

## CASE STUDY

# Optimizing Multi-Participant Power Plant Management: *Burbank and the Magnolia Power Project*

## Background

The City of Burbank, California, is both an operator and a partial owner of the Magnolia Power Project (MPP), a power plant jointly owned by six municipal utilities. As the designated project manager, Burbank is responsible for balancing the needs of multiple stakeholders, coordinating complex power schedules, and ensuring equitable cost distribution among participants.

Managing these multi-faceted demands required a solution that could provide transparency, efficiency, and reliable performance for all involved.

## Challenge

The MPP ownership model created unique operational challenges for Burbank, which needed a robust system to:

- Manage complex scheduling for multiple owners with varying power demands.
- Ensure fair distribution of both power output and associated costs.
- Optimize plant operations to increase reliability and efficiency.
- Foster transparency and maintain trust among all stakeholders.

With several participants relying on MPP for consistent power generation and cost-effective operations, Burbank sought a technology solution capable of meeting these requirements while scaling with the project's evolving demands.

# Solution

Burbank turned to our Gen Scheduler software, designed specifically to address the intricacies of multi-participant power plants. The Gen Scheduler software provided a tailored solution with features such as:

- **Automated Scheduling and Power Allocation:** The software automates daily scheduling, simplifying the complex allocation of power across all owners and significantly reducing the potential for human error.
- **Equitable Cost Distribution:** The software's allocation engine ensures that each participant is fairly billed based on their share of plant output and associated costs, with visibility into each cost factor.
- **Real-Time Data Access for All Owners:** Each participant gains access to real-time data on power generation and allocation, enhancing transparency and promoting data-driven decision-making.
- **Customizable Reporting and Analytics:** With customizable reporting, each participant can receive tailored data insights and analytics, fostering an environment of accountability and openness.

## Implementation

The Gen Scheduler software was deployed in phases, with close collaboration between our team and Burbank to address the specific requirements of the MPP:

- 1. Initial Deployment:** The core functionality of Gen Scheduler was implemented, providing essential scheduling and allocation capabilities.
- 2. Ongoing Customizations:** Custom Statements of Work (SOW) allowed for ongoing adjustments and enhancements to meet the dynamic needs of MPP.
- 3. Training and Support:** Regular training sessions and dedicated support ensured that Burbank's team could effectively utilize the software, enabling smooth operations and continuous improvement.

# Results

- 1. Implementation:** The implementation of Gen Scheduler delivered measurable benefits for Burbank and the Magnolia Power Project's participants.
- 2. Improved Efficiency:** Gen Scheduler streamlined scheduling and allocation, minimizing manual processes and reducing the likelihood of errors.
- 3. Enhanced Transparency:** With access to real-time data and customized reports, all six utility owners now have clear visibility into their power allocation and associated costs.
- 4. Optimized Plant Performance:** Custom modifications empowered Burbank to maximize MPP's efficiency, enhancing overall output and reliability.
- 5. Long-term Partnership:** The successful deployment and support of Gen Scheduler has led to a 17-year partnership with Burbank, showcasing the reliability and value of the solution.
- 6. Operational Flexibility:** During the COVID-19 pandemic, Burbank leveraged emergency provisions to extend the Gen Scheduler contract, ensuring uninterrupted service during a critical period.

## Testimonial

"The Gen Scheduler software has been instrumental in managing the complexities of the Magnolia Power Project. It's allowed us to operate more efficiently and maintain trust among all participants."

— Steve, Plant Superintendent

## About SoftSmiths

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