



North Canton cuts its report-processing time in half with Civica



Upgrading to Civica Authority Utility was an easy choice for this progressive Ohio municipality

With a view to better servicing its population of around 17,500 residents, the City of North Canton – in Stark County, Ohio – recently completed the implementation of Authority Utility, a complete utility billing solution from Civica.

Civica's Authority Utility software now efficiently manages North Canton's billing and payment options for trash, water and sewer services to over 9,500 customers.

City of North Canton's Finance Director, Ms. Laura Brown joined the municipality in 2016 having previously worked at the Ohio State Auditors' Office. She quickly identified the need to upgrade the city's 15-year-old utility billing system and processes which were based on an early, client/server version of Civica's Utility software.

Benefits and outcomes

- ▶ **Better business decision-making enabled by customized reports**
- ▶ **Improved staff productivity and maximized resources through shifting manual processing to online payments**
- ▶ **Tangible cost savings and support of North Canton's strategy to reduce reliance on printing and postage.**
- ▶ **Rapid familiarization with Authority Utility through comprehensive onsite training**

"Civica's software and service has always impressed us, however, what really won us over was the fact that, unlike the other two vendors, Civica was prepared to give us an on-site trainer with a customized training schedule that better suited our needs."

Ms. Laura Brown,
Finance Director
City of North Canton

When going to market, the City of North Canton short-listed solutions from three software vendors, evaluating their offerings against three main criteria – ease-of-use, total cost of ownership and the richness of features.

Ms. Brown said that, based on these benchmarks, Civica's Authority Utility product was selected as the most suitable for its plans to improve the quality of utility billing services and the efficiency of how they were managed for North Canton's residents.

"Civica's software and service has always impressed us, however, what really won us over was the fact that, unlike the other two vendors, Civica was prepared to give us an on-site trainer with a customized training schedule that better suited our needs.

"The other vendors could only provide online training or a hybrid of online/on-site training which did not suit our needs."

Ms. Brown also knew that rolling out the comprehensive Civica Authority Utility software would be simplified because it was an upgrade from a previous Civica version (Client Server Utility) as opposed to implementing a whole new system.

"We knew it was always going to be easier to implement Authority Utility than introducing a whole new solution, but we were, in the end, surprised that it went so smoothly," she said. "It was even better than we expected, and we were immediately able to start noticing the benefits.

"Since going live, we are now able to run our daily reports in less than half the time it previously took to do this. We have unprecedented capability to create customized reports, so it is much easier and less stressful for us to extract valuable data that helps us to make strategic decisions that improve services, reduce costs and enhance productivity.

"Currently, one third of residents in the City of North Canton pay their bills by coming into city hall to pay their water, trash or sewer bills via cash, card or check, while only one in ten residents choose to use our online payment option via our website

"Both of these methods are time-consuming and require manual processing as well as administrative infrastructure. With the new system, we will be able to educate and transition residents to utilizing online bill payment services which are far easier for all of us."

Ms. Brown said that as the administrative staff become more accustomed to all the features and functionality of Authority Utility, multiple legacy manual processes are converting to more cost-effective, automated methods of getting things done.

"These streamlined processes are freeing us up to focus on more strategic, bigger-picture goals with regards to the utility services we provide with the bonus of reducing the time burden on residents associated with remitting their utility payments.

"It's a win-win scenario for both the administration and the constituents," says Laura Brown.

"With Authority Utility we will be able to educate and transition residents to utilizing online bill payment services, which are far easier for all of us"

Ms. Laura Brown,
Finance Director
City of North Canton