

# Customer Care Reaches New Heights with Utility's Proactive Approach

*Daily routine calls such as account inquiries and bill payments greatly impacted available resources that could otherwise address more complex customer inquiries. The Utilities OnCall™ Solution proved dramatic results within a short time for both customers and the St. Johns County Utility Department team.*

## St. Johns County Utility Department in Florida

St. Johns Utility is a highly driven customer-oriented team that dedicates its resources to managing the needs of its customers. As call volumes increased, routine calls such as account inquiries and bill payments greatly impacted available resources that could otherwise address more complex customer inquiries. To alleviate the pressure on their team and improve the customer experience—St. Johns Utility proactively updated their approach to customer service call management and made the decision to implement the Utilities OnCall Solution from Vocantas.

## Turnkey Integration

With a clear understanding of St. John's requirements, the Vocantas team put the interactive voice response system (IVRS) through an extensive QA process to deliver on the promises that they made. When the integration was complete at the utility's location, Vocantas application engineers ensured that the St. John's team was comfortable with the Utilities OnCall browser-based interface so they could easily create general reports, change standard business rules and develop custom greetings.

## Around the Clock Use of New Solution

Edie Manning, Director of Customer Service for St. Johns County Utility, commented that Utilities OnCall was "critical to their after hours/disconnect strategy." As customers had been disconnected because of overdue accounts, they immediately called into the automated system to pay their bills—often after regular business hours. Service personnel would then go out to reconnect customers based on updated payment reports. Before the Utilities OnCall Solution was in place, disconnected customers had to wait until the next business day to make their bill payments and requests for reconnection.

Utilities OnCall affected a dramatic change in the amount of calls St. Johns had to manage manually—especially for bill payments and account history inquiries. In the month of February in 2007, report logs showed over 5,000 calls managed by Utilities OnCall. Of these, there were over 1,300 payment transactions for more than \$150,000. Calls to the system were logged for virtually every hour of the day—around the clock.

Ms. Manning stated that they are "still in awe of the [Utilities OnCall] system—it's been wonderful"—commenting that the statistics speak for themselves. Clearly the implementation of the IVRS has paid off for their customers' satisfaction, the improved receivables and the support team's ability to manage their customer accounts more effectively.

## Customer Profile

St. Johns Utility is responsible for the reading, billing and collection of approximately 23,641 service connections.

It also administers and coordinates utility status management reporting, reviews engineering drawings, construction management and performs inspections and surveys for new construction.

## Business Situation

Increased call volume had an impact on the entire team—everyone had to pitch in just to stay ahead of customer calls.

## Solution

When St. Johns Utility implemented the Vocantas Utilities OnCall solution, over 300 customer calls per day were managed by the automated system.

## Business Benefits

Customers realized 24 hours access to easy-to-use, voice activated, self-serve options. Account receivables improved and the customer support team was able to effectively manage more complex inquiries.