

Alliant Energy Improves Efficiency with Interactive Customer Communications for Curtailment

Using Varolii Communications to complement its load curtailment program, Alliant Energy streamlines the customer notification process.



As part of its Load Management program, Alliant Energy offers reduced rates to commercial and industrial customers, who agree to curtail their energy usage during peak periods. When this program was introduced, Alliant Energy alerted customers of imminent interruptions by using four to six members of its sales systems support group along with proprietary light panel technology. In states without panels and outbound phone calls were necessary, this manual process took up to four hours and offered no guarantee that customers were being reached in a timely fashion. This led to unnecessary fines and a perception of poor service.

Recognizing the need to collapse the cycle, ensure message delivery, and improve customer satisfaction, Alliant Energy turned to Varolii to help them automate the notification process.

Implementing the Right Solution

Using Varolii, Alliant Energy's commercial customers were able to indicate how, when, and where they were to receive load curtailment notifications. By empowering customers to maintain their own contact information, Alliant Energy saved valuable time, money, and effort normally spent maintaining distribution lists. Meanwhile, customers are more satisfied with the process because they receive curtailment information faster, through their preferred contact method – phone, email, pager, SMS, or fax. Plus, recipients were able to adjust their notification preferences based on their schedule, again, leading to more efficient notification delivery and more satisfied customers.

Fast communication is Critical to the Utility and the Customer

“When demand for electricity is about to exceed supply due to weather conditions, power plant problems, or transmission line overloads and curtailment is necessary, it's imperative we communicate with our customers in a fast and reliable manner,” explained Chuck Miller, Systems Administrator, Alliant Energy. “With Varolii, we are able to reach customers instantly on the devices they prefer, depending on the event and time of day.”

With potential fines of over \$100,000, Alliant Energy wanted a partner who could communicate with customers reliably and swiftly. They also wanted robust tracking. They chose Varolii. “Whenever possible, we provide customers with at least an hour notice prior to an interruption; however, time is always of the essence, and Varolii's ability to reliably distribute thousands of messages instantly and simultaneously is key. On top of helping us to build customer loyalty, we've dramatically improved our productivity by reducing the time it takes to get notifications out from hours to five minutes.”



CLIENT

Alliant Energy

CHALLENGE

Improve efficiency of curtailment notification process for large commercial and industrial customers.

SOLUTION

Use Varolii to notify customers of curtailment events and the curtailment process.

RESULTS

- Reduced the communication time from hours to minutes
- Eliminated dependency on staff resources for manual calling
- Increased customer satisfaction
- Provided ability to track customer response to ensure compliance with load management agreements

Contact Us:

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- Chuck Miller
Systems Administrator, Alliant Energy

Keeping the Lights On

Since Alliant Energy began partnering with Varolii to deliver curtailment notifications, customer feedback has been decidedly positive, according to Miller. Based on the success of the program with its electric customers, Alliant Energy rolled out a similar program for its natural gas customers.

“Due to Varolii’s ability to link with our existing CRM system to extract customer data, along with their Professional Services organization’s ability to quickly and easily modify the message delivery templates to meet our needs, the work necessary to get the notifications distributed has been the most painless aspect of the project,” concluded Miller. “The reality is that we can’t build power plants as fast as communities grow and businesses move in, but with our electrical interrupt program we are able to better manage the energy we do have and keep the lights on for our customers.”

ABOUT VAROLII

Varolii® provides on-demand communication software and services that enable organizations to more effectively reach and interact with their customers and employees, getting the best result from every interaction.

www.Varolii.com

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