

## CASE STUDY

# **Addressing Unique Challenges in the Energy Sector with Outsourcing**

## Large Kansas-based energy company addresses workforce challenges and achieves greater operational efficiencies.

While some industries are known to be more steady and predictable, others are more dependent on external influences and tend to ebb and flow alongside market demands. Often faced with unique business challenges, organizations working within this type of environment must work to create an operational structure that offers the flexibility and agility needed to rapidly adapt to changes in the marketplace.

One industry that can empathize with the nature of a fluctuating business environment is the energy sector. Historically, energy providers have operated primarily under a CAPEX model due to a high demand for services. However, as both consumers and businesses look to leverage cleaner and more efficient forms of energy production like solar, wind, and geothermal energy, businesses have been forced to become more efficient in terms of operating costs, production, and organizational structure.

Additionally, many of today's energy companies are now faced with the challenges of an aging workforce. The baby boomers that previously held the large majority of the 'blue collar' positions within energy organizations have gradually begun to retire, and in the process, have created a gap in the workforce and, subsequently, a skills shortage. As the education standard continues to rise and vocational training becomes less prominent in curriculums, fewer and fewer applicants will possess the skillset needed to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of these open positions.

Recently, Windsor Group had the opportunity to work with a Kansas-based energy provider that works to provide safe and reliable electricity to nearly 700,000 customers in East and East-Central Kansas. With energy centers that operate and coordinate across roughly 35,000 miles of transmission and distribution lines, and generate more than 7,000 megawatts of electricity, this energy company is responsible for a large majority of Kansas' energy production.

## The Challenge

---

Highly concerned about key resources nearing retirement and the impact that their aging workforce would have on operational capabilities, workflow, and production, the client engaged with Windsor Group to seek out a solution that would seamlessly fulfill the responsibilities of these positions and minimize disruption, while also solving for the growing need to modernize their infrastructure environment.

Although the energy company had previously considered outsourcing as a solution, there was great concern around the cost, risk, and compliance issues often associated with outsourced solutions. Additionally, the client struggled to determine which approach would cause the least amount of disruption; implementing a new solution prior to their critical resources retiring or continuing to invest in a cumbersome legacy system platform until those resources had officially retired. To help alleviate concern and identify solutions to leverage, Windsor Group worked closely with the client to evaluate various opportunities and potential solution providers.

## The Solution

---

To create a platform from which to evaluate potential solutions, Windsor Group worked closely with the energy client's leadership team to establish a baseline that outlined existing capabilities, cost structure, and supporting infrastructure dynamics. Through this, Windsor Group was able to present the energy client with potential solutions that had already been configured, priced-out, and compared to the client's current and future service requirements.

Upon an internal review which allowed the client to evaluate the cultural fit, technical design, and financial state of each individual solution, the energy company decided to pursue a more in-depth evaluation of the outsourced solution that Windsor Group had previously presented. From there, Windsor Group worked closely with the client to perform the necessary due diligence and ensure that all specific details and any concerns were addressed.

## Results

---

After presenting a few solutions that would address its business needs and be well-aligned with its infrastructure environment, the company was able to select an IT service provider and implement a new solution that enabled them to seamlessly fulfill the responsibilities of its critical customer billing system and transition away from its legacy systems. In addition, the energy client was able to achieve all of this while also reducing costs and maintaining high availability and security compliance.

When all was said and done, a partnership with Windsor Group allowed the energy company to alleviate their concerns of employing an outsourced solution, connect the energy company with solutions that addressed their workforce challenges, create greater operational efficiencies, and do so in a way that relieved the stress and frustration that often occurs when evaluating new IT solutions.

## Insights

---

Although this case study highlights challenges specific to the energy client discussed, many businesses working within the energy and utility industries struggle with similar obstacles. With the ability to shift the daily management and responsibilities of non-strategic business initiatives to external service providers, outsourcing enables utility organizations to significantly lower IT costs while creating a more agile, efficient, and effective operation. Not only will this reduce the risks associated with an aging workforce, but it will also allow businesses to gain specialized expertise and place a greater emphasis on their core competencies.

About the Windsor Group

The Windsor Group's IT infrastructure solutions help clients reduce risk, improve operations, and gain competitive advantage. In the process, clients benefit from increased service levels, greater flexibility, improved disaster recovery capabilities and access to outstanding technical expertise. Our infrastructure services model allows companies to convert the typically high fixed cost of IT infrastructure expense into a variable cost based on actual usage. Windsor Group creates solutions for our clients that offer best-in-class service and price.

*We'd Like to Hear More About  
Your Business and IT Challenges,  
so that We Can Find a Solution  
that Exceeds your Expectations*

Talk to Us