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UTILITIES TECHNOLOGY SPECIAL

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50 Most Promising Utilities Technology Solution Providers

From smart meters to rooftop solar and energy storage, innovative technologies have the capacity to disrupt the utilities industry. After remaining reasonably unbothered for the last 100 years, the lattice is in front of embracing new technologies that are sprouting new business models, altering consumer prospects and causing regulatory models to acclimatize.

The emerging technology solutions are reinventing the industry—automating and enhancing distribution grids, improving security and compliance efforts, and helping to harness meaningful information to keep costs down. With these advances, the industry can better serve their customers and grow the business.

Amidst this technology advances, the aging infrastructures, complex ecosystems, stricter regulations, and higher expectations set a challenging backdrop for energy and utilities. But connected

technologies offer powerful opportunities to modernize operations while cutting costs and generating insights. Technology is enabling utilities to embrace new challenges and pursue new opportunities.

In the last few months we have looked at hundreds of solution providers who primarily serve the utilities sector, and shortlisted the ones that are at the forefront of tackling challenges faced by the industry.

In our selection we have looked at vendor's capability to fulfill the needs of utilities sector—both from a provider and consumer perspective—through variety of services that support core business processes, including innovation areas related to cloud, SaaS, Big Data and analytics.

We present you to CIOReview's 50 Most Promising Utilities Technology Solutions Providers 2014.

Company:
Motion Computing

Description:
A company that offers rugged tablet-based solutions, which consistently reduce operational expenses, improve customer service levels, and enable real-time decision making at the point-of-service

Key Person:
Peter M. Poulin
CEO

Website:
www.motioncomputing.com

Motion Computing, Inc. Incorporating Mobile Solutions into Work Order Automation



Peter M. Poulin

Peter M. Poulin, CEO of Motion Computing is a fly fisherman who is pretty particular about his tackle. Each rod, reel, and fly line are built for a specific purpose. The equipment one uses to catch trout in a small stream is not the same he would use to catch stripers in the ocean. Being at the helm of a company that specializes in providing mobility solutions for utilities, he and his team of engineers are crafting purpose-built equipment for the unique job and work conditions of these customers.

According to Poulin, Motion Computing's customers are seeking help in two areas. One is for reducing operational costs by increasing field worker efficiency; and the other is for providing higher customer service levels by reducing repair turnaround time and enabling real-time decision making at the point of service. To facilitate this, Motion Computing incorporates rugged tablets with cellular connectivity into work order automation. "By doing so, it eliminates redundant data entry time and reduces

errors, reduces the number of return visits to a repair site, and provides the worker with real-time information to make on-site decisions," remarks Poulin.

Headquartered in Austin, TX, Motion Computing offers purpose-built equipments for vertical markets including utilities, manufacturing, oil & gas, mining, and public safety. The company's offerings includes a suite of ruggedized tablets, accessories, in-vehicle solutions, software and a breadth of design and deployment services. "Founded in 2001, we are a pioneer and early innovator in the tablet market. Our mobility portfolio has now expanded to also include workflow enabling accessories, software, and wireless infrastructure. This integrated approach to designing customizable solutions reduces complexity and deployment risks for our customers," says Poulin.

The company offers tablets that are MIL-SPEC 810G rated for ruggedness, so it can be deployed in the often demanding environments of field workers. The ViewAnywhere® displays are optically bonded for superior outdoor viewing.

“**Motion does not build product to stock, but employs a build-to-order model**”

The ingress protection and extreme temperature ratings enable the tablets to operate in most environment conditions, including snow and rain. Motion also provides an overnight docking station that securely locks multiple tablets while

charging and downloading image updates and the next day's work orders. For a better understanding of the usability of Motion's tablet products, consider the example Peoples Natural Gas. Previously, the client used a combination of laptops and paper forms to perform inspections and other field activities. For gas line locating, technicians used eight-year-old rugged laptops running mapping software in offline mode. But even though the field workers were equipped with laptops, there was no real-time connectivity to the technicians. They deployed rugged tablet-based solution of Motion Computing that has reduced reliance on paper inspection documents and maps, and helped automate the process of locating and marking gas lines for its customers. The solution has eliminated several hours per week in data entry.

The company's Motion rugged tablets run on Windows®, using Intel®Core™ Processors. This enables customers to preserve their existing IT infrastructure investment in software applications, security solutions, mobile device management, and back office integration. "Motion also provides a broad range of workflow enhancing accessories that have been designed in house. This further reduces integration risks when deploying complete workflow solutions that include docking stations, smart card readers, long-range RFID readers, and point-of-sale devices," adds Poulin.

Poulin also remarks that unlike its competitors, Motion does not build product to stock, but employs a build-to-order model. "This benefits our customers by enabling them to configure systems to their desired specifications," concludes Poulin. CR

