



Outcomes

CMI "Had all the Answers" for the Connersville, Indiana Utilities Department



- Karen Lore

Two and a half years ago, Connersville Indiana Utilities Department was looking for a new software package that would get them tracking in a new direction. For years, the office operated with a custom DOS-based system that, according to Karen Lore, Utilities Office Manager, was neither user friendly or flexible. "We looked at several alternatives and frankly, CMI was able to answer all of our questions. It seemed that CMI had really thought through their products and were offering solutions that their competitors were not. They really did so much for us immediately to improve our processing," Lore noted. Here's what she, and two of her staff had to say about the move to CMI's client server Finance, Payroll, Utility and Fixed Asset software.

What system were you formerly using and why did you decide to make a change?

Lore: We had a DP system based on an AS400 platform. Our program was custom written and there were just so many things we couldn't do. For example, when we cannot read meters during the cold weather, we have to average our customer's bills. Then, preparing the catch up billing was always a time-consuming job. CMI's system now handles that easily for us.

Susie Owen: We needed an alternative to our existing system because we needed to add another utility, (storm water) and it just couldn't handle it. By moving to CMI's software, we were able to add the new utility without difficulty.

Cindy Lunsford: With our old system, we could not post and print a receipt for the customer. All we could do was give them a stamped receipt.

Did you have any concerns about going with a software provider from outside of Indiana?

Lore: Not really. CMI is not that far away, and they assured us they would service our account with the same attention given to those within closer proximity of their offices. We didn't get that same feeling from a CMI competitor located in the southwest.

Now that you have been using the CMI software applications for a couple of years, what do you like about how it is working for the utility department?

Owen: I just think it is extremely user friendly. The CMI user defined reports are very easy to use – you

CMI in Indiana

- Meeting the needs of Indiana municipalities since 1998
- Multiple Indiana installations ranging from small user networks to large city wide deployment
- Indiana Government Specialists
- Established Indiana CMI Users Group
- Work closely with Indiana State Board of Accounts for specific/client requirements



- Susie Owen



- Cindy Lunsford

can create almost any report you need. Unlike with our previous system, there is so much information I can pull up in just a matter of seconds. For example, I can have a report on unexcused time off in about three minutes where before I would have to go through all of the time cards. Our old payroll system was not flexible at all. We couldn't code anything the way we can now. CMI's payroll system is great. We're managing information better than ever before and saving time as well.



"Our customers appreciate what we are able to do for them now as well. Looking up information is so much easier when they call to question a bill or a work order."

Lunsford: As for billing, it's really very easy to use as well. My month-end reports are so much simpler to complete.

Lore: And, our customers appreciate what we are able to do for them now as well. Looking up information is so much easier when they call to question a bill or a work order.

What are some of the more significant results you have achieved with the CMI software?

Owen: I can now keep track of my finance projects much easier than before. And, I can look up prices from our vendors faster. Before, everything was manual and it took a lot of time and was subject to error. As for payroll, the personnel module is great. I no longer have to enter payroll data twice because I can simply transfer the information to finance.

Lore: For our utilities, we now are managing our cash receipts and service orders more efficiently. Before, we all did our own individual parts and had our own checks and balances, but it was so time consuming. Now the system does so much for us that we previously had to do manually.

Lunsford: We now offer our customers direct pay and credit card pay where before we couldn't. From what some of our customers tell us, they really appreciate our new system.

Is your application unique in anyway?

Lore: The State Board of Accounts of Indiana has a special way they want to see our detailed ledger. CMI has worked with us to make the necessary modifications to their standard format to meet the state board's requirements.

What do you like about the CMI internal reporting features?

Owen: It's great to print a report to the screen rather than always to a hard copy. One of the best features is that we can change reports as required. I can easily customize reports for our board members, highlighting certain areas that may need additional explanation. The text writer feature is very helpful. And, for recurring

claims, we don't have to duplicate our efforts anymore. Now, I simply call them up in the system, change the date and print them out ... its great!

What has been your experience with CMI's technical support?

Owen: When we first started doing payroll, CMI personnel came to our office and were extremely helpful. The way we were doing payroll up until that time was totally different. Tracking accrued time was a big issue since we had to look up each record manually. With CMI's help we set it up so now we can find all the information quickly on the system. Looking back, I really can't believe we didn't make the switch sooner.

Lore: We get the answers when we need them. We get the support when we need it. Since we don't have an IT staff, we rely on CMI a lot. We just tell them in general terms our problem and because of their tremendous knowledge of the software, and of our operation and application, they understand quickly and work us through most any issue. All I can say is that CMI has great people who are wonderful to work with.

If another municipality were to ask you about CMI, what would you say to them?

Lore: We strongly recommend CMI to other Indiana cities whenever we have the opportunity. Now that we are comfortable with the software, we certainly recognize that with CMI it goes well beyond the software. You just don't know how strong a company's after-sale support is until the system has been installed and you're up and running. The support from CMI has been super. Bottom line, we're happy.

About Creative Microsystems, Inc. (CMI)

Based in Englewood, Ohio, CMI has been a leading provider of Application Software and Services that help manage the daily operations of local and County Government and Libraries since 1979. CMI is a member of the Civica Plc. Group based out of the United Kingdom. For more information, please visit CMI's Web Site at www.civiacmi.com



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