



## Voice of the Customer Report

# Customer City of Seattle

## Vendor

 Verdiem.

**Product**  
SURVEYOR 

August 2009



## The INI Group Voice of the Customer Reports

IT professionals find real value in the experiences of other customers in order to help inform their buying decisions. The Voice of the Customer (VoC) program is designed to provide insightful information for IT professionals to understand different products and services. The INI Group is a consulting firm with expertise in data storage, disaster recovery, data management, security and virtualization and we work closely with our customers to provide the VoC service.

### Background

The INI Group interviewed Deb Schlenker, Director of Computing Services. This is how Deb describes her role:

“I’m the Director of Computing Services and I work in the department of information technology so I’ve been with the city about four and a half years. My team here really is responsible for several different areas. I have an enterprise computing services group which does all of the data center operations support. We support physical and virtual servers, Windows, UNIX and Linux and also have a large shared storage SAN environment that we support. I also have our messaging team and a service desk and desktop support. Probably one other additional role that I play for the city is to coordinate software implementations across the city when support teams are located in the multiple departments so that’s a role I played for the Verdiem project.”

The following is an overview of the City of Seattle’s IT environment:

- Ten thousand employees
- Ten thousand desktop PC’s
- Windows, Unix and Linux

**INI Group:** Why did you decide to implement the Verdiem Surveyor?

**Deb Schlenker:** We have something called the Seattle Climate Action Plan and that plan was put in place by Mayor Nichols and committed us to reduce our 1990 levels of greenhouse gases by seven percent before 2012 and by eighty percent by 2050. This initiative is about the entire city of Seattle however there are specific plans in there for how city government can help to reduce greenhouse gases and that's really where we come in. In computing services, we're especially looking to reduce power utilization for computing at the city. You know, one of the things that's really hard for an individual employee in the city to do is to kind of visualize how they can impact their carbon footprint so by reducing power consumption for their personal PC that they use every day. It's also a way that they can contribute to reduce greenhouse gases. So I guess for us, it was just a logical next step to take based on our city's commitment to reducing our greenhouse gases.

**INI Group:** Can you share with us the process that you went to implement the Verdiem Surveyor?

**Deb Schlenker:** We started by building a preliminary business case and we got approval via our governance process to do a pilot for two hundred PC's. We worked with Verdiem to implement the product on those two hundred PC's and to get a good baseline measurement of their current energy consumption and then we applied a policy to shut down those machines at seven PM each night which was just a very simple policy but then we wanted to measure what were the benefits of the Verdiem product if we took a second measurement and then saw the energy consumption so we able measure really in this pilot what our average savings would be to implement this particular product and we used that to update our business case and then we got final approval to implement the product across the entire city.

**INI Group:** Can you expand on why Verdiem was the best fit for the city?

**Deb Schlenker:** We evaluated it against other solutions and we really looked at features and ease of implementation and cost and we compared it also against just doing nothing. And in the end really, Verdiem best met all of our requirements, you know, either equally or better than any of the other options. That's really how we looked at the product to decide if it met our needs.

**INI Group:** Did you consider any other solution and if yes, why did you decide on Verdiem?

**Deb Schlenker:** Really, it was just based on business requirements. We looked at a variety of different solutions that were out there and compared them against each other. Really it was just those business requirements and features and ease of implementation, cost and that kind of thing.

**“We have something called the Seattle Climate Action Plan and that plan was put in place by Mayor Nichols and committed us to reduce our 1990 levels of greenhouse gases by seven percent before 2012 and by eighty percent by 2050.”**

**“...one of the things that's really hard for an individual employee in the city to do is to kind of visualize how they can impact their carbon footprint - so by reducing power consumption for their personal PC that they use every day.”**

**“We evaluated it against other solutions ... Verdiem best met all of our requirements.”**

**INI Group:** Can you tell us how the Verdiem Surveyor has improved on the overall economic effectiveness within your IT operations?

**Deb Schlenker:** You know the primary advantage to us was really the energy reduction based on the Seattle Climate Action Plan. So for us, to date, we've achieved a thirty-five point four percent energy reduction on operations on our PC's and really that number keeps growing. As our administrators get more knowledgeable about the product and they continue to add more aggressive power policies. The current savings equates to over seventy-five thousand dollar reduction in our power bill to date. This is a significant economic advantage for us. We worked with our utility which is actually one of our city departments, Seattle City Light on our different power efficiency efforts and they can provide us economic benefit as well.

**INI Group:** Can you give us examples of how the Verdiem Surveyor provided real value to your city other than an economic effectiveness?

**Deb Schlenker:** For us it was helping us meet our challenging goal of reducing greenhouse gases so that's the primary thing for us. That thirty-five point four percent represents an annual reduction in power utilization of one million, four hundred eighty-five thousand, nine hundred twenty-two kilowatt hours. And that really, that savings can also be described as a reduction of one thousand sixty-seven metric tons of CO2 released into the atmosphere. It's equivalent to using one hundred twenty-one thousand, one hundred twenty-eight gallons of gas or the electricity use of one hundred twenty-eight homes for a year. So from our perspective, really something as simple as implementing the Surveyor product has a large impact over time in helping the city meet that Seattle Climate Action Plan commitment. The mayor is very active in energy savings and reducing greenhouse gases through all of his work and so certainly this is one of many accomplishments the city has achieved in its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas.

**INI Group:** Can you give us any insights on the Verdiem Surveyor that would be useful for other IT professionals considering this solution?

**Deb Schlenker:** The City of Seattle has over thirty departments that we needed to coordinate with to implement Surveyor so we actually set up this implementation as a formal project. We had a project manager, a steering committee and a working team that represented many of those departments, then the PM (project manager) really was responsible for coordinating with each department. And the implementation looked a lot like the pilot where department by department we deployed the client on all the PC's.

After two weeks we ran an energy consumption report to determine, you know, to baseline their current power utilization and then we applied power policies that met the needs of that particular department. And a lot of them were simple to start with. Just shut it off at 7 PM every night. After two weeks then, in each department, we would run the energy consumption report again and determine the savings. And of course we continue to run that report frequently to see what our current savings is associated with that and the report gives us that energy savings.

**"...to date, we've achieved a thirty-five point four percent energy reduction on operations on our PC's and really that number keeps growing."**

**"The current savings equates to over seventy-five thousand dollars reduction in our power bill to date. So this is a significant economic advantage for us."**

**"That thirty-five point four percent represents an annual reduction in power utilization of one million, four hundred eighty-five thousand, nine hundred twenty-two kilowatt hours. And that really, that savings can also be described as a reduction of one thousand sixty-seven metric tons of CO2 released into the atmosphere. It's equivalent to using one hundred twenty-one thousand, one hundred twenty-eight gallons of gas or the electricity use of one hundred twenty-eight homes for a year."**

My advice would be is to do a pilot especially if you need data to justify the acquisition because you'll get that from a pilot as long as you pick your machines that you pilot on properly. I would also suggest if you have a distributed environment, especially like ours that you do formal project management because it's just a lot of coordination work. The product itself is fairly easy to implement but there is a lot of coordination involved and finally I'd say buy some consulting hours from Verdiem. We did that and we were very glad that we did. It was really good for us to have someone to escalate to throughout the project and so that was really a benefit to us that we had done that up front. Really just to kind of summarize, it was just a pretty easy implementation. It was just time consuming for us to coordinate it.

**INI Group:** Both PCs and the data center are areas for IT to implement power management. Why was PC power management a priority for you?

**Deb Schlenker:** Greenhouse gas reduction is really important to the city so we really have placed equal focus in reducing energy consumption for our data centers in addition to our PC's. Again I did numbers. I keep a running total of our energy savings for computing and we're currently at over three point five million kilowatt hours annually that we have saved since we started keeping track of this a couple of years ago. But the important thing really to note is half of that was achieved through the implementation of the Surveyor product so it's really important to us that we did that. And so it's not really a matter of prioritizing one or the other for us but really a matter of just doing the right thing and reducing our overall power consumption for computing.

**INI Group:** What are the next steps using the Verdiem Surveyor?

**Deb Schlenker:** We need to upgrade to the new version of the product that will get us the dashboard so I, in my love of numbers, am really looking forward to that. But we also need to continue to look at our power policies and ensure that the most aggressive policies really are being applied. I really think there's a lot more savings out there we can get. We just need to be proactive and go after it.

**INI Group:** Would you recommend the Verdiem Surveyor to other IT professionals and can you tell us why?

**Deb Schlenker:** Sure, of course I would. Really Surveyor is cost effective and it's easy to prove it's cost effective. It's easy to implement and really it's easy to administer the product. So I kind of say, why not implement it?

**“...from our perspective, really something as simple as implementing the Surveyor product has a large impact over time in helping the city meet that Seattle Climate Action Plan commitment.”**

**“...and we're currently at over three point five million kilowatt hours annually that we have saved since we started keeping track of this a couple of years ago. But the important thing really to note is half of that was achieved through the implementation of the Surveyor product so it's really important to us that we did that.”**

**“Sure, of course I would. Really Surveyor is cost effective and it's easy to prove it's cost effective. It's easy to implement and really it's easy to administer the product. So I kind of say, why not implement it?”**



The INI Group provides expertise and experience in IT working closely with end users and vendors to provide real world experiences. The goal is to share insights and information first hand from IT professionals with their peers.

Voice of the Customer is a service provided by the INI Group using our experts to interview IT professionals directly. For more information go to [www.VoicesofIT.com](http://www.VoicesofIT.com)

All trademark names are property of their respective companies. Information contained in this document has been obtained by sources The INI Group LLC (INI) considers to be reliable but is not warranted by INI. This document may contain opinions of INI, which are subject to change from time to time. This publication is copyrighted by The INI Group, LLC and is intended only for use by persons who have purchased it directly from INI. Any reproduction or redistribution of this document, in whole or in part, whether in hard-copy format, electronically, or otherwise to persons not authorized to receive it, without the express consent of the INI Group, LLC is in violation of U.S. copyright law and will be subject to an action for civil damages and, if applicable, criminal prosecution.