


Progressive Web App Dev for Energy Efficiency Firm

PROJECT DETAILS

 Web Development

 Feb. 2017 - Ongoing

 \$50,000 to \$199,999

 *"We felt that they were a partner rather than a contractor."*

PROJECT SUMMARY

Orases designed and developed a progressive web application to automate a company's auditing and reporting processes, including the backend work.

PROJECT FEEDBACK

The application will significantly improve the company's processes, meeting the required needs and speeding up the audits.

Despite some bugs, the team's discovery process and careful development ensured the relevant features were included and the budget was not exceeded.

The Client

Introduce your business and what you do there.

Atlas Home Energy is a home services company focusing on energy improvements. I'm a co-owner, co-founder, and manager of the business. We do a lot of data collection in the field, as part of energy audits on homes. After the assessments, we put together energy reports, detailing all the areas where a customer can improve their house. We also provide them estimated energy savings and a quote for those improvements, based on which customers can decide to move forward with the work. Finally, we send out crews to implement those improvements.

The Challenge

What challenge were you trying to address with Orases?

We collect a tremendous amount of data for energy audits, contracts, and work orders. The challenge was transferring all that data to each document type. We used to create each one using separate programs, which led to data loss. We were looking for ways to make the whole process more efficient.

-  **Matt Sera**
Owner, Atlas Home Energy
-  **Energy & Natural Resources**
-  **1-10 employees**
-  **Frederick, Maryland**

CLIENT RATING

5.0

Overall Score

Quality	5.0
Schedule	5.0
Cost	5.0
Would Refer	5.0

The Approach

What was the scope of their involvement?

We're implementing a digital data-collection system in the form of a mobile app. We started by undergoing a two-or-three-month discovery process. We met with one of their program developers, who established the functionalities of the solution. It needed to collect data from the field, work offline, take pictures, and so on. We created mockups as we went through the process, based on the functionalities we described.

They designed and developed the Progressive Web App (PWA), along with the backend system where all the data is synced. It is then used to generate all the documents we create. The app is setup to work on Android devices; it works to some extent on iOS, though certain features aren't supported. It will work properly when the operating system expands its PWA compatibility.

What is the team composition?

The majority of the work was done by four of their people. We mainly worked with the project manager and the program developer. When we needed to discuss more complicate functionalities, we also had meetings with the developers themselves.

How did you come to work with Orases?

They developed our customer-facing website a couple of years ago. We initially met them through one of our employees, who had gone to school with someone on their team. When we ran into the current challenge and I asked them about it hoping to get a referral. They told me they could do the work and were happy to take on the project.

How much have you invested with them?

The cost of their work has been just below \$200,000.



What is the status of this engagement?

We started working with them in February or March 2017. The beta version was finished a month ago and the app is currently being launched. We anticipate having an ongoing relationship with them to develop additional functionalities.

The Outcome

What evidence can you share that demonstrates the impact of the engagement?

Everyone at our office is excited by the app and surprised by how fast it operates. It offers a number of additional features, beyond the current processes. The app has a clean interface and it works effectively. We do have some bugs to work through, but the app is doing what we were hoping it would, which is all we could ask for.

How did Orases perform from a project management standpoint?

Their general approach to setting expectations and planning the process was very smooth. I wasn't sure about how to tackle a project of this scale, but they had a lot of experience with similar tasks. It was clear from the beginning that they had the whole scope in mind.

I was initially under the impression that we would start development right after the first meeting, but they recommended we go through a discovery process. In hindsight, it was very effective for outlining and organizing all the features we needed. We were able to determine what we wanted and what would have been too expensive.

They were good at seeing the big picture and making sure we wouldn't exceed our budget. They were also good at scheduling general meetings and keeping us updated. We've met weekly over the past year and, as we got closer to the delivery date, we increased that to almost every day.

Their project manager was extremely accessible—we could get hold of her whenever we needed to. They were transparent in terms of resource allocation, completion dates, and any possible issues. We felt that they were a partner rather than a contractor. We had a good working relationship overall, in terms of communication and determining what needs to be done.



What did you find most impressive about Orases?

One of the best things about them is their passion for what they do—from the program developer to the project manager, and the actual developers. We could tell that they pride themselves on making the workplace more efficient. They were genuinely excited about the different features and functionalities we discussed, and how those were going to help us. This made the whole process enjoyable. We never felt that we were working with a contractor that only focused on the numbers.

Are there any areas they could improve?

When we ran into problems, I sometimes felt that I wasn't getting the full picture. It could take a couple of days of them working internally until I got an update. However, it wasn't ever anything crucial.

