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Marina Miloslavich
Director of Operations
Consorcio Credicard

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Bill payment simplified for the people of Venezuela.

Hidrocapital, serving the states of Miranda and Vargas, is the leading supplier of potable water to five million customers in Venezuela. Caracas, the capital city, includes 23 municipalities. For the people of Venezuela, paying the water bill isn't as easy as turning on the tap for clear, clean water. The average consumer in Venezuela prefers not to use the country's postal service to deliver checks to pay their bills, and the adoption of electronic banking in that country has been slow.

Hidrocapital wanted to find a way for its consumers to avoid waiting in long lines at their offices or the post office to pay their bills.

It made perfect sense for Hidrocapital to turn to the premier electronic billing provider in Venezuela, Consorcio Credicard, the national processor of credit and debit card transactions, to find a solution. Worldwide leaders in the financial services arena, such as ABN Amro and Banco Santander, rely on Consorcio Credicard for their credit card processing needs. Consorcio Credicard is backed by a banking consortium and currently processes 1.5 million transactions a month, with point of sale (POS) connections at 14,000 locations. One of the services Consorcio Credicard offers is an electronic billing and payment (EBP) Web site known as Mis Facturas (My Invoices). Hidrocapital is now an active biller on this Web site along with other major national billers in the utility and telecommunications markets.

When Consorcio Credicard made the decision in 2001 to expand its services to include electronic billing and payment they freed consumers from having to visit the post office or a bank or billers' offices to pay their bills. Consorcio Credicard also offered billers the opportunity to reduce costs associated with maintaining bill payment

collection facilities, equipment and the staff to operate them. And EBP was a win for Consorcio Credicard as well. According to Marina Miloslavich, Director of Operations, “Consorcio Credicard invested in EBP because we were looking for an additional revenue stream that would complement our existing payments infrastructure.”

How electronic billing works for Consorcio Credicard

Because different billers have different needs, Consorcio Credicard realized the need to be flexible. “When you start this type of service it is important to be flexible for your customers. Using CheckFree i-Series enabled us to process data with different specifications per biller and adapt the service to each biller's needs – not the other way around,” explained Fernando De La Viña, Director of Marketing, Consorcio Credicard.

With CheckFree i-Series software, Consorcio Credicard was able to present electronic bills directly to consumers through its own Web site – a method known as the “consolidator model.” As soon as the biller uploads its billing stream to Consorcio Credicard using the CheckFree i-Series software, an e-mail notification is sent to consumers who have registered for the service. This e-mail lets consumers know their bill is ready to be viewed online at Mis Facturas. Miloslavich says, “The billers have indicated to us that consumers really like being able to receive an e-mail notification of a due bill.” Now the consumer can be assured they won't be subject to termination of services due to lost or late delivery of paper bills by the postal service.

Consorcio Credicard is also able to warehouse data with the software according to the needs

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of the biller. “Some billers like the option of being able to go back as far as six months to view history,” stated Miloslavich. Consorcio Credicard delivers remittance information to billers, who in turn make it available to consumers whenever they want to view it – 24 x 7 x 365.

Extend and expand with the right electronic billing platform

Successfully extending Consorcio Credicard’s credit card processing business depended upon the right platform choice. Miloslavich explains, “We chose CheckFree i-Series because it had the backing of a respected name and established partners with solid financial backing and a proven software platform that would allow us to go to market quicker. The fact that CheckFree uses its own software to deliver its own consolidation service is also key.”

Success confirmed

The proof of Consorcio Credicard’s success is that they will add four new billers to their EBP platform over the next few months. According to Miloslavich, “The adoption of the service has doubled since we first started back in 2001 and the feedback we have received from our billers has been very positive.” Consorcio Credicard’s business acumen has also been touted in popular publications such as El Nacional, El Universal and PC Word in Spanish.

Another of Consorcio Credicard’s clients is Seneca, an electricity provider. “Seneca provides electricity to the island of Margarita. There are a lot of people who own vacation homes in the area and it is nice for these consumers to receive and pay their electric bills when they are not physically there. Property management entities

that deal directly with Seneca and Hidrocapital love the service because they receive payments from tenants on time,” stated Miloslavich. Consorcio Credicard will expand their marketing efforts with Seneca during vacation season to drive more consumer adoption. They are also considering extending their leadership position in other channels such as Internet cafés and the addition of EBP kiosks to further reduce the number of consumers at their billing partners’ customer service centers.

Centralized and consolidated document management in the international market

Consorcio Credicard’s choice of the leading electronic billing and payment software solution, CheckFree i-Series, had a powerful impact in allowing them to provide bill generation and payment collection processes to Venezuela’s largest billers. Leveraging CheckFree’s experience in document delivery in the international market, Consorcio Credicard has developed a centralized and consolidated document management system that has simplified the lives of many consumers in Venezuela and improved the business processes of some of the largest billers in the country.

For more information on CheckFree i-Series, visit our website at www.checkfreecorp.com. Or, call 800.964.4552 toll free (U.S. and Canada), and +44 1753 567896 (International).

To see Consorcio Credicard’s EBP service, please visit www.mis-facturas.com.



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