



Human Resource Systems Corporation



SUCCESS STORIES

Water Utility

The Customer
Aqua America

Industry
Water Utility

Employees
1600

Geography
Headquartered in Bryn Mawr, PA, with 100 satellite locations across the US

Products
iVantage®
iVantage Connect™
Position Control & Budgeting

“Before iVantage®, we had to key in the applications one at a time and then send out individual mailings to each applicant requesting sex and race data. SPECTRUM’s system has saved us an exceptional amount of time and money!”
~Carrie Panetta, Assistant Manager of Employee Relations

iVantage® software manages Aqua America’s tidal wave of paperwork

Aqua America Inc. is the nation’s largest U.S. based publicly-traded water utility company. The company provides water and wastewater services to approximately 2.5 million residents in 13 states.

Aqua America embarked on a successful growth-through-acquisition strategy in the early 1990s. Since this time, the company has undergone more than 120 acquisitions and growth ventures—more than 90 acquisitions have taken place in the past five years. Due to the magnitude of growth they have achieved record earnings and high shareholder return; all while offering low-cost, quality drinking water.

Managing the growth

The fast growth of Aqua America placed a large burden on the HR staff’s valuable time and resources. In order to effectively manage the growing number of employees and applicants, HR decided to invest in a new, web-based HR software package. They chose SPECTRUM to make it possible.

Aqua America has been a SPECTRUM client for over 14 years. The company first used SPECTRUM’s HR2000® software, then moved to HRVantage® for Client/Server, and ultimately

transitioned to iVantage in order to accommodate its vast growth.

When Aqua America switched to iVantage®, they knew they needed a Web-native system that enabled them to communicate with multiple employees, applicants and their payroll provider; all of whom are located in different areas of the country. Additionally, the system needed to track affirmative action responsibilities and generate customized reports for managers and officers. They found iVantage to be a smart, reliable, cost-effective solution.

Automated applicant tracking saves time and money

According to Carrie Panetta, Assistant Manager of Employee Relations of Aqua America, iVantage Connect™ is especially useful for applicant tracking because this module enables them to post-job openings to their website and lets applicants apply on-line.

“Legally we have to track applicant flow,” Panetta said. “With 17,000 applicants to date, we never could have kept up. iVantage Connect saves my staff an unprecedented amount of time because they no longer have to key in all of those applications.”

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Another advantage that Panetta boasts about is how iVantage Connect makes the entire applicant process paperless.

“Before iVantage, we had to key in resumes one at a time and then send out individual mailings to each applicant requesting sex and race data. SPECTRUM’s system has saved us an exceptional amount of time and money!”

Easy to generate reports

The HR department needed a dynamic reporting tool for their managers and officers. According to Panetta, HR often pulls important company data including organizational charts for succession and new position planning, employee terminations for stock option planning, and workers’ compensation reports for managers.

“The information we need is right at our fingertips, which makes our job easier to complete,” Panetta said.

Additionally, standardized email templates in iVantage Connect™ assist HR in keeping in constant communication with employees and managers.

Tailoring information to help HR

Since no two organizations are alike, iVantage can be easily tailored to fit any size company.

The first customization Aqua America requested lets them track the employees covered by a pension plan—over 75% of staff—as they needed the iVantage system to track vesting rules.

“Employees with 5 years of service are vested in the pension plan,” Panetta said. “So, if an employee works for us from the age of 20 to 26, they are vested in the plan, but are not eligible for another 40 years. We use the same screen to track employees who have participated in the plan who have retired because we need to keep their beneficiary information for long periods of time as well. Figuring out a way to track this process was imperative to Aqua America.”

Another customization enables Aqua America to track medical benefits for retirees.

“The majority of our employees qualify for continuation of medical benefits when they retire,” Panetta said. “How much the employee pays toward this continuation of coverage is different for almost every retiree.”

Prior to using iVantage, the continuation of medical benefits for retirees created a lot of extra work for the HR staff. A special customized ‘Retiree Medical’ page shows how much the retiree must pay, how much the company pays, the percentage Aqua America pays towards a predetermined cap and from what account to deduct the payment.

Exceptional client service

During the conversion process, Aqua America interacted with a SPECTRUM client service representative on a daily basis. This was key to successfully implementing their system and building a positive relationship.

“Our client service rep is both an HR and SPECTRUM technology expert—she really strives to understand what we are trying to accomplish on a daily basis,” Panetta said. “SPECTRUM goes above and beyond to make sure we stay satisfied.”

Where they are today

With the use of iVantage features like applicant tracking, employee self-service, pension planning, and the ability to generate key reports for executives, the HR department at Aqua America continues to exceed expectations for its 1600 employees; thanks to the iVantage system.