

CITY OF GARDNER, KS

INVESTING IN COMMUNITY BY INVESTING IN CLOUD INNOVATION

Throughout its more than ten-year relationship with CentralSquare Technologies (previously Superior), the City of Gardner, Kansas, has experienced the power and reliability of CentralSquare software.

Gardner's long-term relationship with CentralSquare is sustained by the company's commitment to customer success. Over the years, CentralSquare has provided superior customer service, reliable support and dedicated implementation and training teams to ensure the city fully maximized its use of CentralSquare finance, utility billing, community development and work order software.

Yet, faced with the growing needs of an increasingly mobile and digitally connected community, the city recognized a need to keep up with the pace of changing technology. In this new digital era, providing higher levels of accessibility, efficiency, transparency and cost savings became central to Gardner's mission.

Thus, the city sought a solution to help navigate this increasingly digital environment. It found the solution in CentralSquare Cloud (previously Superior Cloud).

CentralSquare Cloud enabled Gardner to keep pace with its citizens by delivering new, innovative service models that are timely, targeted and mobile-ready. The community—customers, employees, residents and leaders—benefited from 24/7 self-service and comprehensive, intuitive options for interaction.

"Customers now have freedom of access and can now help themselves when they go online and look things up," said Amy Foster, Business Service Manager for the City of Gardner, Department of Finance.

"CentralSquare Cloud [previously Superior Cloud] gave us the ability to put tools in our community members' hands."



REALIZING COST SAVINGS AND IMPROVING SERVICE EFFICIENCIES

Prior to its initial implementation of CentralSquare software in 2002, the city tracked utility billing deposits on a spreadsheet. Deposit payments were tracked and credited back to customers manually, and reports also were generated manually by staff.

With its move to CentralSquare Cloud in 2005, Gardner realized substantial savings in staff time. Payments, reports and refunds are now fully automated, eliminating the need for staff to respond to in-person customer requests.

"Not only does automation improve our process and efficiency, we've enhanced our focus on customer service to our community and the developers we're trying to attract," said Foster.

LIFTING THE BURDEN OF MEETING STRICT COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

Prior to implementation, the city had limited resources and expertise to maintain the city's complex technology infrastructure. Prior to moving its NaviLine premise system to the cloud, Gardner often pulled staff to respond to technical requests or troubleshoot issues.



Additionally, the department had the daunting responsibility of managing security compliance reporting. Meeting annual compliance standards sometimes led to extensive updates that required long, grueling staff hours on weekends.

With CentralSquare Cloud, Gardner more easily complies with strict regulatory requirements through automation.

“CentralSquare provides that ‘extra team’ and availability, which meant our services were functional 24/7 for our customers,” Foster said.

RELYING ON THE EXPERTISE AND ROUND-THE-CLOCK AVAILABILITY OF SUPPORT

Maintaining and working with the city’s in-house system required specialized IT resources. Rounding out the workforce, utility billing clerks, code enforcement officers and accountants supplemented any additional support needs.

CentralSquare Cloud services provided Gardner with specialized expertise 24/7, freeing staff to focus on the city’s additional goals and priorities. Even when CentralSquare faced its own challenges caused by a devastating hurricane at its headquarters in Florida, Gardner experienced no downtime and had consistent, reliable access to CentralSquare support.

“We have always been fortunate with CentralSquare [previously Superion] staff. From sales and implementation to support, CentralSquare staff is by our side, and they always help us stay on track,” said Foster.

With its continuous investment in CentralSquare Cloud innovations, Gardner invests in the success of its community. By facilitating engagement among residents, leaders and their government, the city stands poised to provide new opportunities for the community’s next generation of residents.

“Our very strong relationship with CentralSquare makes it all work.”