



Apogee Software Powers Georgia Power's Home Audits

Situation:

Georgia Power provides its 2.4 million customers with a robust portfolio of energy efficiency programs. Participation in its flagship online and in-home energy audits, however, began to plateau around 2009. That year, online home energy audits totaled just 1,800 and in-home energy audits totaled 3,421.

Georgia Power set out in 2010 to reenergize its home energy audit programs and promotion. This case study presents the solutions Georgia Power identified, the actions taken, and results achieved.

Solution:

Georgia Power surveyed the market and thoroughly evaluated the leading home

energy audit programs and packages. The company readily selected Apogee Interactive's EnergyInsights™ software and billing-integrated HomeEnergyCalculator™ for three primary reasons:

- To achieve greater accuracy and improved information presentation in online and in-home energy audits to improve the customer's overall experience.
- To increase the efficiency of its in-home energy audit process.
- To boost customer engagement with in-home audits, improve understanding of audit results, and increase the likelihood behavioral changes through accurate and impressive presentation.

Apogee's proprietary AMES software powers the energy analysis behind Georgia Power's branded "Energy Check-Ups" (online and in-home). The AMES software is the most accurate analysis available on the market today as signified by its RESNET® certification at the HERS rating level* and best-in-class ranking in the BESTEST EX savings prediction tests run by the DOE and EPA.

"We want to ensure the energy advice we provide over the Web or in the home through the Energy Check-Up is as accurate as possible," said Kevin Kastner, eBusiness Manager for Georgia Power. "We are trying to let customers know that they can do and predict the impact of their changes. This tool does the calculations and converts into dollars instead of just kWh."

Apogee's EnergyInsights and HomeEnergyCalculator programs operate on multiple platforms and integrate with multiple utility billing systems. This enabled Georgia Power to launch the online application very quickly on its website, including full integration with its billing system.

Next, the utility chose the iPad platform for its in-home audit program. Apogee worked hand in hand with Georgia Power to ensure a highly mobile, streamlined and engaging audit experience.

Georgia Power auditors then gained significant time and process efficiencies by downloading customers' billing histories into the iPad application before each audit and running a preliminary energy analysis. Apogee's predictive software provides the auditor with a detailed breakdown of the home's energy usage before the visit. While onsite, easy touch-screen data entry allows the auditor to actively engage with the customer, showing them exactly how consumption changes as they enter different thermostat settings, equipment choices and behavioral patterns. A final audit report is then emailed to the customer at the close of the audit.

With the new in-home and online home energy audits in place, Georgia Power launched a coordinated promotional campaign to drive traffic to its Energy Check-Ups. This campaign included billboards, radio spots, TV spots, bill messages and strategic promotion and cross-linking on the website itself.

Using Apogee's online administrative and tracking tool, Georgia Power monitors usage of the online Energy Check-Up for program management purposes as well as to document changes in participation during promotional activities or weather events.

Results:

The highly engaging user interface and accurate analysis of the Apogee audit products combined with Georgia Power's strategic promotion has clearly reenergized customer participation:

- From 2010 to 2012

169,458 online Energy Check-Ups were performed.

- For 2012 alone

8,110 in-home energy audits were completed.

Additional follow-up measurement compiled by an outside research firm reveals further positive results. According to Chartwell Inc.'s **October 2012 Energy Efficiency: Marketing Program Report**, Georgia Power's phone-based survey results showed proven impact on customer engagement. It cites, "Subsequent, post-campaign phone interviews with customers confirmed the effort was effective at generating greater awareness, changing customer behavior and making the utility a valuable, reliable source of energy efficiency information."



Documented Accuracy: Apogee's proprietary AMES engine is RESNET® accredited at the highest HERS rating level and was ranked best-in-class in the BESTEST EX savings predictions test run by DOE and EPA. See www.resnet.org and www.nrel.gov/buildings/bestest_ex.html.



APOGEE, now serving the energy industry for more than 20 years, is a trusted partner in customer engagement to more than 650 U.S. utilities.