



Company | **Affordable Housing Alliance**

Affordable Housing Alliance's TRUE Program is Put into Action by Twin Lights Professional Services

The Affordable Housing Alliance (AHA) is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1991 to provide affordable housing and other services to low-to-moderate income individuals and families. They have successfully developed 400 homes in Monmouth, Ocean, and Middlesex counties. With their help, over 1,000 qualified families and individuals have been able to purchase their first home. Over the years, the organization has extended its services to other housing-related areas such as foreclosure counseling and energy assistance.

The Challenge

In early 2011, the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) selected AHA to be the administrator of the Temporary Relief for Utility Expenses (TRUE) program. The TRUE program is a one-time assistance program and is designed to help low to moderate income households, across the state of New Jersey, who are experiencing economic hardship and struggling to pay their electric and natural gas bills.

Due to the recent and lengthy economic downturn, there was a huge pent-up demand for this assistance among NJ residents, so the program had to be up and running within a very short time frame to ensure that families did not experience service disconnection.

Furthermore, with the available funds, the program was projected to last two years so upfront investments needed to be minimized. At the same time, the ability to grow beyond current projections was required.

Program ubiquity was important. The program was statewide and needed to be designed in a manner such that a potential client could apply from anywhere, at any time.

Finally, the application process was data-intensive and involved transfer of funds to various parties so accuracy and ability to closely track all transactions was critical.

The Solution

Twin Lights Group implemented an all-cloud solution that addressed the unique challenges of the True program. A NetSuite-based system was built that supported the application process, from beginning to end.

- Through the website (www.ahanjtrue.org), clients have the ability to self-screen and if they qualify, apply on-line and track their application status.
- Through NetSuite's CRM module and workflow automation, the system ensures that caseworkers quickly and accurately process all applications while keeping the client informed through all stages via automatic email notifications.
- NetSuite's ERP module is utilized to ensure accurate transfer of funds to the utility companies in order to avoid service disconnection of all qualified applicants.
- And the ubiquitous nature of a cloud-based solution such as NetSuite makes it easy for Affiliate agencies, dispersed throughout the state, to have easy access to the same True system.

M5, a cloud based Voice over IP service, was provisioned at the True office. The M5 solution required minimal capital investment (only phones had to be purchased), supported the high call volume easily and provided real-time call detail and routing flexibility.

Finally, Box.net, a cloud-based document storage service, was introduced. Box.net ensured security, privacy, and easy accessibility for the files and reports exchanged between AHA and the participating utility companies.



The Results

Within 3 months, Twin Lights completed the implementation of all systems. This success was largely due to the ease of implementing cloud-based systems (and a few all nighters). Minimal training was required to get caseworkers fluent in using the system.

Call volumes are heavy but are being handled well by the M5 system. For improved customer experience, more sophisticated call routing to local affiliate offices is being considered.

Online applications are coming in at a steady pace and are being processed efficiently by the caseworkers.

Funds are getting accurately and quickly transferred to utility companies to minimize service disconnection.

Lastly, easy access to data and program metrics has allowed AHA to report, with detail, on the program performance to all key stakeholders.