

# AGL Energy Limited

Implementing a sophisticated digital platform for a strengthened online presence



High performance. Delivered.

AGL and Accenture collaborated to deliver a sophisticated digital platform that strengthens AGL's presence in the online world.

## Client profile

Established more than 175 years ago, AGL Energy Limited (AGL) serves more than 3.8 million customers in the competitive Australian energy market. An integrated energy company, AGL operates retail and merchant energy businesses, power generation assets, and an upstream gas portfolio. It is one of the largest gas and electricity retailers in Australia and the country's largest Australia Stock Exchange-listed owner, operator and developer of renewable energy generation.

## Opportunity

Operating in the competitive Australian energy market, AGL views the digital channel as critical to protecting and growing market share, and to reducing the costs associated with serving customers. However, the company faced a number of significant challenges regarding digital delivery. For example, it had a large number of websites hosted on multiple platforms. This arrangement was expensive and difficult to maintain, and changes to content required long lead times and significant IT effort. In addition, key online functions were unavailable during central SAP

system or infrastructure maintenance downtime, which typically occurred 10 or more weekends per year.

At the same time, AGL executives saw that mobile technology was becoming increasingly important to their online users, with 94 percent of Australian energy customers using smartphones to research products or services. These customers had rising expectations for mobile access, based on their experience with banking and telecommunications companies, which typically offer advanced mobile capabilities. AGL wanted to be in position to meet those expectations.

To do so, the company engaged Accenture to help rethink its digital platform, prepare for a mobile world, and take an innovative approach to providing an online customer experience that would help it grow in a competitive market. Accenture was chosen to assist on the engagement due to a long-standing relationship with AGL, as well as Accenture's ability to work with its partners, SAP and Microsoft, to bring innovative market solutions to AGL's customers.

## Solution

AGL and Accenture began the effort by developing a digital channel strategy, a business case, and an architecture design, all of which were presented to AGL's CIO, IT department heads, and marketing and communications teams. Turning that

strategy into action, the two companies worked together to consolidate AGL's numerous websites onto a single platform using Sitecore, a best-in-class multichannel content management and customer-engagement system. This is hosted on Microsoft Azure cloud (in an infrastructure-as-a-service capacity). The implementation also included new middleware based on SAP Netweaver Gateway to support back-end customer relationship management and analytics processes.

The effort was divided into several steps, starting with the migration of static public-web content to the new platform. This was followed by the migration and enhancement of transaction capabilities for web-based customer self-service, and ultimately, the implementation of mobile capabilities. In addition to the technology itself, the effort delivered an operating model, governance processes, and change management, and established a support capability to enable AGL to drive ongoing enhancements to the platform.

The platform was built by a team working in Melbourne, Australia, and at the Accenture India Delivery Center in Pune, India. The team included personnel from AGL, Accenture and Avanade, the Accenture affiliate that focuses on Microsoft solutions. As they worked, these professionals drew on several key tools—including the Accenture Agile Delivery Methodology, Accenture Interactive, and Accenture Energy Consumer Services'

digital transformation capabilities—to help ensure a cost-effective and smooth implementation.

This initiative resulted in AGL having a single integrated digital platform, along with effective supporting processes. This platform enables an optimal customer experience across a range of devices while providing AGL with improved content management and analytics capabilities.

## Results

With the new platform in place, AGL quickly achieved its target goals, and began seeing a number of benefits. For example, the analytics-driven ability to provide personalized content and the reduction in service disruptions from downtime has resulted in a better customer experience. So too have the new mobile-based tools. AGL has seen a 34 percent increase in online visits via mobile devices, and a 22 percent increase in the use of mobile devices to access self-service tools. Among mobile users, the rate at which mobile-based visits result in a sale has increased 29 percent. Overall, the platform's improved usability and the ability to provide targeted offers has helped increase online sales by 25 percent.

AGL has found that the platform is helping to reduce costs by driving increased use of self-service. In addition, the single platform is easier to maintain than the previous multiple systems, and the cloud-based approach allows "pay as you go" funding—factors that also contribute to keeping costs down.

Looking ahead, the new platform is positioning AGL for continued improvements. Over time, the increased flexibility and greater speed-to-market of cloud solutions and the ability to use analytics to provide deeper insights into customer behavior will help the company sustain high levels of performance in its online business.

"Enabled through our collaboration with Accenture and Avanade, we have achieved a lot with the build out of our digital platform," said Owen Coppage, Former Chief Information Officer, AGL Energy. "It is definitely a sophisticated, futuristic digital platform that we can use for many things."

## About Accenture

Accenture is a leading global professional services company, providing a broad range of services and solutions in strategy, consulting, digital, technology and operations. Combining unmatched experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries and all business functions—underpinned by the world's largest delivery network—Accenture works at the intersection of business and technology to help clients improve their performance and create sustainable value for their stakeholders. With approximately 373,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, Accenture drives innovation to improve the way the world works and lives. Visit us at [www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com).