



Application Hosting

Key Features

- Lower total cost of ownership (TCO)
- Scalability for any organization from one to hundreds of users
- Simplify IT budgeting
- Allows staff to focus on the customer and not technology
- PCI compliant
- Access to high-end applications including:
 - ◆ Accounting
 - ◆ Billing
 - ◆ AMR/AMI
 - ◆ MDM
 - ◆ IVR
 - ◆ OMS
 - ◆ Customer portal
 - ◆ Credit checking



Product Overview

Utilities across the nation are faced with an emergence of new technology to manage and implement Smart Grid solutions. These solutions improve operations and provide a greater level of customer service and customer choices. While the benefits are great, the challenges are also great. These include the cost associated with supporting the required information technology to the hiring and/or training the required IT staff to managing the infrastructure.

Many utilities are considering hosting these applications outside their physical organization to achieve cost efficiencies, greater security, and redundancies. These efficiencies are achieved by allocating resources over a greater number of users and organizations.

The PCS application hosting center, called **Utilit-e Central**, is an innovative method of delivering software applications via the Internet. In today's business arena, it is imperative to stay up-to-date with all aspects of the computer system's hardware and software. This has become a major budget item in most utilities. As the utility of tomorrow expands their product and service offerings, they have a real need to stay on top of the tools needed to accommodate these changes. Normally this means constant updating of computer servers along with a continual upgrade of software applications. Both require a substantial investment in equipment, licenses, and personnel.

Utilit-e Central provides a method of software delivery eliminating many of the headaches and expenses that go along with maintaining a proper computer server. Companies subscribing to **Utilit-e Central** use the applications, which can range from billing applications to accounting software. **Utilit-e Central** houses all applications and data at a central facility where PCS professionally manages hardware and communications, backups, and disaster recovery.

Servers installed in the hosting center support "Virtual Computing". Using multiple virtual servers, each operating within their own dedicated and protected environment, allows the servers to be shared by a multitude of applications and users. Virtual servers can be increased across physical computers. This allows for increased load and number of users without compromising performance and reliability.

For each utility, the PCS hosting center can scale from a few users to hundreds of users. This provides the ability to add almost an unlimited number of users with little effect on system performance.

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For less than \$30 a day, PCS can provide a secure service allowing your utility staff greater time to focus on serving the customer instead of managing this technical infrastructure.

Key Features

- Unlimited virtual servers
- Multiple Internet paths with automated failover
- Automated backup plans
- Disaster recovery backups



- Hosting designed for 24/7 operations
- Multi-levels of security and monitoring software
- Empowering smarter choices

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Benefits for Your Utility

Low Up-Front investment

By moving utility applications into the hosting center, the utility eliminates the initial up-front expense of the server, operating system, security software, and labor for installing the application. Ongoing, the utility eliminates the cost of repairs, maintenance, hardware updates, operating system patches, and backups.

Higher Reliability

The hosting center averages over 99% up-time. The PCS IT team is constantly monitoring the servers in the center. In addition, the IT team has an ongoing software patch and maintenance plan. All servers are monitored 7/24 and the team members are notified automatically when hardware and network issues are encountered.

Security

The hosting center and the disaster recovery center are locked down with limited access to the physical facility. Access to the hosting center from the Internet is handled by very strict security protocols. PCI compliance is addressed for you, limiting the need for an internal PCI program.

Performance and Uptime

Servers in the hosting facility are designed to be "fault tolerant". This means servers are equipped with redundant components such as disk drives and power supplies. In the case of failure of one component, the redundant part takes over. Servers are monitored 24/7 to ensure systems are available and secure.

Staff Availability

The effort of managing the server, operations, maintenance, and support is part of the hosting fee. Time spent on managing technology now can be focused on serving your customer.

Easy to Budget

PCS hosting fees are easy to budget and will eliminate the need to plan on major server replacements, adding memory, disk, or other components, operating system updates, and network software. PCS provides continuous improvement of the hosting center. Examples include virus protection, technology improvements, operating system and network upgrades. All items are included in a monthly hosting fee.

Lower Cost of Ownership

PCS provides a very low upfront fee to migrate into the hosting center. Ongoing, PCS provides a consistent monthly fee based on the number of applications hosted and users on the system. The monthly fee also includes future server migration costs and the cost to move applications to any new computing environment.