Internet/Intranet
Project Overview

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to make minor enhancements to the Company's external Internet and internal Intranet. These applications are deployed using similar technologies (therefore, these enhancements have been grouped together for planning and budgeting purposes), however they have distinctly different user bases. The user group for our Internet is primarily the general public while the users of the Intranet are Newfoundland Power employees.

Description (Internet)

A number of enhancements are planned, including improvements to site navigation, providing the ability for customers to perform an online analysis of their electricity requirements and consumption, provide energy education information directed to children, and provide notification of power outages and tree trimming activities.

Costs (Internet)

The estimated cost of the Internet Enhancements is $60,000.

Benefits (Internet)

- Making it easier for customers to access information on the web site encourages return visits and makes the customer contact with the Company more efficient for them.
- Providing customers with the ability to "analyze" their electricity requirements and consumption is a customer service improvement and could reduce the number of calls to the Customer Service Center regarding high bill complaints.
- Environmental, safety and electrical use information geared towards children supports the Company's many initiatives. After demos such as the Highline Hazard Kit, children can be referred to the website which will reinforce the concepts demonstrated.
- Advance notification of tree trimming and planned outages improves customer satisfaction by providing another efficient avenue for customers to obtain information about Company activities which may impact them.

Analysis

Usage of the Company's Website site from January 1999 to January 2002 has increased by approximately 420%, up from 2,068 visits in January 1999 to 10,763 visits in January 2002. Usage increased by approximately 145% from January 2001 to January 2002. This

trend continues as our customers utilize the existing features offered on the Customer Service portion of our Website and more features are added.

Description (Intranet)

We continue to evaluate opportunities to provide better access to policies, procedures and information stored in various applications (for use by employees) through improved search capabilities and navigation features on the Intranet.

As well, process improvements proposed in 2003 include the reduction of duplicate keying of information now required to maintain employee information in human resource records and other employee directories.

Costs (Intranet)

The estimated cost of Intranet enhancements is $56,000.

Benefits (Intranet)

- By providing direct links to the Company's application databases, employees have real-time access to information such as employee phone numbers (and other contact information) as well as on-line organization charts. This reduces the need for printed copies of internal phone directories and organization charts and ensures that changes to employee related information is reflected at all locations as they are make in the central database. This reduces duplication of effort and information redundancy that currently exists.
- Employees can respond more quickly to customers' inquiries and service needs if the necessary information is accessible from their desks by way of their personal computers. The time required to locate information is reduced if employees are not required to search through paper files, which may be stored in various locations and which may not contain all of the necessary information due to improper filing or the failure of others to replace filed material.
- Providing the information on-line eliminates the need to manually update multiple copies of corporate procedures and policy manuals. Updating the information in a single electronic copy ensures that all employees are working with the same material, and that updates are as timely and accurate as possible.
- Consumers benefit from information being readily accessible to employees on the Intranet because the information can be provided, or service requests can be responded to, in a more timely manner; the information relied upon is more likely to be accurate and up-to-date; policies and procedures are applied consistently throughout all Company offices; and the overall cost of providing electrical service is minimized as a result of the inherent efficiency of using electronic data management in place of paper.

Analysis

On average there are approximately 540 employees that are current users of our Intranet site ("Webster") in any given month. This number has increased from January 2001 when there were approximately 470 during that month.

Providing access to information from the Intranet satisfies a significant portion of employee inquiry needs without the need to increase access to Company applications.