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High performance. Delivered.

Achieving high performance with Accenture Utilities Business Process Outsourcing Services

• Consulting • Technology • Outsourcing

Introduction

Utility companies around the world are looking for ways to respond to industry and market changes, while addressing the evolving needs of their customers.

Accenture Utilities Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) Services delivers cost-effective outsourcing for front- and back-office functions. With an emphasis on end-to-end solutions, Accenture helps utilities address today's immediate needs and position for high performance over the long term.



Manage industry and market challenges

The utilities industry (electricity, gas, water and waste water) is a dynamic sector. Around the globe, new business models and technologies are emerging for power generation, transmission and distribution, retail and customer operations. With this innovation, however, come a number of industry and market challenges. Based on Accenture's decades of experience working with the utilities industry, we see leading companies managing issues such as:

Financial constraints

Economic uncertainties in the global markets combined with volatile commodity prices are putting pressure on margins and profitability. Stakeholders continue to expect a good rate of return, while regulators are scrutinizing operating and capital costs. Further, persistent economic challenges have affected utility customers' ability to pay bills. As a result, utilities are bearing the risk of increased debt and heightened credit and collections activity at a time when smaller margins require more-efficient revenue management.

Rising consumer expectations

Consumers expect more from their utility providers across the board. Meeting consumer needs is challenging for utilities that are not evolving in pace with consumer expectations. For example, utility customers now want:

- New and enhanced multi-channel options.
- Support for new products and services.
- New customized offerings and analytics capability.
- Reliability and safety—all delivered at a fair price.

Environmental and regulatory pressure

The push toward a low-carbon economy and environmental conservation is profoundly affecting not only the way utilities and other providers operate but also the products and services they offer. Many are introducing "green" products and services to attract customers and build loyalty. Brand management, attracting and retaining customers in competitive markets is a huge investment and customer churn can be significant. In regulated markets, many utilities are subject to regulatory or government policies that drive a demand-side management or energy-efficiency agenda.

Lack of scale

Due to the location-specific nature of utilities, utility companies can be challenged to achieve scale. Without scale, utilities have fewer resources to invest in infrastructure and technology deployments, and fewer levers to reduce costs while improving service and customer satisfaction. However, many leading utilities are moving beyond a focus on short-term results and considering new operating models to drive lasting improvements in processes, costs, technology and services.

Drive business value with outsourcing

Accenture provides its clients with an integrated combination of management consulting, technology and outsourcing services. As a truly global organization with delivery centers around the world, Accenture is a recognized leading provider of outsourcing services, ranking No. 1 for four consecutive years (2008–2011) on the International Association of Outsourcing Professionals (IAOP) Global Outsourcing 100 list.¹

Our mature, proven outsourcing capabilities help our clients:

- Achieve scale (up or down) on resources as needed.
- Reduce operating expenses with lower-cost geographies.
- Access new capabilities from a broad range of skilled professionals.
- Leverage world-class processes and industry-leading technology.

Work with an experienced provider

We specifically created Accenture Utilities BPO Services to address the unique needs of the global utilities industry. Accenture Utilities BPO Services has more than 5,000 employees operating today in more than 10 countries across North America, Europe and Asia. Accenture provides business process outsourcing and application outsourcing services to more than 40 regulated utilities and competitive retail energy clients worldwide.²

Benefit for utilities companies

Accenture Utilities BPO Services creates value across the utility organization. For example, our outsourcing services help utilities:

- Deliver consistent and predictable customer service with highly standardized processes.
- Focus on improving key performance indicators, such as cost-to-serve and customer satisfaction.
- Improve operational performance with established operating models and IT/application support.

Accenture Utilities BPO Services annually processes an average of:³

- 8 million customer calls.
- 180 million bills.
- 20 million payments.
- 3 million credit actions.
- 18 million meter reads.

Tap into utility-specific outsourcing services

With 40 years of experience working with electricity, gas and water companies, Accenture has helped clients manage regulatory issues in a variety of political environments, drawing on our globally diverse workforce and innovative technology solutions. Utility companies can select individual or bundled, complementary solutions such as:

Meter-to-cash business process outsourcing

Our meter-to-cash BPO offering provides fully integrated retail and customer operations across the front and back office, such as:

Contact center

Inbound and outbound contacts through multiple channels such as web, voice, interactive voice response, SMS/text messaging, and other technologies.

Billing and payments

Automated and manual exception processing, payments management, invoice generation, and bill print.

Debt collection

Dunning management, inbound and outbound customer contact through voice, written and third-party agencies to secure and collect revenue.

Field service operations

Management of field activities including meter reading, field marketing, sales and services.

¹ International Association of Outsourcing Professionals (IAOP) Global Outsourcing 100 list, The 2011 Global Outsourcing 100, www.iaop.org/content/23/152/2040.

² Annual volumes based on Accenture experience across different engagements and transaction types.

³ Ibid.

An extended portfolio of tailored BPO and technology assets

Accenture Utilities BPO Services has developed or deployed more than 50 tailored BPO and technology assets in the areas of:

- Contact center operations.
- Revenue cycle operations.
- Operations enablement.
- Contact intelligence and value discovery.

These assets range from industry-leading practices to full life-cycle customer care and relationship management applications.

Capacity services BPO

Our capacity services offering provides industry professionals to help with back-office exception processing on a flexible and interim basis, supporting clients' requirements to quickly scale up and down and meet changing staffing demands.

Operations support services BPO

Our operations support services BPO offering provides the support functions that enable successful retail and/or customer operations. These services include:

- Quality and performance management.
- Learning and knowledge management.
- Workforce management.
- Reporting and service performance management.

Customer application outsourcing

Accenture has long-standing experience in implementing and operating customer information and billing systems on behalf of utilities. Our services include break/fix and enhancements, as well as new application development that is part of the ongoing, repeatable process or capability that we have been contracted to manage.

Bundling Accenture Utilities BPO Services offerings with customer application outsourcing delivers additional benefits across the full end-to-end of retail and customer operations. These benefits can help utilities make fundamental changes to their business to improve cash flow, speed growth and reduce costs. Through service integration and alignment of business needs to technology, utilities can:

- Reduce duplicative or redundant management layers, processes and costs.
- Simplify the governance process.
- Reduce operating risk.
- Mitigate delivery risk.

Operational excellence

Operational excellence (OpEx) is a key component of Accenture Utilities BPO Services' ability to reliably deliver quality services. OpEx combines industrialized processes together with Lean and Six Sigma programs to increase the measurability, repeatability and predictability of our day-to-day operations delivery. OpEx is embedded in our Utilities BPO Services delivery culture as front line and management staff are engaged in continuous improvement and customer satisfaction.

Outsourcing for high performance

Our collaborative and partnering approach to delivering services is established on the principles of trust, mutual success, flexibility and value creation. As such, the processes, measurements and accountabilities that are an intrinsic part of an Accenture Utilities BPO Services outsourcing arrangement mean that clients gain more, not less control over their business processes.

Additionally, Accenture Utilities BPO Services provide a customer experience that is consistent with each individual client's brand promise. Our robust delivery infrastructure enables us to expand or scale down our services as market, companies and customer demands change.

Through our offerings, services and utilities-specific capabilities, we help our clients achieve:

- Reduced cost to serve.
- Optimized business processes for improved competitiveness and service delivery.
- Enhanced financial performance.
- Improved customer satisfaction.
- Desired demand-side management outcomes.

Accenture Utilities BPO Services helps utility companies address today's most pressing challenges and position for high performance over the long term.



For more information on Accenture Utilities BPO Services:

Visit: www.accenture.com/utilitiesbpo

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Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company, with approximately 236,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world's most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. The company generated net revenues of US\$25.5 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2011. Its home page is www.accenture.com.