

York County Natural Gas Authority

Key Benefits

- Improves customer satisfaction with greater ease of use
- Reduces customer service inquiries, saving time and money
- Facilitates move to paperless billing
- Smoothly integrates with SunGard Public Sector application

API Solution Integrated

- OptiView Web™

York County Natural Gas Enhances Online Services with Electronic Duplicates of Paper Bills Using OptiView Web from Advanced Processing & Imaging

For more than 52 years, York County Natural Gas Authority has provided residential, commercial and industrial gas service throughout York County, South Carolina. It is a political subdivision of the state that operates as a not-for-profit corporation. The authority currently has more than 1,000 miles of distribution mains and serves approximately 54,000 customers.

Challenge: Different formats for paper and online bills caused customer confusion

York County Natural Gas Authority uses an online billing management system that enables customers to view the details of their accounts on a secure Web site. The organization accomplishes this through the Click2Gov® gateway from SunGard Public Sector, a provider of applications that automate utility services and billing. With this e-government solution, information from the SunGard Public Sector mainframe system is presented in an online format to provide York County residents with convenient, Web-based access to their account information.

"We are achieving important returns on our investment in OptiView Web while facilitating the adoption of paperless billing, which will deliver even greater efficiency and cost savings in the future."

Tim Baldwin, Market Services Manager,
York County Natural Gas Authority

However, this system did not allow the online bills to be displayed in the same graphical format as the paper bills that customers received in the mail. As a result, the visual differences between the online and paper presentations of the bills often led to customer misunderstandings and calls to the authority's customer service department for clarification. "Rate changes, in particular, could lead to confusion on the part of our customers," said Tim Baldwin, Market Services Manager at York County Natural Gas Authority. "We wanted customers' paper and electronic bills to match. Further, we wanted service representatives to see exactly what callers were seeing."



A related issue was encouraging more consumers to adopt paperless billing. "Mailing a paper bill to each customer every month costs us more than \$250,000 per year in paper, printing, postage and handling. Paperless billing offers the potential for significant savings, as well as greater convenience for customers."

Solution: OptiView Web for improved online bill presentation

Advanced Processing & Imaging implemented a solution that integrates York County Natural Gas Authority's Click2Gov® gateway with OptiView Web™. This allows customers to access electronic versions of their paper bills online. The integration was accomplished without any programming by the authority or SunGard Public Sector. The solution provides customers with a full Web viewer—personalized with the York County Natural Gas logo—through a secure connection. Customers simply log into their accounts as usual and click on a single button to open the electronic duplicates of their bills.

"All a customer does is click on the button that says 'View Last Bill,'" said Baldwin. "It is literally that easy. The OptiView Web system presents customers with a fully graphical reproduction."

When customers call with a billing question, the authority's customer service representatives can quickly access the online image of the printed bill, making it easy to discuss issues over the phone.

Benefits: Lower costs, greater convenience and support for paperless billing

The Click2Gov® gateway with OptiView Web solution provides important benefits for York County Natural Gas and its customers. Customers can now view an image of their paper bills online and even save them to their computers or print them. Some are making the move away from paper bills altogether.

"We send e-mail notifications every month telling customers that the online bill is available via an embedded link," said Baldwin. "We always include a note suggesting they opt out of paper bills. So far, about 500 customers have chosen the paperless option, saving us \$2,500 a year. However, we believe that online billing and payments will eventually replace paper because it is so convenient. We're already seeing greater momentum in that direction, and the OptiView Web solution is playing a vital role in expediting this trend."

"We are achieving important returns on our investment in OptiView Web while facilitating the adoption of paperless billing, which will deliver even greater efficiency and cost savings in the future," Baldwin concluded.

For more information, please visit www.apimg.com or call 800.430.7011.



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Advanced Processing & Imaging, Inc.

Founded in 1996, Advanced Processing & Imaging (API) develops software solutions that enable public and private organizations, across a range of industries, to implement an efficient and effective paperless environment. The API electronic content management (ECM) portfolio includes document management and imaging, records management, workflow and agenda administration. The company is a certified IBM® Business Partner, Microsoft® Gold Partner and Microsoft® ISV. Powerful solutions, the ability to seamlessly integrate with line-of-business applications and world-class customer care set API apart from their competition.

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