



A Partner Solution for the Communications Sector

Modernizing Rate Case Submission Management for Improved Efficiency and Better Customer Service

IBM **Information Management** software

IMC Rate Case Submission Management

Partner Solution

■ **Target Industry**

Energy and Utilities

■ **Business Application**

Rate Case Submission

■ **Products**

IBM FileNet Business Process

Manager

IBM FileNet Capture

IBM FileNet Content Manager

IBM FileNet eForms

IBM InfoSphere Content Collector

IBM InfoSphere Enterprise Records

Business Challenge

To ensure compliance with regulatory standards and approved business processes, utilities such as energy, water, and transportation are subject to government oversight during the approval of tariffs, standardization of accounting formats, review of annual reports, analysis of mergers and acquisitions, assessment of other related business activities, and the resolution of customer complaints.

Among the processes that are most visible to the public are Rate Case Submissions, or formal requests by a utility, or other regulated organization, to modify the rates it charges its customers. Prior to increasing its rates, a regulated utility company must first obtain approval from the appropriate state regulatory commission(s), and by law, these commissions must balance rates that are fair, just, and reasonable both to the customers and the company.

Because a Rate Case change is a legal process carried out much like a courtroom trial, there are a number of complex factors affecting the documentation and support of rate changes.

When a new Rate Case is initiated, an initial testimony phase is followed by the Data Request (DR) phase, which is subsequently followed by a Hearing and Rebuttal phase. During the DR phase, interviewers and utility commission staff submit requests for detailed information

to the pertinent company via state specific mechanisms. For example, Missouri uses the Electronic Filing and Information System (EFIS). Requests are forwarded to the company, as appropriate, and distributed by the case manager to personnel for processing responses to each data request.

Utility companies managing distribution of their services in multiple states must maintain control of their systems including accounts payable, contacts and various plant activities. Yet, because these systems have varied and disparate field names, or indices for the same data, there is no consistent method of searching across the repositories, which can lengthen the DR phase, further delaying rate increases, and impacting the utility's bottom line.

In addition, regulatory and litigation pressures have shown that a consistent method of records control is lacking not only in these repositories, but with paper, email, file server documents, and back-up media. Even where corporate policies do exist, the lack of common control of the assets prevents effective enforcement of these policies. This has opened companies to greater exposure during litigation and prevented a consistent voice during rate cases.

As a result, utilities are now demanding automated business processes that can help streamline the DR phase activities in order to alleviate regulatory and litigation pressures.



Solution

IMC's Rate Case Submission Management solution automates many of the testimony and data request functions by leveraging the IBM Enterprise Content Management (ECM) suite of products in order to support:

- Data request email notification from regulatory agencies that automatically initiates workflow;
- Document version control for testimony and data request responses that eliminate data loss;
- Full-text document content searches that aid testimony preparation;
- Distribution of disaggregated (multi-part question) data requests to multiple respondents;
- Automatic notification and alarms for data request responses;
- Monitoring of data request activity to ensure timely delivery;
- Automatic conversion of approved request responses to PDF format for delivery to the regulatory agency; and,
- Immediate inclusion of Rate Case documentation in the Records Management system.

Value Proposition

IMC Rate Case Submission Management with IBM ECM utilizes industry-leading technologies to enable the utilities industry to improve validation for rate case modifications. Companies improve the tracking and usage of information, enabling them to more quickly respond to inquiries from constituents and the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), and present information to validate the submission. Implementing this solution will result in better management of information required for tariff approval, standardization of accounting formats, review of annual reports, analysis of mergers and acquisitions, assessment of other related business activities and faster resolution of customer complaints. Rate Case Submission Management with IBM ECM breaks through barriers that limit organizational efficiency, resulting in more thorough analysis, more timely responses to inquiries, and operational effectiveness.

Company Description

IMC, Inc. is an internationally recognized systems and software development firm known for building innovative IT custom and packaged solutions for government, commercial businesses, higher education and scientific organizations. IMC and its subsidiaries offer a variety of services focused on integrating technologies to solve complex business problems. IMC's projects have been recipients of the prestigious "Golden Hammer Awards" given by the Office of the Vice President of the United States. The company was also listed in the top 20 "Ones to Watch" list in 1998, and in 2002, IMC won an Industry IT award by GCN (Government Computer News) for being among the Top Fast-Growth companies.

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