WINTEN^2 AT EDISON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Edison Housing Authority is located in Edison, NJ. The agency manages 160 Low Income Public Housing units and 375 Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers.

The Challenge

Edison Housing Authority (EHA) in New Jersey was using 2 different programs to maintain their 535 units; HAM (Canon) for Section 8 and PHA Partner (Gilson) for Public Housing. Without the help of one integrated software system they found themselves in an "unfortunate" situation. Originally using Canon Software (HAM), it was bought by Gilson. Using Gilson's PHA Partner for Public Housing caused many problems, resulting in their refusal to switch Section 8 over to the system, "There was no need to screw up two programs," Executive Director Madeline Cook explains.

Multiples Systems/Integration

Using different systems entering new tenants was a "nightmare" for EHA; each new tenant had to be manually keyed-in to PHA Partner and HAM, as well. Moving someone in was a burden and described as a "total mess" by Project Manager, Alfreida Kates. She explained, "You would have to find the person and make sure they were on the correct waiting lists because they were in separate systems."

Manual Processes

The word "manually" was connected to almost every process EHA performed, manual billing, manual transmissions to PIC, and manual adjustments. Rent Reasonableness was completed manually creating problems with mass rent increases, which had to be changed tenant by tenant. "This was a problem," Cook says. The speed of the system was "horrible" according to Edison employees.

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KEY RESULTS

- Problems with running two different systems resolved by using **one integrated system**

- Elimination of **Manual Processes**

- **Easy Implementation**

- **Strong Support staff** now assisting HA

- All previous **problems have been resolved** since using WinTen^2

Certification Chaos

Certifications were exhausting and rarely worked. The system would allow all information to be completed but not submitted. PIC errors routinely came up and employees would try to fix the error and resend it. PIC was reporting the error, not the software. This was very inefficient; an obvious problem resulting from not using an integrated system. In addition, EHA had become "accustomed to creating 50058's in both HAM and PHA Partner," Cook explains.

Tenant Accounting Problems

When payment information was entered into PHA Partner, they would have problems; each month rents would change causing tenants to not be on the rent roll or no longer listed as having apartments. Unit turnaround time was often incorrect and employees had to track it manually. Cook describes their struggle, "Every month there was a problem. And these problems caused tenants to have incorrect receipts."

Struggles with Support

With consistent software troubles, the agency would often turn to their software provider's support team to assist them. The response was less than acceptable, and they had continuous issues working with a company who was small and didn't have the support staff to assist them. "If they got back to you, you were lucky," Judy Long, Edison's Housing Management Specialist admits. Edison describes their struggle by sarcastically asking, "What's support?"

The Role WinTen2

Fed up with all their software problems, Edison began seeking a new software provider. They found their answer in Tenmast Software's WinTen^2 system. Cook explains why they chose Tenmast in place of their old software provider, "A system that is user-friendly, easy to work with, and offers reports that make sense to tenants too." Section 8 Technician, Michelle Thorne, was excited about things getting easier, "A system where we don't have to do things manually! It takes away a lot of time and eliminates tedious work, while making a lighter load overall."

Implementation

Edison went live on Tenmast's WinTen^2 in February 2011. Immediately employees reported things were going well. Surprised by the ease of transition, the organization started working with the program right away. Cook also adds their Project Manager played a significant role, overseeing every step of their implementation and communicating from EHA to Tenmast, "Tamika has made the transition a lot easier too."

Training was the foundation for the easy transition, "Once training is over, you know that any kink that comes up, Tenmast will always be there to help," Cook says. The agency will also have continued training available through weekly webinars offered by Tenmast, "These will be very helpful and continue our learning," Thorne believes.

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Executive Director

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Support at Tenmast

The HA now describes the best thing about Tenmast after settling in as the support they receive. "With Tenmast you don't get excuses. We call in or email if we have a problem and BANG, it is resolved," Cook says. Overall they describe things as "going very well!" They have seen significant changes in their processes. Kates reports that Public Housing is running much smoother. Re-certifications have turned around and are "much easier with the Tenmast system," Long reports.

Life as a Tenmast Software User

Edison is enjoying the benefits of being a Tenmast client. "I assured my staff they would love Tenmast," Cook remembers. Long admits they had doubts, "We couldn't imagine it could be this good, but now we are so happy," admitting Cook was right. "It is really hard to top, we are so happy," Cook admits, saying it is rewarding to see her employees work and not want to "throw their computers out the window." Not only have processes improved, but there has been a great difference in the ease and enjoyment of work at Edison Housing Authority.

Edison believes Tenmast is "fantastic" and they are completely satisfied with the system. "It was worth every penny we spent. You get what you pay for. What we got is exactly what we need," Cook says. Confident in their software provider and what it has done for their housing authority, they believe, "Put up against any other provider, Tenmast will win every time!"

For more information on WinTen² or to see an online demonstration, please contact Adam Block at ablock@tenmast.com or call 877.359.5492 ext. 238.

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