



Utility Team Story

Dakota Electric Association® Puts Members First Through Its Latest Modernization and Innovation Initiative

Minnesota cooperative transforms member experience, operational efficiency, and future readiness through a strategic partnership with SpryPoint



When Dakota Electric Association's legacy technology provider began eliminating key functionality and raising cybersecurity concerns, the cooperative didn't just look for a replacement system. It used the moment as a catalyst to rethink how it serves the 118,000 member-owners who depend on it across Dakota County and portions of Goodhue, Scott, and Rice counties in Minnesota.

In February 2026, Dakota Electric went live with a modern cloud-based Customer Information System (CIS) platform from SpryPoint, deploying SpryCIS as its core system alongside SpryEngage, SpryMobile, and SpryIDM. But technology is only part of the story. The real achievement is what Dakota Electric set out to accomplish and is now delivering: a path to a business transformation centered on member service, operational efficiency, and long-term adaptability.



Modernization Driven by the Association's Mission

As a member-owned cooperative, Dakota Electric approaches technology investments differently than many organizations, specifically investor-owned utilities whose main priority is investor profits. In contrast, Dakota Electric is owned by its members, the families, farmers, and businesses who buy electricity from the co-op, and governed by a board of directors elected by those same members.

Every decision is measured against the cooperative's mission to deliver value to its members, improve service, and help members make informed decisions about their energy use, so all members collectively benefit from the efficiency.

"Our focus was not on simply implementing a new CIS and technology," said Nick Devine, Financial Systems Operations Director at Dakota Electric Association. "We wanted to create a foundation that allows us to continuously improve how we engage members, operate the business, and adapt to changing expectations. The partnership with SpryPoint allowed us to think beyond replacing technology and focus on creating a better experience for both our members and employees."

Like many utilities, Dakota Electric recognized that member expectations have evolved dramatically. Members increasingly expect the same digital convenience, transparency, and self-service capabilities they receive from banks, retailers, and other service providers.

At the same time, utility leaders face growing pressure to maximize workforce efficiency, strengthen cybersecurity, leverage smart meter and operational data, and improve visibility across the co-op business. Dakota Electric is capitalizing on modernization to address all of these challenges together.

Building a More Connected Member Experience

Prior to modernization, important information about usage, rates, rebates, and energy-saving programs was not transparently available to members. Many interactions remained dependent on paper communications or direct staff assistance.

Today, members have 24/7 access to personalized information through a modern self-service experience and SpryPoint portal – SpryEngage. Because of their integration with SpryCIS and other vital systems and applications, they can view usage data, monitor billing activity, manage their accounts, and engage with programs and services on their schedule.

More importantly, the co-op can now proactively communicate with members through timely notifications, usage alerts, program recommendations, and educational content to help members better understand and manage their energy consumption.

This shift reflects a broader industry trend toward customer-centric utility operations, where utilities move from reactive service models to more proactive and personalized engagement.

Transforming Operations Behind the Scenes

While member experience was a key driver, Dakota Electric's modernization effort also focused heavily on improving operational and technological capabilities.

Working closely with SpryPoint's product, implementation, and client success teams, Dakota Electric identified opportunities to streamline workflows, reduce manual processes, improve reporting, and create greater visibility across the organization.

Business processes that previously required numerous steps are being simplified and automated, from job scheduling to billing to letter generation. Seven previously disconnected systems are now integrated into a unified operational environment, giving teams faster access to information and reducing administrative effort.

"One of the most valuable aspects of the project was discovering opportunities we didn't initially anticipate," said Devine. "This process challenged us to rethink how work gets done. We found ways to automate routine tasks, simplify processes, and create efficiencies that continue to deliver value every day."

For utility leaders evaluating modernization initiatives, Dakota Electric's experience highlights an important lesson: the greatest value often comes not from replicating existing processes on new technology, but from rethinking how work can be performed.

Modernizing a Core Cooperative Function: Capital Credits

The project also included innovation around one of the most important aspects of cooperative membership: capital credits.

Dakota Electric collaborated with SpryPoint to develop functionality that supports the management and administration of capital credits directly within the CIS environment, creating greater transparency, consistency, and operational efficiency around a process that is fundamental to the cooperative business model.

The initiative demonstrates how modern platforms can be adapted to support the unique needs of electric cooperatives while preserving the values and practices that make the cooperative model distinct.

Early Results of Progress

Just three months after go-live, Dakota Electric is seeing meaningful indicators of success.



Member engagement with the new portal has reached levels comparable to what the legacy platform generated over nearly two decades.



More than 6,500 password resets have been completed through self-service channels without staff intervention, reducing call volume and allowing employees to focus on higher-value member interactions.



Integrated systems and improved data visibility are helping teams work more efficiently while providing leadership with better insight into operations and member activity.

While the technology implementation was completed in February, Dakota Electric views modernization as an ongoing journey rather than a destination. For example, its IT team is now evaluating how to leverage SpryPoint's open technology architecture to develop new capabilities and integrations that enable continuous improvement and innovation.

Lessons for Utility Leaders

Dakota Electric's experience reflects a broader reality facing utilities across North America.

Modernization is no longer solely about replacing aging technology. It is about creating a more resilient, efficient, and member-focused utility that can respond to changing customer expectations, workforce challenges, regulatory requirements, and emerging opportunities, including advanced metering, data analytics, and digital engagement.

"Our advice to other utility leaders is to stay open to learning throughout the process," said Devine. "Modern platforms create opportunities that may not be obvious when you first begin the project. At the same time, not everything works perfectly so it is critical to work closely with your provider."

For Dakota Electric, modernization was ultimately about strengthening its ability to serve members for decades to come.

Through a collaborative partnership with SpryPoint, the cooperative is establishing a modern operational foundation that supports innovation, efficiency, and a better member experience, while staying true to the cooperative principles that have guided the organization for generations.



About Dakota Electric Association

Dakota Electric Association is a member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative serving over 118,000 members in and around Dakota County. Established in 1937, Dakota Electric is committed to providing safe, reliable, affordable, and sustainable electricity to its members while actively engaging with the community and promoting energy efficiency. For more information, visit www.dakotaelectric.com or follow Dakota Electric on X, Threads, Bluesky, Instagram, Facebook, or LinkedIn.

About SpryPoint

Founded in 2011, SpryPoint builds and delivers integrated, cloud-native software solutions to empower utilities to serve customers better, operate more efficiently, and provide new levels of business visibility and data-driven decision-making. Today, more than 100 utilities across the Americas rely on SpryPoint to modernize billing, customer engagement, and field operations. In 2025, SpryPoint was recognized as a Deloitte Technology Fast 50™ company in Canada and a Deloitte Technology Fast 500™ company in North America. For more information, visit www.sprypoint.com or contact info@sprypoint.com.

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