

## CASE STUDY

# City of Thousand Oaks Wins “Best of California” Award for Green Cloud Applications



With a small budget and limited IT resources, the City of Thousand Oaks enlisted a volunteer intern to create its Green Business Certification Program, the first fully-automated city program of its kind in California. Graduate student Justin Baker didn't have much IT experience, but found he could build several applications quickly and easily using Caspio. For their efforts, the City was recognized with the 2012 “Best of California” award and Baker was hired on as a full-time employee.

### Industry

City Government

### Department

Environmental Programs, Public Works

### Department Size

5 Employees

### Challenge

The City of Thousand Oaks needed to implement a Green Business Certification Program and create an online presence for its environmental programs that would allow them to track overall program efficiency and effectiveness. Yet given the small budget and few human resources, traditional development methods were not an option.

### Solution

Research pointed the City to Caspio as the most reliable and cost efficient alternative to traditional development. The City used Caspio's cloud database to create several web applications that automate processes for green business certification, recycling permits, and community enhancement grants. With Caspio, the City was able to create their programs for less than 3 percent of the \$370,000 it would have cost for traditional development methods. The cloud-based green certification application also reduced paper usage by 95 percent. Based on the success of these endeavors, the city won the Center for Digital Government's 2012 “Best of California” Green IT award.

## Rethinking Operations

The City of Thousand Oaks, California, needed to create an online certification program that would help over 4,000 local businesses apply for community enhancement grants, reduce their carbon footprint, implement energy efficiency and water conservation upgrades, and purchase environmentally-conscious products. John Brooks, City Environmental Programs Senior Analyst, knew the program had to be completed on a small project budget with few IT resources, plus align with the state's program and monitoring requirements. Traditional consulting and development costs were not an option.



Caspio-powered cloud database application automates the entire green business certification process.

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According to Brooks, “Research determined that Caspio would be the best fit of robustness and ease of use.” With Caspio, the City could develop an intuitive online application that would use minimal staff time to run and maintain, plus track the overall program efficiency and environmental impact.

### From Intern to Cloud IT Professional

The task of developing the new program fell on Justin Baker, a graduate student intern enlisted by the Environmental Programs branch in the Public Works department. Though experienced in web design, Baker had limited prior development experience. Despite the learning curve, he quickly became familiar with Caspio’s cloud platform watching video tutorials, finding that “Caspio was easy-to-use, affordable, and better suited to our needs than any other alternative. It allowed for easy customization on a reliable platform,” Baker said.

### Improved Citizen and Staff Services

The City soon expanded its use of Caspio’s cloud database service, replacing their existing paper-based Community Enhancement Grant Program and Recycling Permit System with automated online applications. In the past, all documentation from initial inquiries to insurance documentation had been paper-based, requiring extensive staff time and resources. Using Caspio’s cloud platform, the City was able to automate and streamline processes for both programs.

Baker soon designed and developed all three programs for nominal annual cost of \$2,500, less than three percent of the estimated \$370,000 traditional program development, consulting, and maintenance would have cost. Baker was hired as a full-time Information Technology Technician as a result of the project’s success.

“Overall, we have received great feedback on the reliability and design of our applications,” said Baker. “Both residents and employees alike seem to enjoy the simplicity and speed at which the applications deliver services.”

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**Justin Baker**, Information Technology Technician,  
City of Thousand Oaks

### Go Cloud, Go Green

With Caspio, the City was able to easily collect program data, track and report metrics, and make these programs more environmentally sustainable. How sustainable? By implementing the programs, the City had reduced paper usage by 95 percent, and for businesses certified through the city’s green business program, they had cut energy use by 25 percent, water consumption by 15 percent, and a 10 percent reduction in CO2 emissions is expected. Baker also found Caspio to be “an excellent way to be adaptive and launch applications 60 to 70 percent faster and at a fraction of the cost of ‘ground up’ development.”

### Award-Winning Results

For their groundbreaking database applications, the City of Thousand Oaks and project leaders John Brooks and Justin Baker received the Center for Digital Government’s 2012 “Best of California” Award in the Green IT category. Brooks noted, “This award shows what government agencies can accomplish with innovative cloud technology in spite of reduced resources.”

For more information on how the City of Thousand Oaks utilized cloud database applications to achieve these benefits, read the [Best of California Award](#) announcement. To learn more about the Caspio’s solutions for local, state and federal government agencies, visit [www.caspio.com/gov](http://www.caspio.com/gov).

### About Caspio, Inc.

Caspio, Inc. ([www.caspio.com](http://www.caspio.com)) is the world’s leading do-it-yourself online database and web application creation platform. The company’s philosophy is to empower business users to create and deploy web databases, forms, reports and applications easily and without programming. Caspio’s platform-as-a-service replaces coding with intuitive point-and-click wizards, enabling users to rapidly produce web database apps for capturing, publishing, and managing data online. Caspio shrinks development time from weeks to hours, and from thousands of dollars to a small monthly fee. Caspio’s customers range from one-person entrepreneurs to Fortune-500 corporations, digital media giants, government agencies, and educational institutions.

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