

## COMPANY PROFILE

Since 1976, Answer Heating & Cooling, Inc. has provided HVAC services systems for residential and commercial customers. Dedicated to quality service that exceeds customer expectations, the company installs and maintains Furnaces, Air Conditioners, Humidifiers, Air Filtration, and Central Vac within a 45-minute radius of Freeland, Michigan area.

With annual sales of nearly \$6 million and 46 employees, Answer handles 600-800 service calls each month for more than 1600 residential and 250 commercial customers on their maintenance program.

For 19 years, Brenda Burmeister has worked as Controller and Office Manager at Answer H&C. She knows what sets the company apart. "As the only 24-hour service company in the area, we get a lot of new customers on those cold nights and weekends when no one else will go out to their homes. We believe through knowledge, professionalism, and respect for all involved, we will continue to be a leading HVAC dealer."



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## VMS FOR SERVICE MANAGEMENT

Since 1992, Answer has relied on Vertical Market Software (VMS) to manage their business. Twenty-four users rely on the 11 installed modules which include Service Management, Job Cost, Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, Payroll, Inventory, Purchase Order, General Ledger, Check Reconciliation, Call Management, Pager Control, AIA Draw Request, and Administration.

“About 13 years ago, we took some time to evaluate other software packages to ensure that VMS was truly handling our needs,” Burmeister recalls. “Through that investigation, we found there was nothing that compared in terms of functionality.”

The deal-breaker? “The other programs fell short in terms of their dispatch board,” Burmeister says, noting that VMS Service Management “runs our service department, everything from receiving customer service calls to dispatching work orders to technicians in the field.”

“We found out it’s not always greener on the other side of the fence,” Burmeister notes, smiling. “We saw what else was available and decided to stay with VMS.”

## VMS MOBILE DATA

No VMS feature is more important to Answer H&C than Mobile Data. "We bought mobile data before it even existed," Burmeister states. "As a beta test site, we have been working with VMS from day 1. During the testing, we tried different devices as they rewrote the program for different platforms — PDAs, Nextel phones, etc.

"About 10 years ago, VMS made mobile data available for laptops and, within the past year, tablets. For us it's taken off since then. Today, our technicians log in to their laptop to get the service history and directions. They can type in comments, enter flat rate, billing, parts, and then complete it, print it and move along."

Today, technicians print service tickets in the field. The service biller reviews the tickets and then posts it — no data entry required.

"With 8 service technicians producing 6-8 tickets a day, Mobile Data has saved us a lot of money on overhead," Burmeister enthuses. "In fact, it has saved us hiring another person in the office."

## UPGRADING TO VENTUS

VMS software called Ventus. With its intuitive, easy-to-use interface, Ventus is an integrated, Windows-based software solution that uses SQL database to provide fast access to data. As a current VMS customer, Answer will upgrade to VMS Ventus at no cost, and conversion plans are now underway for February 2014.

"The actual conversion will take two days," Burmeister says. "On a Monday morning, we will turn it on and our data will be converted, then training begins. A VMS expert will be on-site to ensure a smooth conversion.

"There are a lot of attractive features in Ventus," Burmeister notes. "Ventus dispatch board offers an e-mapping service — we're very interested in that. Ventus will also provide more integrated report writing features. Currently we use an external report writer that almost requires programming skills to know where to pull the information from."

## A PROMISING FUTURE WITH VENTUS VMS

"We need VMS to run our business," Burmeister says simply. "We have no desire to spend thousands of dollars to convert to something else. We've been with VMS for more than 20 years as they continue to grow and evolve, and we trust them."

She adds, "Ventus VMS is part of that evolution. It positions us well for the future. It will make report writing and accountability easier. Not only is it user friendly, Ventus uses the newest technology behind the scenes."



## CONTACT US

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