

### HOP Energy Improves Customer Experience KPIs and Reduces Costs through Cloud-based Solutions

Award-winning Cloud Unified Communications and Workforce Management Solutions Improve Service Levels, Productivity, and Analytics to Drive Insight-based Decisions

Hop Energy is a full-service provider with branches in eight states. Working with some of the largest and most established energy companies in the Northeast, HOP Energy delivers everything from heating oil, liquid fuels and propane gas to HVAC installations to nearly 80,000 commercial and residential customers. The company has built a solid reputation by maintaining reliable inventories and providing dedicated support

HOP Energy's Senior Vice President of Operations, Stephen Loizeaux leads the effort to ensure high customer satisfaction. One key to his success comes from employing innovative and reliable technology tools to improve efficiency and retain customer loyalty. A perfect example - Loizeaux recognized that the company's antiquated phone system and contact center was an impediment to rapid customer care. At the time, HOP Energy operated 13 disparate phone systems in geographically dispersed locations. The hardware-based PBX systems were incompatible, so interconnectivity was not an option. This limited the ability to transfer calls and provided no reporting features or visibility into critical customer care KPIs.

Loizeaux began seeking a replacement system, noting, "Most vendors required significant capital investments, sometimes in excess of \$1 million, with ongoing phone bills." Based on his poor experiences with expensive, difficult-to-manage hardware-based PBX systems, he explored modern cloud-based communications systems. Evolve IP offered multiple advantages, including low up-front costs and predictable operational expenditures that made sense for HOP Energy.

"We selected Evolve IP's Unified Communications solution, which was very attractive from both a financial and operational perspective," noted Loizeaux. HOP Energy was able to consolidate its 13 ailing phone systems into just one unified solution using Evolve IP's cloud-based solution, gaining advanced collaboration and communications features, user mobility and world-class voice quality. "Today, it provides the visibility and reporting I need, along with sophisticated call recoding capabilities. And since all software updates are maintained by Evolve IP, the systems updates itself seamlessly in the background without requiring time and support from our busy in-house IT department."



#### The Need for Insight-based Workforce Management

With a unified, cost-effective communications system in place, Loizeaux then looked to further improve internal productivity and customer experiences with a workforce management (WFM) system.

Loizeaux recalls the challenges, noting, "Maintaining optimum skill-based contact center staffing is essential to affordably ensuring quality customer experiences. Managing agent schedules in just one location would be difficult enough, but imagine the challenges across seven call centers in five states."

Some HOP Energy call center managers utilized spreadsheets to assign agent shifts, while others just made scheduling decisions on gut instincts. With no centralized system and no data to consult, right-sizing staff schedules for call volume peaks and valleys was inefficient and sometimes resulted in less-optimal customer experiences.

With the aim of improving staffing-based challenges, Loizeaux selected the integrated cloud-based solution from Evolve IP and Monet Software. The

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unified WFM solution combines Monet's Live Workforce Management platform and Evolve IP's award-winning contact center solutions, significantly improving service levels and increasing productivity. The platform empowers contact center managers to build accurate forecasts and optimal schedules, with reporting tools to ensure agents are adhering to assigned hours.

The Evolve IP/Monet WFM solution produced measureable improvements in both customer experiences and cost savings. Prior to deploying the WFM solution, the company struggled to meet Service Level Agreement (SLA) KPIs for answering calls. At some locations, the average speed-to-answer in 30 seconds or less was as low as 29%-33%, with other locations faring somewhat better in the 40-60% range.

Today, more than 80% of calls are answered in 30 seconds or less, with an average answer speed of just 19 seconds. HOP Energy also drastically reduced Call abandonment rate to approximately 33% of its earlier performance level, and eliminated a high percentage of service-based complaints.

With advanced insight regarding call volumes, HOP Energy now more accurately predicts staffing needs, creating opportunities for full-time split shifts, as well as part-time and seasonal workers. "With the WFM solution, we're delivering better, faster customer service, and we're doing it with fewer agents at a lower cost," added Loizeaux.

"A big part of this comes from the ability to view and manage all call centers as a single organization, and to enact skill based routing. With Evolve IP's UC-One solution, HOP Energy has added home-based agents to handle additional calls. "It really doesn't matter where our agents work, the system provides a seamless experience for our customers. I can manage all agents spread across the kingdom, routing each call to the next-available rep, based on skills, not location. We get the right call to the right people while reducing our costs and complexity."

The WFM solution is also a valuable HR tool, providing visibility into agents out of "compliance" with scheduled shifts. Loizeaux can monitor adherence to schedules and break times, helping reps understand responsibilities and better comply with company policies. The solution is also a valuable tool for HR, deliver agent scorecard data for employee promotions and raises.

Loizeaux concluded, "The workforce management solution from Evolve IP and Monet Software delivers proven results, with the simplicity of one vendor, one contract and one invoice. Advanced analytics enable us to provide greater customer experiences while minimizing costs through right-sized and skill-based staffing levels. Since deploying the platform, we've experienced improved service metrics, increased productivity, reduced costs and better-aligned staffing hours. I recommend the platform for any call center manager interested in improving metrics across the board."

**"With the WFM solution, we're delivering better, faster customer service, and we're doing it with fewer agents at a lower cost"**

Stephen Loizeaux  
**SVP of Operations-**  
**HOP Energy**



#### LOCATION:

Headquartered in White Plains, NY with local branches in eight states from Vermont to Delaware.

#### INDUSTRY:

Commercial and residential energy services provider

#### CUSTOMER PROFILE

HOP Energy is a full-service energy provider, delivering everything from heating oil, liquid fuels and propane gas to HVAC installations. With local branches in eight states, HOP Energy services some of the largest and most established energy companies in the Northeast. The company has built a solid reputation by maintaining reliable inventories and providing dedicated support to nearly 80,000 commercial and residential customers.



#### PRODUCTS

- Unified Communications as a Service
- Cloud Contact Center
- Workforce Management Solution



#### BUSINESS SITUATION

The company struggled to meet Service Level Agreement KPIs for answering calls, and was challenged by staffing issues. A unified communications solution and workforce management suite were required to improve customer experiences and reduce costs.



#### SOLUTION

The Evolve IP unified communication solution provided visibility and reporting with sophisticated call recoding capabilities. Coupled with the Monet WFM solution, HOP Energy gained measurable improvements for both customers and for HOP Energy's bottom line.

#### BENEFITS

- Ability to manage all call centers as a single organization
- Greater insight into business demands and staffing needs
- Drastic reduction in call answer speeds
- Call abandonment rate reduced to approximately 33% of previous levels



#### OVERVIEW

HOP Energy required a better solution to handle a high volume of inbound calls and the associated staffing challenges at its seven call centers in five states. Evolve IP delivered solutions for reliable cloud communications management, efficient call routing and seamless workforce management to better serve customers and operate a fiscally sound business.

## ABOUT EVOLVE IP

Evolve IP is The Cloud Strategy Company™. Designed from the beginning to provide organizations with the ability to deploy both cloud computing and cloud communications onto a single platform, today, over 210,000 users rely on Evolve IP for services like disaster recovery, contact centers, unified communications, virtual desktop services, IaaS and more. With deployments across the globe, Evolve IP provides cloud services in virtually every industry with specializations in the healthcare, finance, veterinary, retail, legal, and insurance verticals.