



City of Troy Improves Customer Relationships and Billing Accuracy with Sensus AMI Solution

ALABAMA UTILITY UPGRADES TO STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY, SAVING TIME AND LOWERING COSTS

The City of Troy modernizes its water and electricity infrastructure with technology from Sensus.



CHALLENGE

Upgrade aging electric and water metering infrastructure to create more operational efficiencies

SOLUTION

Leverage Sensus Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) solution to gather more data and monitor for issues like leaks or pipe breaks

REACH FARTHER

Use data and insights to become more responsive and build better customer relationships

Located just south of Montgomery, Alabama, the **City of Troy** is a unique mix of southern small-town charm and big-city amenities. There's a vibrant downtown square where the city's 20,000 residents can be found dining at local restaurants or shopping at boutique stores. Around the corner, students on the campus of Troy University might be taking in a show at the campus theater or cheering on the school's football team, the Trojans.

"It's a small southern town where everybody seems to know everybody. But, we're growing and there is a lot going on," said Danny Lee, advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) coordinator, City of Troy. "We strive to keep the city utility system up-to-date with the latest advances to provide the highest quality service to the community."

Time for an infrastructure upgrade

By 2014, the City of Troy's utility infrastructure, which encompasses a combined 14,000 electric and water meters,



“We looked at every (AMI) solution available, and Sensus was far and away the best.”

DANNY LEE, AMI coordinator, City of Troy

was starting to experience equipment failures. Particularly troubling was the inefficiency of the water meter-reading system. Each individual meter had to be monitored manually to ensure accuracy in some cases.

“We wanted to create more efficiency in our system while also gaining quicker access to data so we could be more responsive for our customers,” said Lee. “We knew it was time to do something new.”

To improve operations and enhance customer service, the City of Troy decided to upgrade to an AMI platform and implement a complete meter replacement program.

Solving the puzzle

Lee and his team sought an AMI solution for the City of Troy that could deliver:

- Near 100 percent read success rate across electric and water meters
- Timely and accurate insights on usage data
- Advanced data analytics capabilities
- Faster billing resolution
- Improved customer service

After an extensive evaluation process, the city determined that the **Sensus AMI solution** was the right choice.

“We looked at every solution available, and Sensus was far and away the best,” said Lee. “There wasn’t a problem we had that we didn’t think the solution could solve.”

Putting the pieces in place

The solution included the **Sensus Stratus®**, **A3 ALPHA®**, and **iConA™** electricity meters, as well as the **iPERL®** and **OMNI™** water meters. The **Sensus FlexNet® communication network** and **Sensus Analytics** solutions serve as the platform’s command center, enabling staff to remotely monitor and manage the city’s electric and water meters.

“We chose the Sensus AMI solution based not only on the meters, but also on the



With Sensus AMI technology, the City of Troy remotely monitors usage data and proactively addresses customer issues.



FlexNet network and the hourly insights and accurate usage data it would provide us," said Lee.

The upgrade began in September 2014, with the replacement of more than 9,000 electricity meters in just a four-month period. Then came the water meter upgrade, which began in 2016 and is now nearing completion.

Solution drives service

With their AMI solution in place, the City of Troy has achieved their goals for the project—and then some. The benefits have been evident in their improved relationships with customers.

"We often used to rely on customers to notify us in the case of an issue," said Lee. "Now, thanks to Sensus, we're able to frequently monitor usage data. If something happens, we know about it before the customer and can proactively notify them."

In one instance, the city received an alarm about a customer's elevated water usage of 1,780 gallons per hour. The city quickly dispatched staff to the house and discovered a leak behind the customer's pool, allowing them to address the problem before it became a costlier issue. In another instance, the city detected an electricity customer with high consumption and worked with the customer to identify a problem with their heat pump as a factor,

rectifying the issue before it led to a considerably higher bill.

"We've received numerous thank you's from appreciative customers," said Lee. "In some cases, we've saved them from having weeks of high consumption that would have otherwise gone unidentified."

Moving forward

In the next phase of their rollout, the city will seek to empower customers to monitor and manage their own usage. Lee expects to soon launch a new customer-facing portal, which will allow customers to view their own consumption and make more informed decisions about it.

"For any utility looking to upgrade their metering system, I recommend taking a hard look at Sensus," said Lee. "The support we've received has been first-class since day one, and everything we use has helped us on a daily basis."

ABOUT SENSUS

Sensus, a Xylem brand, helps public service providers—from utilities to cities to industrial complexes and campuses—do more with their infrastructure to improve quality of life in their communities. We enable our customers to reach farther by responding to evolving business needs with innovation in sensing and communications technologies, data analytics and services.