer distribution operations, as we install automated service dispatching and geographical information systems in the future."

"We are thrilled to have been selected by the DC WASA team," said Mark Crapeau,

### Infrastructure

Application hosting and delivery via a high-availability network and 24/7 managed options are among the services this business model provides.



### Support

Business Process Management services include billing, payment, processing, credit and collections. Ongoing support and account management services can keep a company ahead of the marketplace.

### Call Center

Call center services increase productivity and lower costs while providing personalized customer service. Service Level Agreements guarantee performance.

### E-CIS

Software tools help deliver superior customer service and sophisticated billing. Web-based customer self service and transaction management for coregulation also are provided.

"We knew that we had to replace the system," said Grace Beaman, customer service manager for DC WASA and head of the CIS Selection Committee. "Our challenge was to find the most function-rich system that could be implemented quickly and within budget. Not only does ORCOM offer the system functionality and track record of success that we are looking for, the VSP approach allows us to replace our system quickly, cost-effectively and with clearly defined risks."

impressed by the functionality and ease of setup and use. After a close look at the VSP approach, we realized that it would allow us to focus our energies on our business. We were not interested in entering a CIS technology race when our focus is delivering safe and clean drinking water and superior customer service. The VSP approach allows us to focus on our core business while ORCOM ensures that our CIS system remains current. Additionally, this

ORCOM executive vice president. "More and more utilities are turning to VSP relationships because they recognize the need to focus on their main business operations, not technology. Our VSP approach allows our clients to move quickly while spending less money and avoiding the risk associated with an in-house solution."

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