SDIComplete

Accounting and Utility Billing

Introduction:

Significant Digits Incorporated (SDI) is a software engineering company that focuses primarily on the utility industry providing software tools and embedded systems for route management, meter reading and utility billing. The vision of SDI is to become the premier software engineering systems provider for the metered utilities industry through a total commitment to customer service and product excellence.

Historically, SDI was incorporated in 1992 when work was begun on the first SDReader Route Management System. The initial implementation was completed in 1993 with SDI's first customer. It was the first Route Management handheld meter reading system offered as a complete Microsoft Windows based tool. Development tools have since evolved and SDI along with them. Today, SDI utilizes the latest Microsoft.NET environment to develop our utility management, meter reading and billing systems. SDI is staffed by competent and capable software engineers with a wealth of experience that reaches back to the 1970's. SDI provides customer support via the internet by creating a direct connection to the customer's computer. On hand help is available though many miles separate representative and customer. With combined experience and a strict determination for customer satisfaction, SDI's client base climbed to 400 in 2007 with customers spanning the United States, Europe and the Middle East.

Significant Digits Incorporated does not work on its own however. SDI has partnered with the top meter equipment and electronic equipment providers to offer our customers the highest quality equipment and software tools. SDI is constantly updating and increasing the scope of our products to ensure that we stay on the forefront of the technology curve. Not constantly increasing the scope of our current offerings, we also develop new technologies to increase the productivity of our users. For example, SDI recently released a billing package targeted for the mid to small utility. There is now one source for a utility's suite to process management needs.

SDI's commitment to excellence in product development is what attracts customers to the Significant Digits' product family. Because of this, SDI has grown a customer base of over 400 members. However, it takes more than great products to retain customers. Without good customer service, customers seek other sources to fulfill their needs. SDI offers timely customer service that is extremely knowledgeable and personable. Significant Digits strives to win your business through

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SDI utilizes the latest Microsoft.NET environment in all of our software development.

Forward thinking has led SDI to develop a billing package. Now billing and route management are part of an all inclusice package.

SDI works hard to stay ahead of the technology curve and produce advanced solutions to simplify the tasks of utilities management.
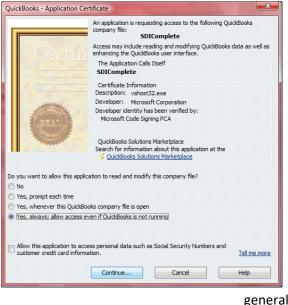
superior, cutting edge products and to retain your business through excellent customer service.

SDI is realizing our vision to become the premier software and hardware provider for municipalities and utilities through our commitment of providing powerful software products and excellent customer service. AT SDI, we pride ourselves in being innovators in the field of utility management and consistently staying ahead of the technology curve by constantly thinking forward. The commitment to excellence in product development and customer support pursued by SDI can be summed up by a single fact. Our first customer remains a customer.

Overview:

Utility billing systems are costly because the development expense is spread amongst a small market.

Utility Billing systems are typically expensive because the target market is relatively small. Because of this, the development company has to spread their costs over a small pool. Significant Digits found a way to drastically lower the cost of ownership of a powerful billing package by utilizing QuickBooks, the massively popular accounting program from Intuit. QuickBooks is a feature rich software tool that avoids high costs by targeting a large base. Namely, QuickBooks ability to adapt to any environment enables Intuit to spread the cost of development over a large pool. This, in turn, drastically decreases the price to the individual user.

SDI developed SDIComplete coupled with QuickBooks to extend the package functionality to include assigning meters and services to customers as well as other route management tasks. On the other end, SDIComplete interfaces to meter reading, route management tools. Before SDI developed SDIComplete to extend QuickBooks, QuickBooks was a limited accounting package that handled invoices, receivables, billing, and the general ledger, but it was not a route management tool. Now with SDIComplete, only one package is needed for the suite of utility processing needs.

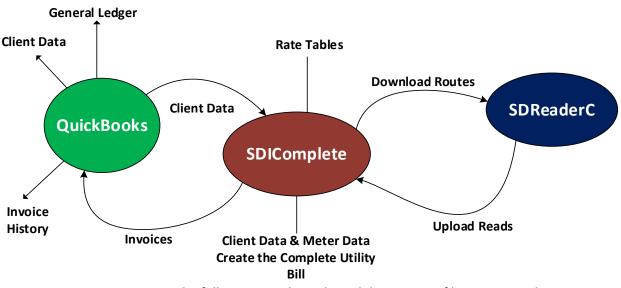*One company produces one suite of tools that include route management and billing.*

SDIComplete's flexibility enables the user to set up the rate structures as they see fit. For example, if the user wants to charge the customer fifteen dollars per thousand for the first two thousand gallons and then seventeen dollars for every thousand after that, they can. If, for some reason, the user needs to increase or decrease the cost per unit, they easily can with just a few key strokes. The number of rate schemes is unlimited. The same is true of the billing cycles. The user can choose to read as seldom or as often as they please: once a month, once a quarter or once a year and anywhere in-between. Finally, this theme of flexibility is found throughout every feature of the SDIComplete product.

Solution Details:

The following is a chart that shows a visual representation of how QuickBooks and SDIComplete interact.

The following is a chronological description of how SDIComplete integrates into QuickBooks and handles the billing cycle process.

- QuickBooks holds the names and addresses of the customers and the services that are provided
- SDIComplete syncs into QuickBooks and QuickBooks gives its customer data and the services provided to SDIComplete
- The user assigns the pricing for the various services that are provided inside SDIComplete
- Inside SDIComplete, the user attaches to each customer their corresponding meter service details and other services they receive from the utility
- The user is able to relay messages to the meter reader by typing it inside SDIComplete in the space provided
- SDIComplete creates an interface for each specific billing. This transfers to the route management system and, subsequently, to the meter reading devices.
- After the readings have been gathered, SDIComplete collects that data from the route management software and creates invoices for each customer from the readings and other service details in SDIComplete
- The user then syncs the invoices into QuickBooks from SDIComplete
- Now, QuickBooks is able to send out the bills based upon the invoices received from SDIComplete and track receivables as well as other general ledger functions.

Business Benefits:

There are many benefits that businesses gain from using the SDIComplete and QuickBooks billing package. Not only does the user save money on a route management billing package, but the entire organization can use QuickBooks as their accounting package thus eliminating the need for multiple, expensive programs. QuickBooks is also extremely popular and easy to use, which means a large number of people are well versed in its use. Hence, the need to train users is minimal. The major strength of SDIComplete is that it is part of SDI's suite of tools, which means that everything from billing to route management to meter reading is handled by one company. This negates the need to pay annual fees to multiple companies. Also, this single source supplier saves the headache inducing runaround that always ensues when a problem arises with multiple source systems. There is only one support number required.

SDI has been providing software and hardware for the meter reading and route management community for many years. After all that time working alongside many different billing systems, SDI has seen all the strengths and weaknesses commonly found in billing systems and thus refined a template of user requirements. Thirteen years after the initial route management system was implemented, SDI decided to provide this state of the art billing package, targeted to the mid to small utilities, focusing on a template of user requirements. Through the design of SDIComplete, SDI also provided a way for the entire organization to run on one affordable package.

Finally, and most importantly, the user has 24 hour access to customer service 7 days a week.

Pricing:

SDIComplete: $1495

SDIComplete bundled with SDReaderCE OEM: $1995

SDIComplete has extended QuickBooks' functionality to include route management.

SDI offers personable and professional customer service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Summary:

Significant Digits Incorporated has been providing advanced software and hardware technologies to the utility management community since 1993. The staff of expert software engineers is constantly developing and re-engineering ways to better serve our customers. By utilizing the latest advancements in hardware technology and software development practices, we remain on the cutting edge of utility management innovation. In addition, Significant Digits offers around the clock customer service that is knowledgeable and personable.

SDI has developed a powerful utility billing package after years of requirement gathering through working with a host of different vender systems. In our quest to serve the mid to small utility market, we have found a way to provide a well rounded, inexpensive package by utilizing Intuit's QuickBooks as a

base. Notably, QuickBooks can be used for everything from general ledger to payroll management and everything in between. SDIComplete adds the meter management tools that QuickBooks lacks. Since QuickBooks is extremely popular, the availability of knowledgeable users is endless.

SDI's SDIComplete syncs with QuickBooks gaining access to its customer information. Next, SDIComplete pairs the customer information with corresponding meter and service data. SDIComplete then interfaces to the meter reading route management tool for the collection of meter reads. After the readings are collected, SDIComplete accepts them and creates the invoices based upon the gathered reads. The invoices are sent to QuickBooks via syncing where they are printed, billed and tracked.

Now, one company provides a complete utility management package from general ledger to meter reading. For all issues there is a single point of support. QuickBooks, with its large market base, allows Intuit to offer the accounting package at a minimal price. QuickBooks' ability to easily handle day to day accounting needs, and the power SDIComplete adds in route management, produces a powerful utility management billing package. The savings, coupled with the power the SDIComplete package provides along with the customer service commitment of SDI yields this tool as a no brainer decision to implement.