

## Texas telecom's Web app on way to doubling its annual sales goals.

### Executive Summary

**Challenge:** Guadalupe Valley Telephone Cooperative was losing revenue, and it needed a way to increase sales, and find new channels or it was going to be out of business.

They tapped their team of Installation and Repair (I&R) Technicians to begin selling services to customers while they were working on their lines, but with a paper form, and a cumbersome process, sales were practically nonexistent. Their VP of Operations asked IT to develop a paperless solution, and wanted it in a month.

**Solution:** Using the mrc-Productivity Series, GVTC's IT director Alfred Perez was not only able to create this Java Web application including an electronic signature capability—with no prior Java experience—but he was able to research it, build it, paint it, and test it...in three weeks time.

**Results:** The secure Java servlet Web application is so easy to use, and so convenient, that I&R sales representatives are exceeding their sales goals left and right. And, with only Q1 behind them, 62% of them are at or ahead of the game, **and 15% have already met or exceeded their sales goals for the full year.**

### Basics

Guadalupe Valley Telephone Cooperative (GVTC) is on its way to doubling its expected sales goals in 2005...from one little Web application they took live in mid-January.

Guadalupe Valley Telephone Company, in the once-rural Texas hill country, has grown from very modest beginnings into the largest telephone cooperative, and the ninth largest telephone/cable/broadband company in Texas. But even with all its growth, GVTC had a big problem.

There was not only an influx of area competition from telephone/cable/broadband mammoths like Time Warner, but there was also an increase of users moving to mobile phone companies rather than ordering traditional landlines. As a result, GVTC was beginning to lose revenue.

The company's steering committee commissioned a study to evaluate revenue and profit margins and made a startling discovery. If GVTC

remained as it was, without changing business tactics, they would be out of business within 5 years.

So, they had to act fast, and they needed to get creative.

### Challenge

They began looking at where they were making sales, as well as the quality of those sales, and they decided that instead of relying simply on advertising and direct mail to draw new customers to contact them, they also needed to begin harvesting sales from their current customers. And in that sense, one of their biggest assets was all but being ignored: their Installation and Repair (I&R) employees.

The I&R team was GVTC's first line of communication with new customers, and the only face-to-face contact the majority of their customers would ever see. They also knew that for every new or existing customer who required either an installation or a repair, there would be an opportunity to sell them additional products/services, whether it was a new DSL line, a cable package, call waiting...or larger service packages to draw traditional

Description	Code	Bus/Res	Amount	Package	
VoIP			.00	--	Select
__Voice Mail__			.00	--	Select
Basic Voice Mail	TVMB	RES	6.95	--	Select
Enhanced Voice Mail	TVME	RES	9.95	--	Select
Information Box Only	TVMI0B	RES	15.00	--	Select
Teen Box	TVMTB	RES	5.00	--	Select
__Internet__			.00	--	Select
Basic/Dedicated Dial Up	INTBAS	RES	19.95	--	Select
Budget Dial Up		RES	9.95	--	Select
Additional emails over package	INTAEM	RES	3.00	--	Select

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This screen shot shows a list of available features, and technicians can simply click select to update their customers preferred services.

telephone users to cable, and/or Internet, for example.

They created a commission structure, and pre-printed long forms that the representatives could fill out when they were onsite at the customer's home, and waited for the revenue to stream in.

But, this solution was not as successful as they had initially hoped.

First, the process took too much time. The I&R techs would have to fill out these long in-triplicate forms, then save them up during their shifts and drop them off daily with customer service, which was an inconvenient process. Then, customer service representatives would have to process the forms and enter the data into their system, and then pass the forms onto billing. Billing would then pass the information to payroll so that the techs could receive their commission.

The process would take at least a few days, generally, and the pushing of paper from one department to another left a lot of

room for error. Additionally, it was expensive to preprint the forms, and time consuming.

Between the cumbersome process, delays or errors in activation, and the late commission checks, sales weren't showing any great improvements.

Then the Vice President of Operations had a brainstorm. He decided that moving to a paperless system was the only way to go, and he went about making it happen.

**Solution**

"The only problem was, we didn't have a lot of time," explained Alfred Perez, Senior Programmer Analyst at GVTC, "We found out they wanted us to create the Web application the week before Thanksgiving break, and they wanted it done by January 1<sup>st</sup>. With a week off for the holidays in between, I just didn't think it would be possible."

"We'd purchased the mrc-Productivity Series originally for reporting, but I knew the tool was versatile for Web development, so I contacted mrc. The product

specialists called me right back and told me the mrc-Productivity Series could handle it without a problem."

But within those three weeks, Perez was able to create a Web application for the Tech team that they can access via their laptops while they are on site. The application allows them to actively receive updates on specials/services, select only services needed, and display only data on services selected. Then, customers can review, and sign the form electronically with all of their order information automatically entered right into the database for system-wide access by billing, payroll, and customer service.

The results speak for themselves.

Not only is the process convenient and instantaneous, but I&R sales have skyrocketed. With only the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter under their belt, over 62% of the sales force in question is at or above their individual sales goals to date, and more than 15% of the sales force has already reached or exceeded their entire sales goals for the entire year.

**Conclusion**

And that's just the beginning. Alfred is not stopping there, "It is my vision to have everything Web-based so we're not tied to any client." He's already working on a payroll application for time-tracking, and one that allows accounting to manage numerous finance tasks from one screen.

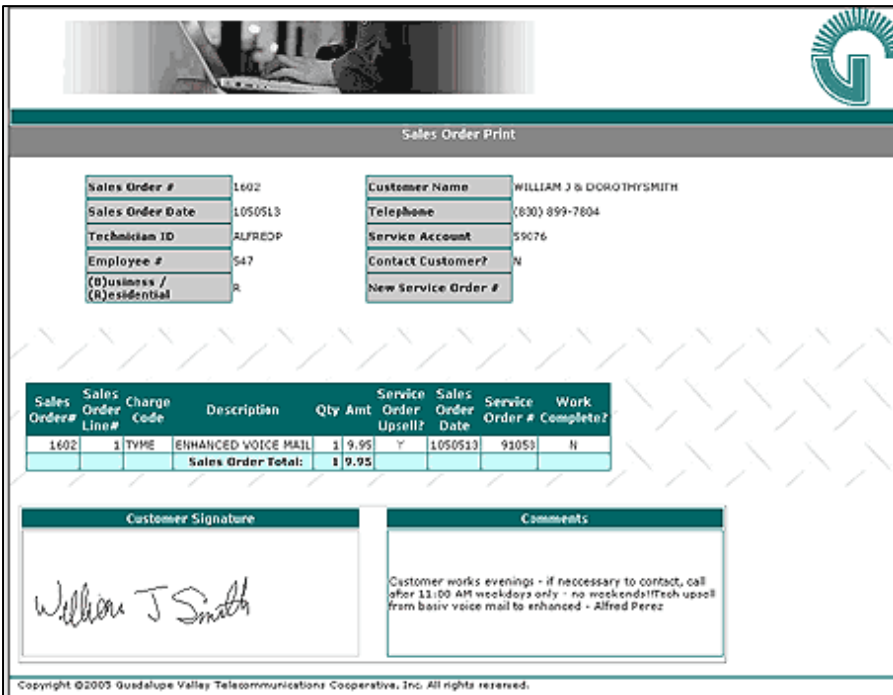
"With the speed that the mrc-Productivity Series lets us work, we're on track to be paperless in no time."

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This screen depicts the where the customer signature and technician notes are displayed, as well as the current status of the services, billing, and work order.