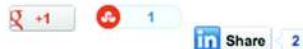


WEB-BASED TECHNOLOGY AIDS RIGHT OF WAY PROJECTS

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An oil or natural gas pipeline, wind farm, solar panel field or transportation project does not happen unless right of way is acquired. Efficiency in obtaining right of way and tracking property and infrastructure information is critical to keeping such projects on schedule and within cost parameters.

Web-based software is creating new opportunities to make the process of acquiring and monitoring right of way go as smooth as possible. Industry-

specific software products provide right of way agents the most up-to-date information on individual parcels quickly, through geographical information system (GIS) mapping and a project dashboard with access to a central repository for managing all land rights information within the scope of the project. This is information that agents can access in the field on mobile devices.

It is a paperless system which is user friendly and can increase organizational efficiency.

The software offers time-saving tools for managing right of way projects, such as lease management, bulk document generation, bulk update, auto reminders, scheduled reports, and managing workflow. The software also provides access to all project information through a central database.

Consider the case study of a major pipeline construction company that subcontracted the right of way work for a new pipeline which would span roughly 200 miles. That project required acquisition and tracking of right of way for thousands of parcels owned by multiple landowners. In the past, the property document searches and records for such a project would have tied up hundreds of hours of staff time and filled a room with paper.

With new Web-based software, companies can manage right-of-way projects and land assets in a real-time, paperless environment that enables collaboration, efficiency and error reduction. The technology offers mobile application and other practical advantages to professionals on the front lines of right of way projects.

"This is the most valuable tool to me in the field," said a Senior Right of Way Agent who worked on the pipeline project. "I can retrieve a landowner's contact information in seconds without carrying my entire assigned tracts file box. I can take pictures of structures, land improvements and infrastructure items that may be of concern and sync them to their assigned tracts at the end of the day in minutes. I used to have to download from a camera, save to my hard drive and upload them to the server.

"I can also add notes to a landowner's file in seconds. If I am on the road for several hours and have talked to five to eight landowners, I don't have to remember what we talked about when I have to do my update. I have already made a note on my phone after the conversation was over and the notes can be synced by a press of a button."

Prior to utilizing mobile technology, this agent faced the same hurdles as others in the profession. Special landowner requests and ingress-egress permissions were hand-written in a notebook. There were title searches in the county courthouse. There were weekly meetings with other agents and the need for multiple spreadsheets. An agent received a new assignment in a folder, and the agent emailed his supervisor to report if a parcel was acquired or an explanation of why not.

As any project planner or manager knows, the process of acquiring right of way can be time-consuming and somewhat chaotic. There are many possibilities for error. It can be a frustrating process for all concerned, including property owners.

Web-based software revolutionizes right of way acquisition and tracking. As development of conventional and alternative energy sources accelerates, this technology is making it possible to complete those projects in less time and at reduced cost.

The opinions expressed in this article are solely those of the author, Dan Liggett is Communications and Public Relations Manager for geoAMPS, located in Powell, near Columbus, Ohio. geoAMPS offers software solutions to manage land rights and infrastructure assets. For more information on geoAMPS products and services, call 614-389-4871 or visit www.geoamps.com.

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