

Case Study: AGL

AGL Gives the Green Light to Efficiency ANCILE uPerform Software Helps Improve Workplace Productivity

For Sydney-based AGL Energy Limited (AGL) customer service is at the heart of everything it does. Therefore, ensuring that call centre staff are fully trained and knowledgeable about products and services is critical. By quickly and efficiently addressing the needs of the customer at the 'coal face' contact centre, staff performance can make the difference between a good or bad customer experience and can ultimately impact the continued success of the business.

Paying the price for inefficiency

Running a busy call centre is a daunting enough task on its own. In the relatively young industry of renewable energy, with regulatory and process policies changing on a daily basis, it is an even greater challenge to stay one step ahead. In the past, AGL trained staff through paper-based manuals and guides. Every time a new policy was introduced these documents would be updated, making the whole process less efficient and more expensive.

Updating these materials was just the tip of things. Materials had to be reissued and staff retrained to understand the changes to products, offers and conditions. As a result, this led to confusion, inefficiency and a painful experience for the customer. It also came at a cost. At its peak, AGL was spending as much as \$150,000 per year developing paper-based learning materials for staff.

Another issue commonly faced by contact center operations was the high turnover of staff. For AGL, this meant that once materials had been updated

and staff retrained, all too often they would leave the business and take with them the valuable knowledge about the business.

"The whole process was becoming a vicious circle," explains AGL's Training Delivery Manager, Sharon Ritchie. As a business and team, we found ourselves constantly on the back foot trying to ensure that staff had access to the most accurate information."

AGL realised that long-term this simply was not sustainable. They looked to find a solution that would enable AGL to capture procedures that could be easily transferred to other employees. Their goal: quicker response rates, improved efficiency, and bottom line benefit.

Bridging the Digital Divide

AGL turned to ANCILE Solutions, a provider of best-in-class learning and performance software solutions to rollout ANCILE uPerform™ - an authoring and content management tool that delivers targeted, high-quality learning content to employees. Having previously used ANCILE Info Pak™ - the predecessor to ANCILE uPerform - AGL was keen to build on this content and migrate to ANCILE uPerform to quickly deploy content to the entire workforce. ANCILE uPerform allows users with no programming experience to create, edit, and publish procedures, task-based simulations, and eLearning courses.

In 2010, AGL migrated more than 2,000 existing documents to the new system. They put in place robust workflow and sign-off procedures to ensure that

only quality content was produced and published. ANCILE staff also provided classroom-based and remote training workshops to bring the AGL user community up to speed as quickly as possible. By doing so, AGL was able to ensure that users understood the full functionality of ANCILE uPerform. More importantly, mistakes were minimized.

To coincide with the rollout, AGL also introduced a new website powered by ANCILE uPerform to act as a homepage for employees. This ensured that staff were introduced to help content and were able to familiarise themselves with accessing content when needed. The site was fully customized to have a consistent AGL look and feel, which has helped with the uptake among employees. However, it has not been complete smooth sailing.

“Whenever you introduce something completely new and change the way people go about their work, there is always some resistance at first. It’s been a complete mental and cultural shift to get to where we are today, but it has been worth it,” explains Sharon Ritchie, Training Delivery Manager at AGL.

Reaping the Rewards

Today, through the use of ANCILE uPerform, AGL is a more efficient and dynamic business and is setting standards in customer service.

- The ANCILE uPerform solution is now used both locally in Australia as well as in AGL international offices such as Manila; the Philippines; and Kolkata, India.
- The business has almost eradicated its paper-based manuals, dramatically reducing its environmental footprint, as well as its overhead spend from \$150,000 to just \$8,000 per annum.
- First-call resolution rate has increased 4% year-on-year.

Sharon Ritchie, continues: “As a renewable energy business, it’s essential that we practice what we preach while maintaining the best possible customer service. By going paperless, we’ve been able to quickly access and share information online, quicker

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The success of the ANCILE uPerform solution has been such that it has been rolled out to develop content for additional web- and Microsoft Windows-based enterprise applications. For example, all of AGL’s billing processes are documented using the ANCILE uPerform product, a major plus for the business, explains Sharon Ritchie.

“The fact that the solution can be deployed across other vendor solutions without encountering any compatibility issues is a major benefit. It means that we can improve efficiencies in other parts of the business while still working with a single supplier,” added Ritchie.

With paper-based materials a distant memory and employee efficiency and customer service at their peak, AGL isn’t resting on its laurels. The company recently introduced a dual monitor system in its contact centers to further support its paperless environment. Contact centre staff are able to manage customer enquiries on one screen while addressing questions and finding solutions through ANCILE uPerform on the other. The result is a positive customer experience which leaves AGL’s competitors ‘green’ with envy.