

QUEEN CREEK, ARIZONA

Queen Creek, Arizona, Struggles to Keep Up with Increasing Citizen Requests

Queen Creek sits in the southeast corner of Maricopa County, with a small portion crossing into Pinal County. The Town offers a variety of parks and recreational activities, impressive views and natural trails.

Increasing citizen requests stretched staff thin

The Town of Queen Creek was experiencing rapid growth, and its customer service deteriorated as the Town struggled to keep up with residents' needs. While the Town continued to add staff, requests would often get lost amidst the constantly shuffling organization, and even long-term employees couldn't keep up with ever-changing service responsibilities. Residents were frustrated and angry, especially long-term residents who fondly remember the high level of service they received when the community was much smaller.

Citizens' requests and questions would often get routed to the wrong staff member, causing delays in response. Further delays would result when the appropriate staff person was out of the office, sometimes for extended periods. Coordinating activities between departments was troublesome, and different departments would be working on the same issue.

There was no mechanism for tracking response times and completions, making it impossible for management to monitor service levels and standards and ensure accountability. Additionally, Queen Creek staff lacked the resources necessary to provide consistent answers to residents' questions, causing residents to lose confidence.

Opting for a long-term solution

The possible answers to the growing pains were to balloon staffing levels or simply accept the lower levels of service as "inevitable." Town management rejected the first option because it would later result in massive layoffs and, they believed, would result in only minimal short-term improvements. Management also rejected lower service quality and instructed staff to find an answer to the dilemma.

By enabling residents to easily find key information about services without staff intervention, the Town hopes to reduce the volume of telephone calls with questions and requests to less than 40 percent of total requests.



Population
27,963

Challenge

Customer service lacked the necessary resources to handle citizen inquiries and requests in a timely manner, which frustrated residents

Solution

Accela Citizen Relationship Management

Results

Queen Creek was awarded a first place Savvy award for their customer service initiative after implementing Accela Citizen Relationship Management

Captures all citizen requests and questions in a centralized location, ensuring they are routed to the correct individual

Provides staff with a single source of information regarding services to more efficiently and consistently answer inquiries

Tracks response times and completions to ensure conformance to service standards

Empowers residents to easily find key information with a centralized source of information about Town services



Becoming more responsive and accountable to citizens

The Town Manager and Town Council set an overarching goal to improve customer service with the baseline standard that residents would receive a response to their question or request within 24 hours, acknowledging the request and providing an estimated timeline for resolution.

These goals, however, were unobtainable without putting into place new procedures and an infrastructure for methodically managing resolution and communication. Understanding that communication was the key to success, the Town's communication staff was assigned the task of devising and implementing a solution with the assistance of representatives from each department.

How Accela empowers Queen Creek, Arizona

The Town's staff instinctively recognized that the implementation of a Citizen Relationship Management (CRM) system held the keys to realizing their objectives. After a thorough analysis of possible options, the Town chose Accela Citizen Relationship Management.

Accela has enabled Queen Creek to capture all requests and questions in a centralized location so that the Town no longer experiences a loss of citizen inquiries. Now, more than 90 percent of citizen requests have been completed within a timeframe appropriate to specific departments and services and management can hold departments and staff accountable to conformance to service standards. The solution also provides a centralized source of information regarding services that staff can use to more efficiently answer inquiries. The Knowledge Base, a key component of the solution, answers relevant questions for citizens so they can seek information on their own, saving staff time.

By enabling residents to easily find key information about services, the Town hopes to reduce the volume of telephone calls with questions and requests to less than 40 percent of total requests. Additionally, more than 89 percent of service requests in the CRM system now come in through the web or mobile devices and only 1 in 10 views of the Knowledge Base results in a service request submission. Residents are able to get answers to their questions without having to call staff 90 percent of the time.

The bottom line

The Town also found Accela's consulting and implementation services, which included communications and marketing support, to be the most thorough. In addition, the ability to interface Accela Citizen Relationship Management with the Town's website has helped the program stand out in the mind of residents. Rather than adding a simple "customer service" link, the program is branded "Queen Creek Connection," or QC Connection. The branding builds resident recognition, making the program more easily understood among the Town's growing community.

About Accela

At Accela, we believe that engagement makes all the difference, and we're ushering in a new era where government works directly with citizens—on their terms. The Accela Civic Platform bridges the gap between agencies and citizens by streamlining core agency functions like land, licensing and asset management, and public health and safety, connecting citizens with web-based, mobile and social applications, engaging them directly in civic meetings and providing built-in open data capabilities. We help build better communities by powering thousands of services and millions of transactions daily for agencies of all sizes. Accela is head-quartered in San Ramon, California, with offices in San Francisco, New York, Melbourne and Dubai.

Learn more

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