

## POWERCLERK CASE STUDY

# NV Energy bets on PowerClerk® to reliably manage its RenewableGenerations Program

To handle ever-increasing numbers of applications, NV Energy replaced their in-house system with PowerClerk and implemented a lottery system for fair distribution of available program capacity and a trouble-free submittal process.

## RENEWABLEGENERATIONS INCENTIVE PROGRAM

- Started in 2004 as a PV incentive program, RenewableGenerations has grown to include wind, micro-hydro and solar hot water
- Distributed \$93 million in incentives in 2011
- Received approximately 1,000 PV applications during the last two-week application period in 2011

## PROGRAM GOALS

- Help build Nevada's PV, solar hot water, wind and micro-hydro industries
- Maintain a high level of stakeholder satisfaction with fair and fast application processing
- Provide program transparency through comprehensive real-time reports for managers and the Public Utilities Commission

## BENEFITS OF POWERCLERK

- Robust, secure software service handles hundreds of applications per day
- Continuous access to online application forms and status updates reduces call volumes
- Lottery system eliminated "gold rush" mentality and allowed fair distribution of funds
- Flexible platform supports a variety of renewable energy incentive programs
- Web-based service enables administrator access from the field or any internet-connected location

## NV Energy RenewableGenerations Program

Since 2004, NV Energy has offered incentives for installing approved photovoltaic (PV) systems on homes, small businesses, public buildings and schools. Since that time, the RenewableGenerations program has expanded to include funding for wind, micro-hydro and solar hot water.

*"There was real logic to PowerClerk's processes and language. By adding that into what we already knew, we made our program even better."*

John Hargrove, Program Manager, NV Energy



## Getting Started

When the program first started, there wasn't much demand for solar and there were only a handful of installers in the state. For several years, NV Energy tracked program participants using a spreadsheet. As the program grew, the company built an in-house system to allow contractors to submit applications online. Although this made the application process a little easier, it did not allow contractors and customers to have ongoing access to an application, nor did it provide status updates. The RenewableGenerations team hoped to one-day give contractors full access to applications throughout the entire incentive process.

## Growing Pains

Each year, interest in NV Energy's program grew, and the number of applications received increased. According to John Hargrove, Program Manager at NV Energy, "The demand was phenomenal. It was more than anyone could have imagined, and we were trying to track it all on a spreadsheet. The larger the spreadsheet became, the more difficult it became to manage."



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In 2010, as the program’s popularity increased, demand outstripped available funds by a factor of three. With incentive reservations awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, there were periodic surges in the number of applications.

#### **Decision: PowerClerk**

“We did some research and found quite a few other utility programs had a similar level of activity, and needed a way to manage it. We acknowledged that as a utility, we needed a better tool for incentive application filing and management,” says Hargrove.

“We had been looking at PowerClerk® for several years, and knew it was used to process a significant percentage of the solar applications across the country. To handle all of our growth, we sprang on the opportunity to get started with PowerClerk in our 2011 program year.”

#### **Six Weeks to a Reliable Operation**

Once NV Energy selected PowerClerk, it took only six weeks to fully implement the PV program. Although implementation of PowerClerk required some changes in NV Energy’ processes, Hargrove noted, “There

was real logic to PowerClerk’s processes and language. By adding that into what we already knew, we made our program even better.”

To minimize large spikes in application volume and keep the application process fair, NV Energy, in collaboration with stakeholders, decided to award incentives using a lottery system. To support this effort, Clean Power Research implemented a custom lottery process in time for the 2011 application period.

Now, the NV Energy team and applicants alike enjoy the ability to enter, track and edit applications anytime and from anywhere. Hargrove comments that, “Application review has been much easier and faster with electronic documents and communication templates. Phone calls from contractors have decreased, while communication has improved, and we’re hearing nothing but good things from our customers.”

Building on the success of the PV program, NV Energy is expanding use of PowerClerk to administer its wind, micro-hydro and solar hot water programs. Hargrove noted, “PowerClerk is really indifferent to the technologies that are offered within an incentive program.”

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