



UTILITY SERVICES



From Pilot to Pioneer: The Evolution of an Illinois Utility's RCx Offering

Overview

As a leading provider of retro-commissioning services (RCx), Resource Innovations (RI) offers comprehensive, fully-funded solutions to commercial and industrial customers. Our goal is to help reduce energy bills and enhance equipment performance without requiring the need for major capital investments, by optimizing control strategies and sequences.

Since 2008, RI has been the program implementation contractor for one of Illinois' largest electric utilities, serving the Northern Illinois area. We've expanded their RCx offering from a pilot with just four projects to a robust program with over 250 projects annually, supported by 40 participating Energy Efficiency Service Providers.

Opportunity

Our delivery approach leverages the expertise and feedback of our delivery team and Service Providers to attract customers to the offering and guide them through tailored delivery studies based on their specific size, facility characteristics, and system complexities. Experienced energy engineering firms identify Energy Conservation Measures (ECMs) by conducting in-depth studies lasting 7-24 months.

- Engineers prioritize equipment for tune-up, repair, or replacement, while also optimizing system controls.
- Estimates of energy savings are provided to help customers make informed decisions about efficiency improvements and project investments.

The Illinois utility's RCx offering includes innovative features such as advanced technology tools for Service Providers, strategies for measure persistence, customer education and training, a new pool of controls/mechanical contractors, and new financing solutions that have led to greater energy savings and customer satisfaction.

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

Program offerings:

RCx Flex, MBCx, VCx, BOC

Facilities served:

1,900+

Sq. ft. of conditioned commercial space optimized:

130 million

Project conversion rate (audit to install):

427

Electric savings:

435 GWh

Therm savings:

10+ million

Solution

The offering has gone through many iterations to meet customer requirements and Service Provider needs. In response to feedback, RI introduced the RCx Flex, Monitoring-Based Commissioning (MBCx), and Virtual Commissioning (VCx) delivery studies in 2021 to streamline offering participation, as well as Building Operator Certification® (BOC) training and diverse business enterprise (DBE) engagement.

RCx Flex combines previous studies including RCx, RCxpress, and Tune-Up to provide energy analysis services to identify, implement, and verify no- and low-cost measures. This enables customers to achieve electric energy, peak electric demand, and natural gas savings in their facilities.

MBCx advances RCx by utilizing incentives to finance the integration of software and analytics, providing actionable insights for long-term facility operations optimization.

VCx offers customer-focused, software-enhanced virtual audits that leverage AMI and AMR interval data to generate actionable insights. This study delivers verifiable energy savings to utilities and customers and was pioneered by our utility team in 2016 as the first fully virtual nonresidential direct engagement solution in the country.

BOC is a nationally recognized, award winning, eight-day training program for commercial facility personnel with two or more years of experience in operation and maintenance. BOC training provides these personnel with the background and perspective needed to implement cost-saving operational improvements that reduce facility energy costs, improve indoor air quality, and increase equipment durability.

DBE engagement is a top priority for our team. Since 2018, we have focused on increasing the participation of DBEs in program implementation. Starting with a 6% DBE spend, we have increased this to 35% in the current implementation. Our goal is to reach a 45% DBE spend for the renewed contract.

Results

Our team has a consistent record of achieving or exceeding savings goals. Since 2008, the RCx offering has saved more than 484 GWh and 10 million therms. In 2020, the RCx offering's savings were more than six times those of the next largest RCx program in the U.S., making it one of the largest and most mature RCx programs in the country.

We consistently achieve high customer satisfaction, with survey results well over our target minimum of 8-out-of-10 for the utility's RCx offering. In 2021, we achieved a perfect 10-out-of-10 in customer satisfaction.

ABOUT RESOURCE INNOVATIONS

Resource Innovations (RI) is an energy transformation firm. Women-led, purpose built, and focused on impact, we're constantly expanding our portfolio of solutions to guide utilities through increasingly complex, connected challenges. For communities across North America, we're leading the charge to power change.

Contact

Find out how RI can transform your business:
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NATIONAL AWARDS

2021:

AESP Customer Engagement and Marketing Award (for VCx offering)

2020:

MEEA Innovation Award (for program modifications our team made during the COVID-19 pandemic)

2013 & 2018:

ACEEE's 3rd National Review of Exemplary Energy Efficiency Programs

2011:

Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance's Inspiring Efficiency IMPACT Award