



Kentucky Association of Electric Cooperatives Inc: A Case Study on Managed IT Services

Executive Summary :

After 16 years of being with the same IT Vendor, Cherisse Walters (IT Director at KAEC) became increasingly frustrated with the quality of support she was receiving. When the push to over-purchase items outweighed the needs of her business and there was not a strategic plan in place, she knew that a change was needed to help improve the company processes and overall ROI. ABS was asked to perform an unbiased, third party review of their IT environment and make recommendations for any areas that do not meet general IT 'best practices' or that could be considered any type of compliancy violation.

KAEC provides several services for the 24 local, consumer-owned electric distribution utilities in the state of KY. Those services include representation before the Legislature, Congress, and regulatory bodies; safety training, coordination of management training and public relations support including publication of Kentucky Living magazine.

Challenges :

KAEC provides support to 8 sites throughout the state. The priority from an IT perspective is making sure their staff is able to connect to required systems and their users are productive and working effectively day to day. KAEC had never proactively put together an IT budget and they were operating from a reactive approach to IT rather than proactive. Upgrades in hardware and handling issues were becoming time consuming for Cherisse prohibiting her to focus on a long-term strategic plan. KAEC was looking for a true partner relationship in an IT support company that had the experience needed to help guide them into the future. An overhaul of the current network was looming over their head. They knew there was a need to look elsewhere. Their current IT vendor lacked the experience needed and the overall resources on staff.

How ABS Helped:

When ABS started working with KAEC, we knew they were not happy and it was our responsibility to change that. In order to do so, and working closely with the onsite IT, we first conducted a thorough IT review for each site to identify and address any immediate network needs and issues. We began fielding all help-desk calls from the KAEC employees and at the same time the dedicated ABS resources for KAEC including their business analyst, account manager, services team and the professional services manager were introduced and started the process of familiarizing themselves with the account. We began looking into the incoming service tickets for persistent issues and common problems across the network. These service tickets were discussed by the ABS account manager and the ABS business analyst. Recommendations were then presented. ABS also assisted KAEC executive management with an IT budget.

Projects to be listed

- IT Review
- Wireless Expansion
- Server and Network Overhaul
- Install new Spam Filtering
- Network Cabling

"The ABS Help Desk answered the phone quickly and was able to address my issue efficiently."

Results:

Over a period of 7 months ABS was able to fully onboard KAEC as a managed services client providing them with a comprehensive site survey and documentation for each of their 8 sites including recommendations that would tie IT to overall business initiatives. We were able to implement key projects that helped KAEC become more efficient and decrease end user downtime while improving their daily experience with IT support. The ongoing support for KAEC is in full effect with their dedicated business analyst and account manager meeting with the executive team and continuously looking for ways to improve the user experience and discussing how IT can impact the changing initiatives that KAEC has. The role of ABS is also changing due to the current IT director leaving KAEC – ABS has been able to fulfill that role from a CIO consulting perspective. Overall, with the multiple resources ABS has on-staff we are able to be a partner with KAEC and help guide them safely and securely into the future of ever changing IT needs.

"ABS has done a great job of explaining the impact their recommendations could have for their business initiatives."