

# Solar Energy Nonprofit Saves \$100K and Receives National Recognition Using Cloud Database Applications



## Industry

Solar Education, Non-Profit

## Company

Solar Oregon is a 501(c)(3) non-profit founded in 1979. With the mission to lead the way to a clean energy future by demonstrating the successful use of solar energy in Oregon, Solar Oregon provides outreach and education on solar technology and its applications, methods for improving energy efficiency, and ideas for building a carbon-neutral future. The organization engages with the public through a variety of solar-related programs to further its initiative.

## Challenge

Solar Oregon was looking for a database solution to improve existing data management methods for events and membership management, plus develop a variety of programs for better outreach effectiveness and efficiency.

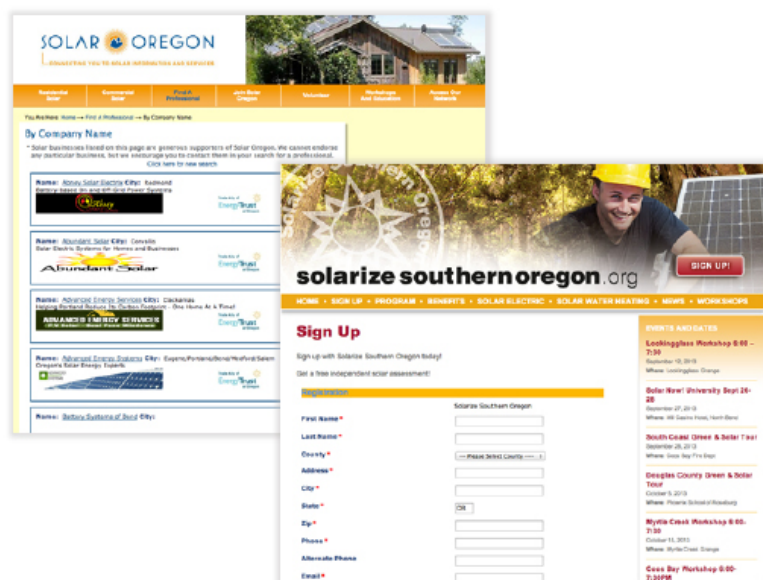
## Solution

After weighing several solutions, Solar Oregon selected Caspio because of the flexibility and the ease of developing custom applications for their website. Solar Oregon quickly launched a registration system and membership portal before developing an extensive “Solarize” program together with the Oregon Department of Energy. Their Solarize programs gained national recognition in the Solarize Guidebook compiled by the U.S. Department of Energy to serve as a best practice reference for other states.

Solar Oregon needed a better way to manage data for their statewide solar adoption programs. With hundreds of workshop and solar tour attendees, finding a solution that would allow them to easily manage contacts and events was essential in helping them build a community of volunteers, members and partners. Using Caspio, Solar Oregon was able to build a complete program in less than two months, saving an estimated \$100,000 in development and management costs. Even more impressive, their “Solarize” program made such an impact that it garnered national recognition from the U.S. Department of Energy.

## Solar Oregon Gets Energized Using Caspio

Solar Oregon is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization funded by its supporters to provide community education to promote the use of solar photovoltaics (PV) as a sustainable energy resource. Since its inception in 1979, the staff used paper-based processes and spreadsheets to maintain membership records and workshops attendance. These outdated processes were prone to errors and delayed the program overall, wasting valuable time for staff members and membership adoption.



Caspio-powered database applications automate the membership and volunteer processes.

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Solar Oregon recognized the need to improve their data management methods. They considered various membership management programs and even experimented with Salesforce. But, these programs were far too confining, according to Evan Manvel, Executive Director of Solar Oregon.

“We were approached to use Salesforce and a few other data capturing programs, but they didn’t have the functionality that our Caspio system did,” says Evan Manvel. “Caspio’s platform provided one solution for Solar Oregon to design and deploy the entire app system,” said Manvel.

Solar Oregon got off to a quick start, developing several integrated web applications using Caspio. Their “RSVP” event registration forms were highly customizable for multiple websites and social media deployment. Solar Oregon also incorporated members’ self-managed profiles in a “Solar Ambassadors” directory and a “Find a Professional” database search – all of which created an ecosystem for solar enthusiasts to connect with other enthusiasts as well as professional solar installers. All of the database applications are powered by the Caspio platform and are integrated throughout Solar Oregon’s website, partnership sites, monthly newsletters, and social media campaigns.

### Partnerships Earn National Recognition

Another popular Solar Oregon program is their “Solarize” grass-roots campaigns which encourage Oregonians interested in purchasing solar to join hundreds of other members for bulk/group discounts by registering across several partner websites. Nearly 20 different Solarize campaigns needed a secure way to share information in order to manage onsite solar assessments and solar PV installations across the state of Oregon. Based on the success of their event management applications, Solar Oregon developed the extensive Solarize partner program entirely using Caspio.



“With all our new projects, we always consider how Caspio fits.”

**Evan Manvel**  
Executive Director, Solar Oregon

In the end, Solar Oregon, Energy Trust of Oregon, the Portland Office of Sustainability, and statewide solar installers successfully managed the installation of more than 400 solar PV systems for nearly 4 megawatts of installed solar (enough to power over 650 homes). Their Solarize programs gained national recognition in the Solarize Guidebook compiled by the U.S. Department of Energy, serving as a best practice example for other states.

### The Cause Continues

Even today, “With all our new projects, we always consider how Caspio fits,” says Manvel. The latest project, in partnership with Oregon Department of Energy, focuses on Renewable Energy Ambassadors from rural areas. Program participants have online use-case profiles demonstrating family-farm sustainable energy production systems; including solar, wind and hydro power systems. The Solar Oregon team designed and deployed the online portal in just a few hours using Caspio.

Caspio applications are an integral part of doing business for Solar Oregon. A visit to their website reveals countless Caspio-powered apps embedded throughout their pages, with similar applications deployed to partner websites. All of the applications work together to provide Oregonians with special events, discounts, and resources to help grow solar usage across the state.

### 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, non-profit organizations, government agencies, and educational institutions.

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