Avetta Case Study

EPCOR Selects Avetta to Ensure Consistent, Reliable Vendor Prequalification

EPCOR Utilities Inc. is a utility company that builds, owns, and operates electrical, natural gas, and water transmission and distribution networks, water and wastewater treatment facilities, sanitary and stormwater systems, and infrastructure in Canada and the U.S.

Industry
Utilities

Profile
- Date founded: 1891
- Location: Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
- A utility company operating in Canada and the U.S. with a mission to provide clean water and safe, reliable energy

Challenges
- Assess and validate contractors consistently precontract
- Streamline administrative tasks for nearly 700 contractors
- Provide executives a consolidated view of risk

Solutions
- Supplier Prequalification
- Insurance Monitoring
- Supplier Audits

Results
- Ensured consistent and thorough vetting of all contractors to meet safety, quality, and insurance requirements
- Streamlined vetting process and reduced risk
- Reduced repetitive administrative tasks, enabling employees to focus on more strategic tasks
- Provided visibility for leadership to make informed decisions about potential issues and risks

The Challenge

As a growing international utility company, EPCOR strives to meet customer needs, provide a safe work environment, and comply with government regulations. Contractors help the company keep its water, sewer, and power systems in peak working order. Management of the contractor relationships across its supply chain was spread throughout the various business units. However, EPCOR wanted a consistent contractor vetting process to ensure that it had the right contactors in the right place and at the right time, and to reduce risk for everyone.

To support the continued growth of the company, EPCOR committed to improving prequalification, centralizing prequalification functions, and providing consistent contractor oversight to all the company's business units. But meeting those goals requires significant administrative work to obtain and verify contractor information and keep the data current. To remain competitive and reach its quality and safety goals, EPCOR needed a system that would reduce its administrative burden and ensure the accurate and consistent vetting of contractors.

The Avetta Solution

Avetta differentiated itself from other providers with a strong prequalification process, a solid track record, and favorable pricing. Avetta's cloud-based program gives EPCOR a complete view of its supply chain, and Avetta's compliance specialists manage the program, reducing EPCOR's administrative burden. Avetta's steady communication with contractors also helps set expectations for the contractors and ensure that nothing is overlooked.

In addition, the ease of use of the Avetta user interface was a major factor. "We had experience using other systems as contractors, and we knew how painful the process can be," said Guy Greenwall, Senior Manager of Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) for EPCOR. "Ease of use was important not just for us, but also for our contractors."

Avetta's system for flagging contractors' qualifications and any gaps is easy to understand. EPCOR can quickly and easily see if an amber or red flag is for a minor or major problem, and they can set controls on a contractor as needed to address specific issues. "When a contractor has a green flag in Avetta, we're confident that we're off to a good start," said Greenwall.

Supplier Prequalification

The Supplier Prequalification service standardizes the collection and verification of information, ensuring it is accurate, complete, and current. Avetta's specialists vet each contractor and ensure that they understand what is needed to qualify for various types of contracts. The easy-to-use interface gives EPCOR a complete view into its supply chain and flags any gaps in contractor qualifications.

With Supplier Prequalification, EPCOR can easily identify contractors that meet EPCOR's specific requirements. "We use Supplier Prequalificationto onboard new contractors and track all their data," said Greenwall. "Avetta makes sure all the data they've provided is accurate and up to date."

Insurance Monitoring

Through the Insurance Monitoring service, Avetta helps manage risk across EPCOR's supply chain. Avetta's specialists collect and track insurance certificates to ensure that EPCOR and its contractors are adequately protected. The service features an intuitive document management system and is easily configured for specific requirements.

The Avetta platform makes it easy for contractors to upload their certificates of insurance. Avetta's specialists verify and monitor the certificates so that EPCOR can quickly identify contractors who meet their requirements. The automatic alerting feature in Insurance Monitoring notifies EPCOR of supplier status changes and alerts contactors when their insurance is close to expiration, helping everyone to remain current and reduce risks.

Supplier Audits

With Avetta's Supplier Audits service, EPCOR's prequalified contractors are monitored to ensure they have documented and are following the required safety and sustainability procedures. This service not only removes the burden from the EPCOR business units to review contractor manuals, the Supplier Auditsreporting features give EPCOR visibility into how its contractors are implementing their policies and procedures. It also provides contractors with guidance on how to improve their processes and establish best practices.

In addition, custom audits can be created to meet any specific auditing needs. "Avetta is bundled into a consistent package, and the audit function ensures everything is kept current," said Greenwall.

The Results

Avetta evaluates and prequalifies contractors to ensure they are qualified to perform the required work and are fully insured, which helps protect EPCOR from risk. The visibility into this data makes it easier for EPCOR to implement its own accountability procedures. "It makes leadership more aware of potential issues and more able to identify potential risk," said Greenwall. "We can now make informed decisions about whether to use a specific contractor."

Outsourcing the contractor qualification process also saves the company time and money. "We use nearly 700 contractors, and it can take anywhere from 4 to 32 hours of effort to prequalify a single contractor," said Greenwall. "Now Avetta does that work. It saves us both time and resources that we can allocate to other areas."

"I like that Avetta approaches our relationship as a partnership and we work together for the greater good. We're looking forward to continuing this relationship."

Guy Greenwall, HSE Senior Manager
EPCOR Utilities Inc.