

CIOReview

The Navigator for Enterprise Solutions

UTILITIES TECHNOLOGY SPECIAL

FEBRUARY 09, 2017

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20 Most Promising Utilities Technology Solution Providers - 2017

The changing face of the utilities industry today is driven by a number of trends from renewable power generation and battery storage to electric vehicles and energy management services. The big data wave continues to create ripples in this sector, bringing data intensive best practices to the spotlight. To this end, utility companies are incorporating the latest analytics technologies in their solutions to power the industry's digital transformation. In conjunction with advanced analytics, the sector is also witnessing the proliferation of machine learning that brings automation and delivers greater insights on asset performance.

Meanwhile, emerging trends such as next generation smart grids and Behind The Meter (BTM) technologies provide greater granularity and frequency of information to utilities. With a more accurate, real-time account of power usage, these smart meters facilitate effective management and optimization of power usage. Talking about the latest technologies, drones come to the forefront for enabling utilities to visually assess pipelines, power lines, and

other assets. In addition, they can be integrated with enterprise software platforms to notify field technicians about any faults to avoid disruptions in the grid.

A number of solution providers offer the benefits of these advanced capabilities through their data driven technologies, making it complicated for CIOs to select the best solution for their enterprise. To help CIOs navigate this landscape, CIOReview is presenting a special edition on utilities technology. A distinguished panel comprising CEOs, CIOs, VCs, and analysts, including the CIOReview editorial board has reviewed the top companies in the utilities technology solutions arena and shortlisted the ones that are at the forefront of tackling industry challenges.

The listing provides a look into how these solutions work in the real world, so that organizations can gain a comprehensive understanding of the available technologies and how they add value to the utilities domain.

We present to you CIOReview's 20 Most Promising Utilities Technology Solution Providers 2017.

Company:
ProStar Geocorp, Inc.

Description:
Precision geospatial solutions and services provider to the utility and pipeline industry

Key Person:
Carl Lashua,
COO
Peter Forster,
CIO

Website:
prostarcorp.com

ProStar Geocorp, Inc.

Improved Asset Management through GaaS® 'Geospatial Intelligence Software as a Service'

The utilities industry has always relied on some form of mapping to manage assets and facilities. As the world shifts into the modern technology era, capturing, managing and sharing digital data is becoming an essential part of the industry. However office and field workers do not always have easy access to asset information and even when they do they cannot always trust the precision or pedigree of the data. To address this problem, ProStar developed a cloud and mobile solution designed to improve existing business practices for collecting, qualifying, storing, managing and sharing critical information of both surface and sub-surface assets. ProStar's flagship services are a desktop app called Transparent Earth® and PointMan® Mobile, which are offered as a Geospatial Intelligence Software as a Service 'GaaS®.' Transparent Earth and PointMan connect seamlessly to allow easy access and secure sharing of information throughout the enterprise in real time, empowering both office and field personnel with access to qualified asset data including the precise geospatial location.

ProStar's solution is designed as a hybrid cloud running on Microsoft Azure and leverages web-services and open data standards to enable the integration of multiple business systems. This approach eliminates data silos, creates a fully integrated enterprise system and makes access to critical information easier, faster and more precise. The hybrid cloud enables seamless connectivity and conflation of data from multiple systems of record. This means that any enterprise data from ERP, GIS and CAD, as well as external data sources including; environmental, weather, geological, and landowners, can be displayed and visualized in a single system and from a single map view.

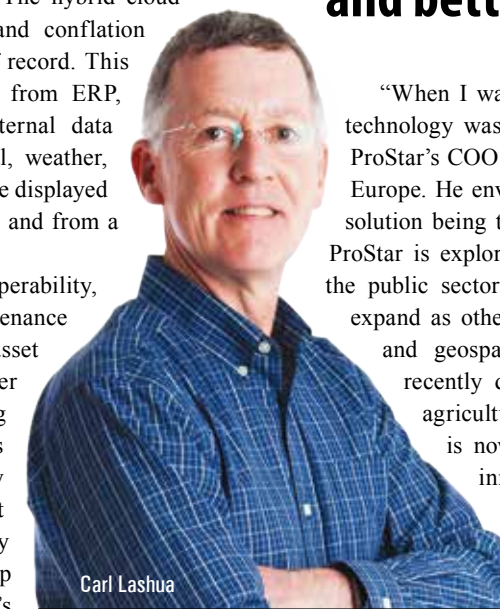
"We focused on system interoperability, data aggregation, and data provenance in order to improve the entire asset management lifecycle," says Peter Forster, CIO ProStar. Using ProStar's solution, office workers and field personnel can easily access, share and qualify asset data as well as identify and rectify any discrepancies. "Our mobile app is designed to capture an asset's

precise location in the field, then binds it to a transaction record and submits the data to the cloud. This improves the availability, timeliness, and quality of data which leads to better decisions and better outcomes," states Forster.

Transparent Earth's dashboard contains powerful business tools, like PowerGI™ that provide improved notifications, reporting and analytics. Recently, a midstream client recognized significant business value using ProStar's solution on a construction project to digitally document the end-to-end workflow process from offloading the pipe to stringing, bending, welding and inspecting. "Using ProStar's Solution for new construction we were able to commission the project in just a few days as opposed to several months," says Cheryl Janicek, GIS/Engineering/Pipeline Integrity, SemGroup.

"This improves the availability, timeliness, and quality of data which leads to better decisions and better outcomes"

"When I was with the bank, adopting cloud and mobile technology was a game changer for us," says Carl Lashua, ProStar's COO and formerly CIO, HSBC Bank, Canada and Europe. He envisions ProStar's cloud and mobile geospatial solution being the de facto standard for the utility industry. ProStar is exploring other markets including agriculture and the public sector. "Our GaaS solution allows us to quickly expand as other industries begin to embrace cloud, mobile and geospatial solutions," concludes Lashua. ProStar recently delivered a project to monitor and measure agricultural subsidies that was a major success, and is now leading a smart city initiative to develop innovative geospatial technologies including 3D imagery and Augmented Reality (AR) to improve local government services and more effectively address public safety and environmental concerns. CR



Carl Lashua

