



- Provides water to approximately 850,000 citizens in Louisville, KY metro and surrounding areas
- Offers safe, high quality water and related business services for homes, businesses and schools
- More than 150 years of experience in providing drinking water to its communities

#### RESULTS SNAPSHOT:

- Project was delivered on-time, on-scope and within budget
- Cross-functional approach kept customer and employee launch of OASIS in sync
- Received “Expanding Excellence Award” for “Best CIS Implementation”

## TMG Consulting Assists Louisville Water Improve Overall IT Systems Architecture with Award Winning CIS Implementation

A change and/or upgrade to a single billing system is one of the most complex projects a company can take on. After 15 years of using multiple aging, non-interfacing systems, Louisville Water Company made the decision to embark on that complex project in a big way. After careful scrutiny, the decision to upgrade its customer-related technologies and systems resulted in improvements and/or replacements of numerous systems at once for the Kentucky-based water utility, including:

- Replacing Vertex ECIS with Oracle’s Customer Care & Billing (CC&B) system
- Replacing Viryanet MDS with Oracle’s Mobile Workforce Management (MWM) system
- Implementing Oracle’s SOA application
- Implementing a new Customer Self-Service Portal (Oracle Utilities Customer Self Service—OUCSS)
- Contracting with a new payment processing vendor
- Outsourcing the bill print and mail function
- Implementing e-billing

Additionally, while not a part of the original scope or project plan, Louisville Water’s effort included:

- Replacing the existing phone system
- Replacing the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) technology

#### THE PROCESS

The decision to move forward with such a massive, multi-faceted undertaking was a process Louisville Water did not enter into lightly. Prior to the project implementation, Louisville Water spent several years evaluating systems and focusing on how its IT architecture should be designed to support its more than 850,000 citizen base in metro Louisville and surrounding counties. In 2011 a decision was made to standardize on Oracle systems which would streamline Louisville Water’s system and support Louisville Water’s growth strategy.

“We knew it was time to bite the bullet,” said Obe Everett, program manager, Louisville Water. “When we took inventory of the overall picture, there was much we knew we needed and wanted to do. The implementation of CC&B, MWM, OUCSS, and Service Oriented Architecture brings Louisville Water into the 21st century business systems perspective. In addition, we are now ready to improve service offerings to our existing customers and enhance revenue opportunities by offering non-water related services across the state and nation.”

And they also knew they couldn’t go it alone. In June 2012 Louisville Water hired TMG Consulting to join its project team to provide needed education on what to expect, to validate Louisville Water’s assumptions, to review the budget and to plan the project. This included evaluating Louisville Water’s ability to staff the project, determining the probable timeframe

and properly setting expectations within the company. Once the program was approved by Louisville Water's Board, TMG provided its solution procurement services. TMG developed the Request for Proposal (RFP), facilitated it among the potential Solution Integrators (SIs), helped address the SIs' questions and assisted in the review of the proposals and the evaluation of the short-listed SIs—and ultimately Louisville Water's business finalist. TMG was also involved in the development of the selected SI's Statement of Work (SOW) and Services Agreement. Finally, TMG worked closely with the Louisville Water program manager to understand the responsibilities that would fall to Louisville Water and to assess if additional outside resources were necessary to ensure that the Louisville Water team was properly staffed. When special skill sets or other resources were determined to be needed, TMG worked with outside agencies to contract for those positions.

The implementation project began in July 2013. TMG continued providing advisory services specifically in the role as Louisville Water's Quality Assurance (QA) manager. TMG provided the third-party perspective on the overall health of the project, particularly focusing on the project's perspective as viewed by team members, the PMO, the project steering committee and executives, and the business stakeholders. TMG reviewed and offered suggestions, when necessary, on the project plan, schedule, communication, budget, and risk and issue mitigation. TMG identified potential issues and offered suggestions related to Louisville Water's side of the program as well as the SI's tasks and responsibilities. TMG was Louisville Water's consistent advisor in supporting the company during difficult decision making.

## EXISTING CHALLENGES

Louisville Water's customers were comparing the utility to other businesses, as well as other utilities, and communicating with Louisville Water that it was not keeping up with their expectations. In addition, Louisville Water had been approached multiple times to perform billing services, and in each case Louisville Water had to pass on these opportunities to enhance revenue through non-water related services.

There were several other critical challenges Louisville Water was facing as well, including:

- Aging CIS, Mobile Dispatch, and Work Order Systems (nearly 26 years old)
- Systems that were becoming more difficult to support
- IT architecture complexity

- Difficulty and expense to add new products
- Existing system's issues interfacing with other systems
- Inflexible billing statement
- Email addresses could not be stored
- Limitations to handling complex rates or adding new services
- Inability to be scalable and conducive to Louisville Water's strategic initiatives
- Cumbersome and paper-intensive billing process
  - › Edit reports were generated daily and included hundreds of pages
  - › New edit reports were continually being added when new billing issues were discovered
- Aging printers for the utility's bills needed replacing to eliminate the resource-intensive process
- Incapability of offering e-billing to its customers.

## PROJECT OASIS TAKES SHAPE

Louisville Water followed a 20-month implementation plan, named Project OASIS (Organized and Simplified Integrated Systems), that included dozens of employees across the organization and contractor partners. Ultimately the project came in on-time, on-scope and within budget (within five percent of the original plan).

"I do not believe there are many, if any, more difficult projects than implementing a new CIS," said Gary Weseloh, senior vice president and senior consultant, TMG Consulting, who served as QA manager of the implementation. "The project was well planned from the beginning with an adequate budget. The evaluation and selection of the SI was thorough and resulted in a vendor firm and a team that worked well with Louisville Water. The Louisville Water executive sponsors were outstanding. They were involved, visible to the team, yet they allowed the PMO to run the project. The Louisville Water program and project managers worked closely throughout the project with the SI's project manager. TMG offered meaningful advice during the implementation and participated in decisions on staffing changes, change orders and the ultimate 'go, no-go' decision."

The overall implementation project was a success in part due to the cross-functional approach Louisville Water embraced: customer service and metering, communications and field services, IT and finance all worked together on a multi-layered plan to not only ensure the technical implementation succeeded but that the customer and employee launch of OASIS was in sync.

“With a project of this scope, stabilization can take months and Louisville Water has successfully worked through the issues typically encountered during these types of projects, while at the same time looking forward to fully leveraging the enhanced benefits of the new system,” said Executive Sponsor Dave Vogel, VP customer service and HR. “The team and cross-functional approach Louisville Water embraced initially has proven to be a key ingredient to a successful implementation. While we did experience some challenges, as most projects do, during the stabilization period, we are proud of what our team (including business partners) achieved with this effort.”

### RESULTING BENEFITS ARE ABUNDANT

By using TMG’s proven techniques and methodologies driven by the advisory firm’s experienced consultants, the project was able to stay within its original concept and deliver the results Louisville Water was envisioning, including improvements to productivity, response times, team collaboration, optimization of all resources and identification of operational anomalies.

The benefits of the project have been plentiful. One obvious benefit is in the new system’s ability to fully automate several processes. For example, previously, the daily collections process included cashiers manually downloading a file, emailing it to the help desk where the operator would decrypt, process and then manually upload the results. This is completely automated in the new environment from start to finish.

Another example: Louisville Water’s IT operations division was manually printing bills using onsite printers before the new system; now it outsources to a bill print provider. This reduces operations’ manual efforts and reduces IT maintenance costs.

The customer enhancements are also greatly improved, providing a CSS web portal over the previous Interactive Web Response (IWR) system, which now also allows customers to view PDF bills and bill history and offers e-billing.

### Since the project implementation, top benefits for billing alone, include:

	Then	Now
<i>Accounts on Hold</i>	Only billing placed accounts on hold and they were held in a batch	Any user can place an account on hold by simply keying in a date on the customer’s account page. No need to place an account in batch
<i>Billing Process</i>	Had to wait the entire billing cycle before you could bill any accounts from that billing cycle	Account will be billed each night if there are no billing exceptions/to-do’s
<i>Cancel/Rebill</i>	Took up to an hour	Takes less than 10 minutes
<i>Creating Field Activities</i>		
	Had to know the exact service order type	The wildcard function makes it easier to research a field activity type, which cuts down on the number of wrong field activities created
<i>Customer Information</i>	Required viewing multiple screens	Requires one screen (Control Central)
<i>IT</i>	Computer room had to release billing batch/billing cycle to bill the accounts	No longer need this process as accounts are automatically released if there are no billing to-do’s and/or the bill is frozen & completed
<i>Navigation</i>	Needed ‘path’ code	Menu driven; drop down boxes
<i>Paperless Billing Edits</i>	Produced up to 300 pages of paper reports per day	NONE – entirely paperless

## MOVING FORWARD

An additional benefit going forward, thanks in part to the utility's investment in Oracle's utility product suite, is Louisville Water's capability to provide a variety of billing options and services to other utilities. Louisville Water's next step is to develop a strategy to provide small to medium size utilities with the highest quality customer care and billing services at competitive rates. Louisville Water wants to be the one-stop customer care and billing shop; whether a property is metered in Kentucky or another state, Louisville Water plans to be the professional customer care and billing company that small to mid-size utilities want. Louisville Water's specialized staff, as well as its top-of-the-line technical infrastructure and systems, assures prompt and courteous service for customers, managers and property owners. Louisville Water's goal: save its customers money, customize bills and reports for their specific needs, bill multiple utilities, products and services (water, gas, electricity, heating and cooling) on the same bill, make property management staff effective and keep its customers happy with Louisville Water's call center to answer questions and resolve discrepancies.

"Due to our work with Louisville Water during the CC&B and MWM project (planning, selection, and QA), we were selected to serve as Louisville Water's consultant for all additional IT applications over the next five years," Weseloh said. "We are currently developing the RFP for an SI to implement the Oracle Work and Asset Management (WAM) solution."

Louisville Water and TMG Consulting celebrated the success of this CIS project together at CS Week 2016 when Louisville Water was awarded the 'Expanding Excellence Award' for 'Best CIS Implementation' for a Level II Utility. "Louisville Water is recognized throughout the industry for producing the best tasting water and engineering innovation," Everett said. "Louisville Water can now include best implementation to our list of accomplishments that enhances our competitive advantage."

**"Louisville Water recognizes the tremendous impact TMG's expert input, guidance and oversight had on the bottom-line and overall success of this project. Due to their excellence, we will continue our partnership with TMG to have them serve as our consultant for all additional IT applications over the next five years. TMG offered meaningful advice and facilitated discussion of challenging issues and decision making, clearly contributing to the success of the project. This counsel was broad in scope ranging from staffing and organizational change management, leadership support, change orders and the ultimate 'go, no-go' decision."**

**– Louisville Water Project Manager Obe Everett**

