

Keane Helps Leading Provider of Consumer Lending Products Offer Direct Relief to Katrina Victims

Repeatable Solution Saves Time, Money, and Prepares Client for Future Disasters

Abstract

A leading provider of consumer lending products was determined to offer direct relief to its customers affected by hurricane Katrina by suspending penalty fees, finance charges, and monthly payments. With time passing, the company needed a solution quickly — one that would meet the immediate needs of survivors and be replicable should another disaster occur. A longtime client, the company turned to Keane for help. In just three weeks, Keane crafted and implemented a solution that modified the client's billing process to meet these requirements. What's more, the solution proved repeatable just weeks later when a second hurricane struck. With Keane's solution, the company is now prepared for future disasters.

Business Challenge

A leading provider of consumer lending products wanted to provide direct relief to victims of hurricane Katrina. On August 29, 2005, the hurricane landed along the Central Gulf Coast near New Orleans, Louisiana. It was the sixth-strongest storm ever recorded in the Atlantic basin, claiming over 1,000 lives. The company, in an effort to provide support directly to those individuals affected by the disaster, decided it would freeze the credit card status of those customers, freeing them from paying any penalty fees for 90 days. In addition, finance charges on installment loans would not be assessed during this period. However, time was tight, and resources were needed to modify the billing application.

The client wanted the solution implemented quickly. But just as important, the solution needed to be repeatable. The client had made ad-hoc

Results

- » **Fast implementation:** Design, development, testing, and implementation completed in just three weeks
- » **Zero application defects**
- » **No disruption to business during implementation**
- » **Extendable:** Solution implemented across product portfolio
- » **Repeatable:** Solution frees company from crafting ad-hoc solutions for unforeseen disasters, saving time & money

Application and Infrastructure Solutions

modifications to its billing applications in the past to provide relief to customers who were victims of previous disasters, including the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. But these solutions had not been designed to be re-used for future calamities. The company understood that creating a solution that could be repeated when necessary would allow them to offer relief to customers more quickly and save costs. With several weeks remaining in the 2005 hurricane season and with days passing since Katrina first made landfall, time was tight.

Solution

Keane's consultant, who had extensive experience supporting the client's applications, worked with the client to define the business and system requirements. The consultant worked quickly to identify how best to modify the billing process so that delinquency fees, cash advance fees, and membership fees would not be assessed, and so that account holders would not be required to make a payment toward their balances for three billing cycles. To meet the requirements, the five applications that comprised the billing process had to be modified. In addition, one program, consisting of hundreds of lines of code, had to be developed to enable customer accounts to be frozen.

Keane's consultant then documented his recommendations and presented them to the business owners. Once the plan was approved, the team of developers (made up of both Keane and client professionals) modified the

COBOL-based legacy application and performed unit testing. After the business owners determined that the application met company requirements, the changes were implemented within a day.

Results

Keane provided its client with a simple and repeatable solution just three weeks after the consumer lending provider announced its intentions to offer Katrina survivors relief from the normal flow of fees, charges, and payment requirements. The Keane professionals had deep experience with both the client application and the consumer lending business at large, which enabled them to modify the billing process quickly.

In addition to providing the client with a solution that met its immediate needs (and the immediate needs of Katrina survivors), Keane's solution proved to be repeatable for future scenarios. By earmarking a field that enabled the new process to be "turned on" when needed, Keane ensured that changes to the billing process could be made easily. In fact, the client implemented Keane's solution when Hurricane Rita struck Texas and Louisiana on September 24, 2005, providing relief to customers in those areas. As a result of Keane's work, the client was also able to extend benefits to the customers of other products, including its auto-lending product. Although the entire project was performed under tight deadlines, the system experienced neither defects nor disruption during or after implementation.

Keane provided this consumer lending firm with a simple and repeatable solution in just three weeks.

As a result, credit card and installment loan customers were freed from paying the normal flow of fees, charges, and payments, while they concentrated on rebuilding their lives post-Katrina.

About Keane

Keane is an IT services firm headquartered in the US with more than 12,000 professionals worldwide. For 45 years, Keane has been an Application Services specialist with distinguished project management credentials. Today, we offer a flagship suite of Application Services, as well as Infrastructure and Business Process Outsourcing solutions delivered through onsite, nearshore, and offshore resources. Visit www.keane.com to learn how our projects, managed services, and outsourcing engagements deliver value for a range of businesses and government agencies.

Application and Infrastructure Solutions