

Lafayette Consolidated Government Makes #20 for JPI

“Knowing JPI has someone like Marla (Holsomback), who has worked in the environment and understands the overall process in Louisiana, is a MAJOR asset.”

**Nina Lopez
Systems Analyst
Lafayette Consolidated Government**

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Recently, it was announced by the Lafayette Consolidated Government that they had selected JPI Data Resource's Galaxy Sales Tax Collection and Distribution system. According to Nina Lopez of Lafayette Parish Consolidated Government, JPI Data Resource, a Gonzales, Louisiana based company, has the best sales tax collection and distribution system in the marketplace. Choosing which sales tax system to purchase was not a decision made lightly by Lafayette Parish. Only after contacting many parishes in Louisiana as well as some out of state agencies did they decide to go with JPI Data Resource. Other reasons cited for their decision were JPI's willingness to add GIS interface to the system and their extensive Louisiana client list.

Their need to upgrade and their reasons to change systems was critical to their efficiency and familiar to many parishes. Most sales tax collection agencies originally acquired their applications back in the late 1970s or the early 1980s. However, over the decades, with each new law and the subsequent changes to administration of sales tax collections, administrators have had to wrestle with programming modifications, languages and programmer changes. Lafayette Parish also had difficulty maintaining the sales tax expertise necessary to keep sales tax logic up to date. Because of the way that the old tax

collection system stored the parish's data, in flat VSAM files, the ability to perform easy ad-hoc queries and reports was severely restricted. Couple the previous system's inabilities, with the scheduled changes and maintenance on the parish's mainframe, data plus applications were bound to be deleted. JPI's Galaxy Sales Tax Collection and Distribution system solved this and several other problems.

Lafayette found that JPI was willing to listen to their needs and work to incorporate GIS into the sales tax application. This provides the parish with valuable tax collection information in the event of application changes or sales tax modifications. By letting the parish officials know where they are collecting the majority of a particular tax and which districts in the parish are not, adjustments can be made based on real – not perceived – information. A GIS interface with the tax collection system becomes a major decision-making tool.

Ms. Lopez was also impressed with JPI's customer service approach – a sales tax subject matter expert working to identify the parish's needs instead of software programmers. According to Ms. Lopez, “Knowing JPI has someone like Marla, who has worked in the environment and understands the overall process in Louisiana is a MAJOR asset.” JPI had what Lafayette Parish needed.

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