



Great Plains Energy / Kansas City Power & Light

A comprehensive migration plan enables 900 employees to work and communicate on behalf of their new employer on “day one.”

Great Plains Energy, the holding company of Kansas City Power & Light (KCP&L), acquired the regional operations of Aquila and then integrated the two organizations, with the intent that all employees could represent themselves as KCP&L employees immediately upon closing. West Monroe Partners helped migrate more than 900 Aquila employees to new Microsoft Active Directory and Exchange services.

Kansas City Power & Light.

Operating from headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri, Kansas City Power & Light (“KCP&L”) has evolved into a full-service energy provider and resource. The company was founded in 1882 and has become one of the Midwest’s most affordable energy suppliers through leadership in fuel procurement, plant technology and efficient power generation, transmission, and distribution. KCP&L services more than 800,000 customers.

Facilitating a fast, efficient transition.

For many acquisitions, it may take six months or more to integrate people, processes, and technology. For KCP&L and its holding company, Great Plains Energy, a fast, efficient transition was a strategic imperative—including establishing the ability for the 900 new employees joining the company as part of its acquisition of Aquila to represent themselves as KCP&L employees on the closing date. Consequently, KCP&L would need to establish Microsoft Active Directory and Exchange services for those employees and activate the services literally overnight.

Adding to the complexity of the deal was the simultaneous carve out of Aquila operations outside of the metro Kansas City area and the sale of those operations, along with Aquila’s former e-mail domain, to a third-party utility, Black Hills Corporation. In addition, regulatory issues prevented the parties from sharing data prior to closing—a requirement that would make it difficult to test the new services thoroughly in advance. For assistance with developing a migration solution, KCP&L turned to West Monroe Partners, which was supporting its overall IT transition and offered extensive experience with Microsoft Active Directory and Exchange migrations.

Managing a successful transition.

In order to ensure a successful transition, the West Monroe Partners project team identified and worked with KCP&L to manage critical success factors:

- ◆ Maximizing available network bandwidth to ensure the fast transfer of data
- ◆ Selecting and implementing automated migration tools to simplify processes and facilitate a quick transition
- ◆ Building out the data center, including physical space and other hardware required to support the required expansion in users
- ◆ Facilitating planning and communication among the three organizations
- ◆ Streamlining and accelerating collaboration with other functions involved in the process, including purchasing, legal, compliance, and security
- ◆ Ensuring sufficient testing, while at the same time avoiding the sharing of sensitive data prior to closing

By working with West Monroe Partners to design the transition and migration, KCP&L achieved its communication objectives for “day one”:

- ◆ New employees from Aquila had immediate access to and use of KCP&L’s corporate Exchange e-mail, as well as use of their Active Directory log ins
- ◆ Users were able to access and synchronize e-mail accounts, calendars, and contacts using mobile devices (smartphone, BlackBerry®, etc.)
- ◆ Remote access had been established for all employees who required it
- ◆ All users had access to Active Directory-integrated applications
- ◆ The company’s IT team had immediate leverage of Group Policy Object management

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