

AFFINITY SUITE
marketflow
Market Interaction Management



RWE npower

Creating a single point of control for automated dataflow management

Key points

- Provides a single point of control for dataflow management
- Eliminates delays and improves customer service
- Increases process automation and improves data quality
- Reduces software licensing and maintenance costs

Summary

RWE npower worked with AMT-SYBEX and SAP to design, develop and deploy a new dataflow management platform based on AMT-SYBEX Affinity Marketflow[®] software.

The solution enables RWE npower to automate processes that depend on complex interactions between different companies in the UK energy market.

By replacing a large number of legacy systems with a single point of control, RWE npower has been able to significantly improve data quality and customer service, while substantially reducing software licensing and maintenance costs.

Overview

The Challenge

RWE npower embarked on a programme called Atlas, which aimed to implement SAP in order to deliver 'best in class' customer experience and reduce service and IT change costs. Within the overall solution, one key area was the management and control of information exchanges with other companies in the UK energy market – for example, during the 'change of supplier' process when RWE npower gains customers from other suppliers.

The Solution

AMT-SYBEX worked with SAP Custom Development to design and deploy a solution based on Affinity Marketflow, its industry-leading solution for dataflow management.

The Benefits

- Automates key industry data exchange processes from end to end.
- Delivers increased 'up-front' data validation, reducing the costs and errors caused by poor data quality.
- Provides automated escalation to ensure that industry dataflows are received in a timely manner, reducing the number of customer complaints from overdue processes.
- Acts as a highly configurable central point of control for dataflow management, enabling RWE npower to respond to industry changes in a more agile manner.
- Replaces a number of legacy dataflow management systems with a single solution, significantly reducing software licensing and maintenance costs.

Complex landscape

RWE npower is a leading integrated UK energy company, and is part of the RWE Group, one of Europe's leading electricity and gas companies, serving around 6.5 million customer accounts.

Following a period of growth, both organically and through acquisition, RWE npower found itself managing a complex network of legacy IT platforms. It had more than 28 different billing systems and multiple ways of managing customers and industry processes in various parts of the business.

"By rationalising our system landscape and standardising on a smaller number of systems, we knew we would be able to deliver significant cost savings," comments John Griffith, Atlas programme director at RWE npower. "We embarked on a major programme called Atlas, based on SAP IS-U and CRM, which aimed to deliver 'best in class' customer experience and reduce service and IT change costs."

6.5
million

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“AMT-SYBEX [is] one of the leading experts in dataflow management in the UK energy industry.”

*John Griffith, Atlas Programme
Director at RWE npower*

Harnessing the expertise of AMT-SYBEX

To maximise the value of this investment, RWE npower also needed to find an efficient way to exchange data between its new SAP applications and other energy companies' systems, using the specific processes and dataflows that have been defined for the UK energy industry.

“We knew that AMT-SYBEX was one of the leading experts in dataflow management in the UK energy industry,” says John Griffith. “The question was whether its Affinity Marketflow solution could be implemented to work effectively with our new SAP landscape.”

Building a new solution

Following a detailed, requirements-gathering exercise and technical design phase, a team from AMT-SYBEX worked with SAP Custom Development on developing the Industry Data Exchange solution, or IDEX for npower, which integrates Affinity Marketflow with SAP IS-U.

Once both parties were satisfied that the solution was ready for deployment, they began a six-month period of on-site testing and implementation within the wider Atlas programme. This also involved a close working relationship with team members from RWE npower, RWE IT in Germany and IBM which was providing systems integration services for RWE npower.

“The collaboration between AMT-SYBEX, SAP, IBM and our own in-house team was excellent,” states John. “The testing phase and the implementation went very smoothly, and the IDEX work stream was delivered on schedule.”

Simplifying and automating data exchange

The AMT-SYBEX solution processes over 800 different types of dataflow and manages more than 30 key processes that involve data exchange between RWE npower and other companies in the UK energy market.

These processes range from relatively simple transactions, such as receiving meter reading information from a data collector, to highly complex multi-stage processes, for example transferring a customer from one supplier to another.

“When a customer wants to move from one energy supplier to another, there's a short time window in which the two suppliers need to transfer all the relevant data,” explains Andrew Hodgson, Solution Architect at AMT-SYBEX. “For a dual fuel customer this could involve up to 20-30 separate messages which all need to be completed within the deadline. If something is missing, the whole process can stall, leading to manual intervention and a poor overall experience for the customer – so it is important to monitor all the activity and chase up the outstanding data.”

John adds: “With Affinity Marketflow, the whole process is automated from end to end, so there's no need to input any data manually. The solution even automatically generates chase-up emails when data is missing or late, and can escalate any problems to the appropriate

people if necessary. This saves an enormous amount of time for our employees, as well as accelerating the whole ‘change of supplier’ process and improving customer service.”

Reducing licensing, maintenance and development costs

With a single solution for industry dataflow management, RWE npower has been able to retire its legacy systems, which should significantly reduce on-going software licensing and maintenance costs.

“Affinity Marketflow is much more flexible than our old systems, and having a single point of control for dataflow management is a real advantage,” says John Griffith. “As the industry standards for data exchange continue to evolve and new industry processes continue to be developed, it will be much easier to update our system accordingly – using configuration rather than development. This should considerably reduce total cost of ownership.”

He concludes: “Dataflow management is a key challenge for the UK energy market, and our project shows that the benefits of adopting Affinity Marketflow can be significant – especially for companies that are using SAP. AMT-SYBEX has helped us deploy a solution that increases efficiency and data quality, while also reducing manual workload and operational costs.”

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