



Building USAC Schools & Libraries Program Volume and Efficiency

Situation

As part of the Telecom Act of 1996, the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), under the direction of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), was charged with administering and managing all aspects of the Schools & Libraries Program. Commonly referred to as E-Rate, this program provides eligible schools and libraries access to affordable telecommunications and internet services. Applicants with the highest poverty levels are additionally eligible for connectivity-related equipment, such as web and email, servers, routers, etc. USAC partnered with Solix to provide end-to-end management of the program eligibility determination.

Objectives

- Perform all aspects of eligibility determination, including specialized reviews to reduce waste, fraud and abuse
- Provide comprehensive case management support including applicant notification/communication, appeal reviews, invoice processing and document management
- Measure ongoing performance metrics and use data to drive improved applications processing efficiencies
- Complete all E-rate application work within just 5 months in 2015 (based on issuance of the FCC Modernization Order released in 2014)

Challenges

- Five months was the shortest timeframe ever given in the history of the program to finish workable applications. Prior to the Order, USAC was given until December 31st of each year to accomplish this goal.
- USAC needed to develop and execute a solution that would accurately and precisely deliver on complex program requirements while maintaining integrity

Solution

- Solix analyzed historical trends and performed a comprehensive risk assessment resulting in the FCC's authorization to streamline key components of the eligibility determination process while maintaining quality controls
- Solix utilized diligent project management, creative problem solving including regular customer checkpoint, milestone analysis, and solid communication to maximize program results, reporting insights, and integrity

Results

- Solix reviewed 48,213 applications and awarded \$3.3 billion to participants in 2015. Both were record measures for the program
- Completed the highest number of applications and dollars to date within the shortened 5-month window in 2015
- USAC's CEO commented:
"The results are impressive to all of us and clearly demonstrate your team's commitment, skill and professionalism. We are fortunate to have Solix as a partner in pursuit of the inspired E-rate mission and we look forward to a great future together. I've seen firsthand the value Solix adds to the program and want to make sure we continue to expand the ways in which you can share ideas and help us shape the future of how we deliver E-rate."
- Solix has continued to work with USAC for approximately 20 years to maintain the highest level of quality, customer service and responsiveness to program challenges