

Case study

How a Large Utility Cut Smart Meter Repair Cycle Time by 60%

Modern vendor management. Faster smart meter installs.
Cleaner field data.

Client Overview

A large utility was in the middle of a smart meter deployment spanning hundreds of thousands of meters, with approximately 3% of meter sockets requiring some type of repair before installation. The repair and install process involved multiple vendor groups, including electricians, repair mechanics, and installation specialists, whose systems were not connected. The utility needed a way to close visibility gaps across vendors, reduce rework, and keep the deployment schedule on track.

Challenges

- Limited line of sight into scheduling, coordinating, and analyzing work across multiple vendors
- A disconnect between vendor systems was delaying smart meter installs and slowing the repair process cycle
- Long cycle times to send vendors out, receive completed information back, and coordinate the smart meter install
- Repeat repair visits and additional install attempts drove up time and cost, reducing overall efficiency
- Deployment delays in key network areas drove up costs and compounded over time

60%

Reduction in Repair Cycle Time

After Partnering With Blue Mantis, the Utility Achieved:

- Approximate 60% reduction in cycle time for the repair process, enabling faster smart meter installs
- Digital review and disposition time reduced from about 5 minutes per repair to under 2 minutes on average
- 40% efficiency increase, freeing teams to focus on strategy and repair planning instead of rework and reporting
- 2 process steps eliminated, speeding the transition from repair to install
- A single portal that serves as the data hub for repairs, installs, and vendor management

Solutions

Blue Mantis started with a discovery phase to review the existing process, assess bottlenecks, and analyze metrics for the "as-is" state, uncovering data integrity as an additional opportunity for improvement. Data mining and stakeholder interviews across the vendor network provided the holistic view needed to design a solution that reduced cycle time and rework.

Blue Mantis then developed a vendor portal that received daily updates from vendors, aggregating both structured data and unstructured data such as field photos of repairs and installs. The portal caught potential rework scenarios sooner and improved data integrity by requiring specific fields, adding new columns, and capturing richer metadata. The initiative also aligned with the utility's corporate strategy to modernize processes and phase out legacy tools.