

Case Study

Automating Lobbying Compliance Saves Fortune 500 Technology Company Thousands of Hours

A Fortune 500 technology company was spending weeks scrambling to gather information from dozens of employees to compile their federal lobbying reports. One staff member was tasked with gathering data from almost 50 employees in order to meet the company's federal reporting requirements four times each year. The process included sending repeated emails to various departments (government affairs, legal, finance, and the executive team) — but receiving inconsistent and incomplete responses, if a response was received at all. For this company, compliance required gathering data on lobbying contacts, what topics were discussed during the contacts, and what expenses were incurred during the course of the contacts, just to name a few.

The compliance coordinator responsible for overseeing the internal reporting and filing devoted 100 percent of their work time to lobbying compliance at the end of each filing period (45 days), leaving zero time to work on other tasks. When the federal government reduced the deadline to file to 20 days, they knew they needed a better solution.

The Challenge

A tech company spent thousands of hours gathering information to submit lobbying reports.

The Outcome

We worked with the client to create a customized solution to automate their internal lobbying compliance process, saving them time and money and giving them peace of mind.





Case Study (cont.)

Our first step had to be streamlining their internal process. We needed to make it easier for the compliance coordinator to collect the necessary data and dramatically reduce the number of hours they spent on federal filings.

MultiState's compliance team built custom forms for the client to be deployed through our online compliance system. These custom forms were automatically sent to all the appropriate staff to collect necessary data at predetermined times during the year, including automatic reminders sent to keep everyone on task by the due dates. By automating the information-gathering process, the compliance coordinator simply interacted with our compliance team as we monitored the process, saving the company thousands of hours overall.

MultiState created a system that drastically improved the efficiency of the technology company's internal reporting system. Our solution worked so well that the company asked MultiState's compliance team to expand the service to all of the client's state lobbying compliance work. The information the client collects for lobbying compliance purposes through our custom forms has also helped the company improve the efficiency in their tax reporting and filing.

MultiState's team of compliance professionals does more than keep you in line with all the rules — we give you peace of mind.

How can you stay on top of lobbying compliance?

- Identify those within the company could have contacts with government employees.** Before you can ensure you're sticking to the rules, you have to understand where you are. We conduct audits to help you identify which departments may be contacting government employees, who they may contact, and the purpose for outreach. This is how you avoid any surprises.
- Check thresholds, definitions, and rules early — you want to avoid making lobbying contacts prior to registering.** Knowing what triggers registration prior to contact is a must. Many states require registration prior to lobbying while others require registration within 1 to 15 days. Some states allow lobbying activity up to a certain number of hours. States have different ways to calculate time, ranging from a set number of hours per period to the percentage of time spent lobbying. Check rules before you engage to cover your bases up front.
- Establish a company policy on who is allowed to talk to government employees.** Set guidelines on who is authorized to engage in contact with government employees. This will reduce the risk of unauthorized contact. Ensuring the right employees are educated on the rules surrounding their activities is a key in complying with lobbying laws.