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BUSINESS INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP JAMAICA PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY, JAMAICA

Empowering the local workforce to modernize the grid, improve operations, and integrate innovative technology

Jamaica Public Service (JPS) is an integrated electric utility company and the sole distributor of electricity in Jamaica. The company is engaged in the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity and owns and operates four power stations, nine hydroelectric plants, and a wind farm. JPS also purchases power from a number of independent power producers.

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

More than 1,300 JPS team members provide service to over 680,000 customers each day. Along with the provision of electricity, JPS is a key partner in national development. The company has a vibrant corporate social responsibility portfolio and makes significant contributions in the areas of education and youth development in Jamaica. The company also has a strong environmental focus and carries out its operations in an environmentally friendly manner.

Currently, JPS experiences very high levels of electricity theft on the network, costing the company an average of \$200 million in losses per year. Meter reading expenses account for approximately 2.3 million annually, down from an estimated \$3.7 million in 2017.

PHOTO: Jamaica Public Service, N.D.

SMART METER CONVERSION PROJECT

Jamaica's electricity grid is undergoing a significant transformation. In 2020, JPS announced an investment of more than \$100 million towards the modernization of the nation's electricity grid by 2025. A crucial piece of Jamaica's grid modernization efforts includes the replacement of 140,000 manually operated meters with "smart" meters that can be read and operated remotely by 2024. Smart meters can provide additional services such as: remote readings, connection automation, improved consumption monitoring, and service reliability. These smart meters are key to achieving net-zero energy targets by 2050 by enhancing the integration of renewable energy onto the grid, decreasing losses, and reducing costs for operations and maintenance.

BUSINESS INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP IMPACT

The Business Innovation Partnership (BIP) provided support from experienced facilitators, coaches, and utility mentors to two JPS teams: one to streamline business processes and one to strengthen organization change management capacity.

The BIP has supported the JPS teams in executing the aggressive roll-out of 69,500 smart meters in 2022. The project reduced meter reading expenses and maintenance costs and improved the accuracy and availability of meter readings, while also automating the billing cycle. This resulted in more data points for the grid stability analysis required to improve grid reliability. With the use of "smart" technology, data is retrieved at 15 minute intervals from "smart" technology applied at all metering transformer locations. The project expanded the smart grid communication network, enhanced systems communications and established standards for smart grid applications.

Through the BIP project, JPS set a goal to change the way in which technology, human resources, systems analytics, and energy measurements are integrated towards realizing utility goals and customer expectations. JPS employees participating in the BIP have gained skills to foster a culture for innovation and strengthen Jamaica's grid modernization efforts, while supporting national decarbonization priorities.

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