The right people, in the right place, at the right time: Workforce optimization

Data science case study
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Key takeaways

- A utility in the southern US needed to improve operational efficiency without negatively affecting system reliability, power delivery quality, and customer experience.
- The utility turned to E Source for help matching available resources with planned work.
- To evenly spread the workload across functional teams, E Source built a workload scenario planning tool and used data-supported, management-aligned analytics to recommend changes to current resource allocation processes.

The challenge

A utility in the southern US needed to minimize operations and maintenance (O&M) spending and optimize staffing without damaging customer satisfaction or system reliability. The utility wanted to understand its current state of operational efficiency and explore ways to:

- Control costs
- Shift resources among departments to fill gaps
- Right-size its distribution engineering staff, field crew, control center operators, and lineworkers

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The solution

The utility partnered with E Source to evaluate its current state and determine how to best allocate

resources to even out the workload. E Source built a workload index modeling tool for the utility. The tool featured interactive dashboards and scenario planning functionality based on several disparate sources including outage history, work orders, asset information and PSC complaints to evaluate utility employees' workload in a variety of departments.

Based on how busy employees were, the utility could determine which departments were overloaded and which had resources to spare. The tool also revealed which critical jobs needed additional staff. The utility could make staffing changes, providing growth and mentorship opportunities while reducing stress.

The results

With E Source's interactive current-state dashboards, the utility could explore various scenarios to predict the impact of staffing changes based on historical workload. The tool empowered the utility to confidently shift resources, leading to:

- Improved employee satisfaction
- Better customer service
- O&M cost savings

According to the distribution control center lead:

> [The E Source dashboard] was crucial in informing the decisions … that will more evenly distribute our workload statewide and provide more flexibility in our operations.

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