

CASE STUDY: Avista

Leveraging Project Management Enables Digital Utility

Avista is a regional energy company involved in the production, transmission and distribution of energy. It provides electric service to more than 600,000 electric and natural gas customers across 30,000 square miles in eastern Washington, northern Idaho and parts of southern and eastern Oregon. It is on the forefront of clean energy and innovation while showing a strong commitment to renewable energy.

Avista is undergoing a digital transformation, similar to the rest of the energy industry. Devices and machines that were once analog and mechanical are quickly becoming digital and smart. In its efforts to provide proper governance and consistent delivery over its technology investments, Avista uses a PMI-driven project delivery practice out of an IT Project Management Office (PMO).

Avista's Challenges

Avista invests annually to refresh aging technology and enable new business capabilities through technology to ensure access to safe and reliable energy, drive innovation, and enhance the customer experience. Effective project management is key to the success of these IT and customer-focused programs.

IT Project Management Expertise

In the late 2000's, Avista began a journey to formalize its processes and tools through the creation of a PMO within its Enterprise Technology department. As the value of this was recognized and the portfolio of projects grew, Avista needed to scale its team with skilled, ready-to-start Project Management (PM) professionals and have the ability to flex its resource capacity without the commitment of hiring full-time employees.

Maintaining Quality

As the use of contracted PMs grew, the ability to manage the quality of service, apply and adapt to process changes and tooling, and manage resource turnover became difficult. Processes for effectively inducting and assimilating new contractors (onboarding), providing regular coaching and performance management were informal and inconsistent.

Balancing Cost

Staffing resources at a rate that balances cost with quality emerged as another need as Avista expanded the number of vendor partners it used for project management services. Cost varied by partner, which led Avista to develop a sourcing strategy that normalized rates for resources with similar skills and experience.

Provides electric +
gas service to over
600,000
customers



across **30,000**
square miles in
Washington, Idaho
and Oregon



\$50M
Approx. annual
investment in
information
systems and
technology

NUVODIA

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Nuvodia and Avista's Solution

Nuvodia provided Avista immediate access to a pool of certified project management professionals with proven success managing the delivery of complex IT projects across a wide range of industries. Nuvodia succeeded by:

- Learning Avista's business as an integrated and federally regulated public utility.
- Developing a strong understanding of its PMO processes and tools.
- Building a trusted partnership with leaders in the organization through regular communication and active presence.

Nuvodia utilized a defined quality assurance process to manage project delivery through the life of each engagement. It defined a comprehensive onboarding plan that helped accelerate understanding and application of Avista PMO process, provided regular coaching and performance management from a senior consultant with extensive project management experience, and access to training and other development opportunities.

"Nuvodia's leadership took unprecedented action helping us solve a challenge around cost." - *Andy Leija (Avista Corp., ET PMO Manager)*

Nuvodia collaborated with Avista to align on a cost structure that would help standardize rates for PM services, and provide access to an additional IT Staffing model. This model gave Avista increased flexibility to fill its short and long-term human resource needs.

The Result - A Long, Valued Relationship

The partnership between Avista and Nuvodia is over 10 years running. This long, valued relationship has been able to last because of the shared core values of both organizations. Nuvodia is always adapting and staying flexible, so it can continue to meet the needs of Avista into the future. Through this journey, Avista has found a partner in Nuvodia who has grown with it, is local and actively engaged, and understands the needs of its business.

"Vendor partners, such as Nuvodia, are critical to our project delivery on technology investments." - *Andy Leija (Avista Corp., ET PMO Manager)*

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Citations

- Nuvodia - [Project Management](#) | Nuvodia - [IT Staffing Services](#) | Avista - [Value Driven Company](#)

Footnotes:

- Approximate annual investment in information systems and technology -2019

Nuvodia staffs professionals across

9

industry leading Project Management and Agile certifications



10+

Years of Nuvodia and Avista working hand in hand together

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