



BENEFITS REALIZED FROM RECOLLECT

From an online communications point of view:

"Working with ReCollect was a positive experience. It was such an easy process, for such a positive result in terms of improved customer service." says Heather.

From a waste management point of view:

"We've been really happy with the service, it's been a user friendly process for us and the residents have been delighted to choose the way that they're communicated with. We definitely recommend it for municipalities looking at ways to improve communications about their garbage program." says Melinda.

DIVERSION



CUSTOMER STORY | City of Victoria

In December 2012, the City of Victoria introduced online and operational changes that altered the way they do business. With the launch of a sleek new website, web analytics clearly showed residents were interested in garbage service information. With an ongoing commitment to customer service, the City saw an opportunity to offer a better way for residents to access their garbage schedules online. The timing was critical as the City was about to launch several changes to their garbage collection service that stood to radically reduce the amount of waste headed to the Region's landfill. Communicating the changes effectively was a top priority – that's where ReCollect came in.

"We recognized we had a unique opportunity to change the way we remind people it was garbage day," says Heather Follis, Communications Coordinator and online specialist at the City of Victoria. The implementation of ReCollect was timed with the changes to garbage collection, and as a result the City of Victoria surpassed their goals for waste reduction within months of launching, and established a new practice for direct communication with residents.

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We knew what we wanted and we came to the conclusion after finding ReCollect online that it just nailed it for us. It checked off all the boxes.

Located on the southern tip of Vancouver Island, Victoria is British Columbia's capital city. Like many cities, their waste management team was working on ways to reduce the amount of waste they were sending to landfills, and to make collection services more efficient. In pursuit of this goal they implemented multiple changes, including shifting their collection schedule to support a new kitchen scraps program aimed at diverting organic material away from the waste stream. As part of this plan, the city distributed new bins to residents, rolled out new regulations and education, and even changed where residents could expect their garbage bins to be dropped off on collection days. Altogether, these changes stood to help the City meet or even exceed its waste reduction goals. "As we changed the service model, we wanted to find ways to make that transition easier and continue to provide high levels of customer service." explains Melinda Jolley, Communications Coordinator for the City of Victoria.

About ReCollect

ReCollect Systems is a technology company specializing in digital solutions for the waste management sector. With a focus on meeting and surpassing the expectations of residents, ReCollect has the proven experience to deliver digital products that also meet the needs of waste managers, communicators, IT specialists and governmental officials. Launched in 2009, today ReCollect is used by millions of residents across North America. From small villages to large urban centres, from municipal services to private haulers, ReCollect is ready to make your waste management programs more efficient and successful.



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The time was right for a service that could help communicate these changes to the public. “We’d recently redeveloped our website, and had a renewed focus on continuous improvement. Knowing we were about to make changes to how we collected garbage, we were seeking options for how we communicated with citizens about garbage. Traditionally, for garbage pickup you still had to figure out which zone you were in, and then open a PDF schedule,” Heather adds. “We were keen to remove some steps and make it easy to just type in your address and find out when the next collection was.” The team researched online solutions but, Heather says “other services were app based, and we know based on our web analytics that a high number of people who come to our website come there for garbage schedules – so we weren’t convinced an app alone was going to do what we needed it to do. We wanted that actual functionality on our website.”

Within a few weeks of contacting ReCollect Systems, the team at the City of Victoria was ready to launch their new solution. “It was a very simple conversation,” says Heather “We connected ReCollect with our GIS – and once we were ready, it took 10 minutes to launch.”

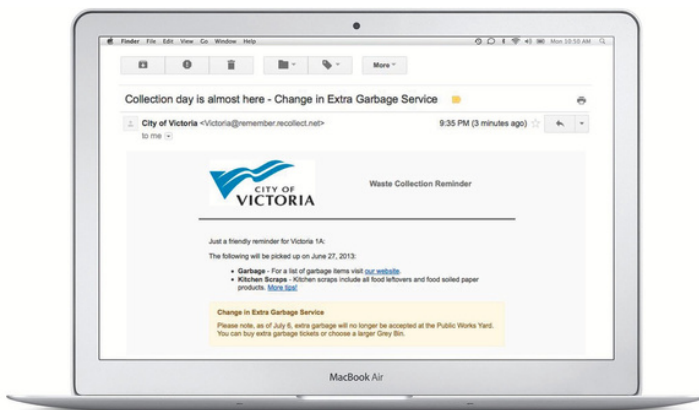
The team was quick to appreciate the added benefits of the service. “The app was a huge bonus to us,” says Heather. And while they haven’t had to use it yet, it’s reassuring to know that ReCollect comes with emergency messaging and the ability to notify residents of changes in service due to weather.



Further benefits to using ReCollect quickly became clear.

Using ReCollect, the team was able to start connecting with residents on a weekly basis instead through personalized reminders in a way that was responsive to how each customer wanted to hear from the City.

“Our main communication with residents became very simple. We connected ReCollect with our GIS – and once we were ready, it took 10 minutes to launch social media and website,” explains Melinda.



For the City of Victoria, one of the advantages of the personalized reminders has been making sure that residents are kept informed both about the “how” – such as what can go in the green kitchen scraps bin – as well as the “why”: “We can now let residents know when we’ve achieved or surpassed the goal for the program,” explains Heather, “and that creates a positive feedback loop.” Sure enough, soon after launch the goal for the kitchen scraps program was surpassed. “The goal

was to reduce waste going to landfill by 30%” says Melinda, “and within the first few months we achieved that goal – we’re at a 37% diversion rate right now.”

In terms of operational flow, the City of Victoria has seen good pick-up with ReCollect: they now have over 14,000 household account holders, and so far 42% of those households have used ReCollect to look up their schedule, with 5% regularly using the mobile app. And, while the City’s initial goal was to have 10% of household account holders accessing the service regularly after one year, it’s encouraging to see they’re already at almost double that goal: 19% of households currently receive weekly reminders and 10% have printed out personalized schedules at home.



They promote the service through regular collateral and messaging on the side of collection trucks that simply says “Never miss another collection day.” and tells residents how they can sign up for reminders at victoria.ca/greenbin.

USING RECOLLECT HELPED THE CITY OF VICTORIA ACHIEVE:

An easy-to-understand solution for residents

“It’s just so simple – just type in your address and get a reminder, however you wish to receive it” said Heather.

Higher engagement between the City and its residents

ReCollect helped the city connect to people in new ways – like being able to reach residents right on their smart phone to remind them that it’s garbage collection day. Melinda explains: “We’re able to communicate in the way users prefer, and that really aligns with the City’s customer service focus.” And experimenting with new avenues of communication with users – such as text messages – is also helping the City to start thinking about how they’d like to communicate with residents in the future. Plus, because ReCollect monitors analytics on user preferences, that data is helping to determine where to go next with resident communications.

ReCollect also had the unexpected side benefit of dealing with a problem neighbouring municipalities often experience by clarifying what services were available in each area. “So, if a resident of Saanich (a neighbouring municipality) types in their address into ReCollect, they’re redirected to Saanich’s waste collection services – and that’s such a great solution for regional residents coming to the site and needing to end up in the right place,” explains Heather.

