



Tyndale Customer Spotlight

With more than 4,500 employees to outfit, AEP needed a solution that would drive end user satisfaction while controlling costs and keeping management out of the uniform administration business.

Until 2009, American Electric Power (AEP) was in a direct purchase program with limited inventory, size range, product selection, availability of women's products, and little to no customer service. The program was almost entirely online, using a site that offered only basic self-serve functions and didn't even display employees' available balances.

ENTER: Tyndale

Tyndale led the transition to a direct purchase managed allowance program for arc-rated and flame resistant (AR/FR) clothing and protective boots, with comprehensive service and individualized delivery to more than 4,500 employees. With Tyndale, employees choose a preferred combination of AEP-approved garments by a variety of leading brands, including Tyndale's own line of AR/FR clothing – which includes a full line of American-made products. Employees enjoy best-in-class online ordering, an extensive selection of available items – including those made by Tyndale and other leading brands, flexible returns and exchanges, and customer service by web and phone, while Management enjoys hard cost savings, spend enforcement, reliable delivery, reporting services, customer support, technical expertise and guidance, product quality tracking, and more. Employees and Management alike now benefit from Tyndale's extensive size range – with stock sizes ranging from Small to 5XL and Long/Tall sizes, substantial on-hand inventory, and the industry's widest offering of products made specifically for women.

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Brent Stegner, Manager of Work Procedures and Human Performance, now oversees the program. Stegner believes that choice is an important part of the program's success. With Tyndale, employees have the freedom to make their own selections, from items vetted by Tyndale and pre-approved by AEP for compliance with the company's protective, budgeting, and image needs.

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With clothing, and the same with boots, each individual has different preferences in the way it fits. So allowing them to be able to get a garment that fits and provides the wear and durability along with the protection is of the utmost importance.
-Brent Stegner
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Today, AEP's catalog includes Tyndale's own line of garments for men and women – including the new Versa Collection, and Tyndale's line of garments with durable Perimeter Insect Guard® – as well as the best delivery in the industry on other top brands like Carhartt, and a selection of protective footwear. In fact, Tyndale maintains significant on-hand inventory, based on historic and projected demand, to minimize lead times. The program, product mix, and other services are even customized to the needs of various subgroups; “Tyndale offering the flexibility to allow us to fund operating company by operating company and maintain the employee account balances for us is a huge plus,” he said. Tyndale deals directly with



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employees for ordering, questions and issues, and returns and exchanges, maintaining detailed records for all transactions at the individual employee level. This ensures budgetary compliance and enables Tyndale to provide reporting services.

The popularity of Tyndale's AR/FR brand of apparel was an unexpected bonus for AEP. Even with a large choice program, employees in the field appear to prefer the Tyndale brand, which accounts for 60% of all items purchased so far this year.

Tyndale's hassle-free return policy further supports employees in achieving the proper fit. “The process that Tyndale uses for exchange when something doesn't fit properly — sometimes I also think we don't like to admit that over the years our clothing size has changed — allows someone to try something on before they buy it.” The return and exchange process “works out very well,” Stegner said.

“The integration of the safety shoe administration to Tyndale with the FR clothing has been a big plus,” Stegner added. “It gives the employees more flexibility to use their FR and safety shoe money as opposed to having a [separate] safety shoe account and an FR clothing account...If they need more expensive garments such as outerwear they may not need a new pair of boots in the same year so they can focus their moneys on the need they have for that particular year.” Additionally, employees have the flexibility to buy work boots from a local supplier, submitting proof of purchase — with manager approval — for reimbursement out of the employee allowance. To optimize this service, Tyndale recently developed and implemented online boot reimbursement processing for AEP.

Stegner also indicated that Tyndale's customer service and support go a long way to ensuring satisfaction, while freeing him to focus on his core responsibilities. In fact, with Tyndale, AEP receives personalized, accountable service from Senior Account Executive Kevin McLaughlin, Account Manager Christina McGrath, and Account Specialist Lisa Slotter, and Tyndale's US-based end-user customer service call center, as well as a designated representative in Accounts Receivable.

As AEP's program liaison, Stegner is often the point person for any issues that may arise. “If I pick up the phone or drop [Account Specialist] Lisa Slotter an email I know the concerns are going to be addressed and looked into. Lisa is very quick to research [an issue] and sometimes there's a reason why the employee didn't understand the account and it is actually correct, but there are other times when the employee just didn't understand the process. Having a person like Lisa to interface with is very valuable from my standpoint,” he said. At the end user level, workers contact Tyndale directly — by phone or web chat — for all inquiries, minimizing AEP's investment in administrative oversight.

Sometimes, employees ask Stegner about adding a new item to AEP's custom catalog, and



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“I'll reach out to Lisa with the request,” he said. Lisa then partners with Tyndale's Supply and Marketing teams to explore product availability, gathering product information and pricing. “Sometimes Lisa will say that's a good item and we'll add it or other times there may be an issue Tyndale is dealing with — problem with the vendor, quality of the material, lead time — so having her insight and advice and troubleshooting with the accounts is very beneficial.”

With Tyndale, AEP is able to consolidate purchasing power and achieve an everyday fair contract price. And, Tyndale always does everything possible to minimize increases, often holding prices firm through the contract term. AEP has seen this firsthand. “We make sure we're getting the best price for the employee on an ongoing basis,” Stegner said, also pointing out that retail stores do not include the services Tyndale provides — spend enforcement, logo services, reporting, flexible billing options, hassle-free returns and exchanges, and more.

What's more, Tyndale's solution delivers peace of mind. All products are thoroughly vetted for availability, quality, and compliance with industry standards before they are offered by Tyndale for sale, and all products sold — whether manufactured by Tyndale or another supplier — are backed by a two-fold guarantee.

Critically, Tyndale's programs also feature a complete product quality audit trail at the individual employee level. In the unlikely event of a product quality issue, Tyndale can identify the individual employees who received an impacted garment or even — if made by Tyndale — an impacted fabric lot.

Stegner points out the value of this service, particularly when compared to buying AR/FR clothing at retail or from other rudimentary program providers. “It's the record keeping part — heaven forbid we have someone injured, we can't go back to these individual [retail] stores and say we want the testing on this pair of pants or shirt or whatever the employee was wearing. That's something very important and it kind of gets forgotten about [in employees' minds] because we try very hard to never need it,” Stegner said. “I hope we never need to call on you for that but it's something we know is available if we do.”

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A SOLUTION THAT MAXIMIZES SAVINGS, SERVICE, AND END USER SATISFACTION? READY TO IMPLEMENT A HANDS-OFF MANAGED PROGRAM FOR ARC-RATED AND FLAME RESISTANT CLOTHING?

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Tyndale can help! Contact us to start creating your custom program.

 www.TyndaleUSA.com  800-356-3433