



Why You Should Outsource Your Telecom Service

ANSWERS:

Aging experienced staff makes it harder to replace employees as they leave

Expertise is becoming more IT centric instead of telecom

New state of the art technology requires engineered solutions

Companies are doing more with less, requiring meter techs to be telecom experts

Requirements for technology monitoring have increased due to increase need for real time data and security concerns

Back to core business (give companies their resources back to do what they do best)

INTRODUCTION:

In the ever-changing energy industry, energy companies are finding that it is more difficult to keep up with technology changes in our fast-moving world of technology. In the past, simple serial communications were performed by in-house telecommunication technicians dedicated to field communications. These field technicians are becoming a distant memory for those of us still working in the industry. The average age of most dedicated telecom technicians is over 55. What are energy companies going to do to keep their current and future data networks operating at peak performance?

I heard a statistic a couple of years ago from a speaker at a smart grid conference that his utility expertise would all retire within 5 years. That's a scary place for every company to be in. Younger technicians have been looking at the IT profession for the last 10+ years. Technical colleges are not focusing on radio frequency programs anymore. Even though radios are easier to program and install, there are always problems with under-engineered systems that unexpectedly grow larger than the field can support.

Equipment vendors have had to step up and try to engineer solutions for their radios just to make sales. The technology has improved greatly, but without field service companies, many of their solutions fail, even though it's not the equipment, but the lack of engineering, poor installation and service techniques by inexperienced manpower that causes the problem. How can you know what is the best option for your company if you have to depend on an equipment salesman alone to drive your company's technology?

Legacy communications were handled by the operations group in the past. With emerging technologies, the field is now being managed by the IT department. Strict security mandates on the IP network are requiring fully engineered solutions to be implemented. Most IT departments don't know what to do with these legacy serial networks and as these fields turn into Ethernet capable sites, they try and implement their internal security policies on fields just like they do on their internal LAN's. The standard IT group relies on the equipment vendor to provide a solution, but the equipment vendor is better suited for the LAN.

Consulting companies have multiple years of field telecom experience and the ability to work with IT groups from small to very large companies. The majority of their management team comes from the energy industry. This expertise gives consulting companies an advantage when we engineer and deploy and manage networks for our energy customers.

When a field network is engineered up front and deployed to industry specifications, the outcome is a high-performance network that meets the needs of our customers for years to come.

CONCLUSION:

You're in the business of producing and transporting energy. Telecommunications is a vehicle that helps you do your work more efficiently and safely, but it's not your core business. Whether you are a small company just needing telecommunications expertise or a large company that has an overworked telecom staff, a qualified outsource company will fill the needs so you can get to your core business.

Outsourcing companies can place a part time or full-time service technician or technicians at your facility or geographic region to meet your immediate or long-term needs. They also have a program where they can manage your existing telecom staff or acquire them from your company so you can get back to your core business of producing and transporting energy.

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