IMPROVED CUSTOMER SATISFACTION THROUGH IT TRANSFORMATION

Wipro leveraged a structured approach to deliver transformational benefits to the client

CLIENT BACKGROUND

Northern Gas Networks is a gas utility in the North of England serving 2.6 million residential and business customers across West, East, and North Yorkshire, the North East, and north Cumbria. It has a pipeline network spanning close to 37,000 km. The company has offices in Leeds and Sunderland and is backed by a consortium of British and international investors.

Northern Gas Networks previously operated a strategic asset management model whereby the roles of asset management and associated services were unbundled from the core business into an experienced service provider United Utilities through their dedicated contract subsidiary, United Utilities Operations Limited (UUOL). The business exploited the benefits of this operational model until October 2011 when a decision was made to develop a fully integrated operating model and bring the services provided by UUOL back in-house.

“Wipro is a strategic partner, which delivers superior cost structure and improved efficiencies to our complex IT environment. Throughout this project, the technical expertise and commitment exhibited by the Wipro team enabled the successful delivery of the new devices, with their new support, applications and the mobile infrastructure, to over 500 business users to very challenging timescales. The project had a positive business impact by greatly improving our customer satisfaction.”

Matthew Little
Northern Gas Networks

OPPORTUNITY

As a part of the Transitional Services Agreement (TSA) between Northern Gas Networks and UUOL’s IT service providers, it was agreed to cut over the services from Vertex (UUOL vendor) data centres to Wipro data centres by the end of Sept 2011.

The project involved refreshing the ruggedized laptops used by field engineers; set up of mobile infrastructure for communication; management and hosting of applications in Wipro hosted data centers; bringing in resilience to the mobile APN network; upgrading from GPRS to 3G network; implementing a comprehensive asset management solution and implementing a security solution to prevent thefts.

Wipro Technologies has worked with Northern Gas Networks for more than four years, setting up System Control Infrastructure & Gas Distribution Network Systems (GDNS) in addition to providing corporate IT support to the company. Wipro’s deep knowledge and understanding of the company and its IT architecture made it well suited to take on the demanding project.
Wipro Technologies provided consulting, design, and implementation of the project.

- Wipro collaborated with Panasonic to provide Northern Gas Networks’ field engineers with Panasonic Toughbooks.
- Wipro implemented a Real time Asset Management Solution and a well defined support process for replacement of laptops.
- Wipro designed and set up a private VPN network for Northern Gas Networks, implementing a resilient mobile data management solution that enabled the Toughbooks to connect from the field to new Apollo backend systems with secure anti-virus protection, all managed remotely over a 3G network (upgraded from 2G), using Sybase Afaria remote management software.
- Wipro implemented Computrace security solution on the hard drives and BIOS to track the movement of the laptops to prevent theft & a remote wipe capability to destroy the device in the event of a theft.
- The new set up was designed to work with the existing Oracle/AT&T data center created by Wipro.
- Wipro coordinated with and managed multiple vendors and service providers and ensured that the project got completed ahead of schedule.

BUSINESS IMPACT

The project presented several big challenges, not least the need to:

- Have a robust asset management system in place to integrate with the existing system and help enhance customer service from the field
- Avoid costly penalties caused by delays in implementing the project.

Wipro succeeded on both counts. Wipro established partnerships with Panasonic and other vendors that enabled the project to deliver a reliable, effective system and components that integrated with the utility’s existing system. As a result, Northern Gas Networks can manage its assets more effectively in line with its stated company vision to be ranked in the top two comparable utilities for Safety, Customer Service and Efficiency.

About Wipro

Wipro Technologies, the global IT business of Wipro Limited (NYSE: WIT) is a leading Information Technology, Consulting and Outsourcing company, that delivers solutions to enable its clients do business better. Wipro Technologies delivers winning business outcomes through its deep industry experience and a 360 degree view of “Business through Technology” – helping clients create successful and adaptive businesses. A company recognised globally for its comprehensive portfolio of services, a practitioner’s approach to delivering innovation and an organization wide commitment to sustainability. Wipro Technologies has 130,000 employees and clients across 54 countries.

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