



Accenture Communications
Solutions Case Study



NRJ Mobile

High performance. Delivered.

Helping NRJ achieve High Performance by building a sales and marketing information system in record time.

Recent experience has shown that new entrants can successfully penetrate the communications industry without physically owning a network. In 2005, NRJ Mobile decided to design, develop and launch a suite of innovative communication services targeted at its core customers. The company required that its operations be up and running within a few months. Aided by Accenture and other partners, NRJ Mobile got the job done, rolling out a high-performance sales & marketing information system in record time.

Company overview

NRJ Mobile (www.nrjmobile.fr) is 90%-owned by NRJ Group, one of France's leading radio networks, and 10% by the Cr dit Mutuel-CIC banking group. The Mobile Virtual Network Operator rolled out its service in November 2005, using the network infrastructure of mobile operator SFR. After just two months the brand had already signed up 60,000 customers. NRJ Mobile is targeting over a million customers within three years thanks to innovative services like free customized numbers, no time limits on call credit reloads for prepaid cards, one free SMS text message for all calls lasting a minute or more, and doubling of reload amounts for six months.

Business challenge

With more than 45 million mobile phone owners*, or 75% of the population, the French market has reached maturity, and if new entrants want to grab a share, they need to demonstrate considerable imagination.

In February 2005, NRJ Mobile entered the fray, setting November as the launch date for a new consumer prepaid calling card offer. As a start-up with only a few employees, the company decided to call in an outside partner with proven expertise in building information systems. The system had to be capable of managing the complete customer relationship chain, from opening and modifying accounts, to online self-service features and billing. Plus, the system had to manage the interface with distributors. The service is sold via supermarket chain Carrefour, specialist retailers Darty and Avenir T l com, SAF (for distribution via French tobacconists), as well as retail bank branches of Cr dit Mutuel-CIC, a minority shareholder in the company.

How Accenture Helped

NRJ Mobile may have been looking for the fast responsiveness of a start-up, but its demanding quality and reliability standards were worthy of a large incumbent. Starting in May 2005, Accenture assigned a team to work directly with the NRJ Mobile sales and marketing team to contribute their functional and technical expertise. Two projects were then undertaken concurrently, one to define the specifications for the future platform and a second to supervise development by the IT systems contractor.

The contractor's experience was weighted towards banking IT systems, and the NRJ Mobile contract introduced it to the brave new world of MVNOs. As a result, it was essential to guarantee flawless coordination between the needs expressed by the operator's sales and marketing units, and the ability of the systems provider to translate these needs into real-world applications. Plus, of course, deliverables had to be on time and meet exacting quality standards. This is where Accenture's consultants played a mission-critical role. "Our strength was expertise that encompassed these different worlds, from marketing to technical issues. Plus, we knew how to ensure effective communication between teams and maintain a broader view of the project's overall viability," notes Gabriel Sainte-Beuve, Manager of Accenture France.

In addition to getting the functional specifications ready in just five months, Accenture continually tracked development work to make sure it was matched to needs. Accenture experts validated software mockups as they were delivered, making regular trips to Strasbourg to ensure that NRJ Mobile's information and expectations were being efficiently communicated.

One of the first assignments for the Accenture team was to model the catalogue of services, including contractual terms, management of prepaid and bundled offers, and rules of use. The two experts also helped facilitate interconnection of applications developed by the prime contractor with the SFR information

system. On the end customer side, NRJ Mobile wanted to make direct account management by its users as simple and easy as possible. This meant that customers had to be able to use the company's interactive voice response system, its WAP (Wireless Access Protocol) portal or the nrjmobile.fr website to change contact information, add or cancel options, or get detailed information on voice or data (SMS, MMS) consumption. "NRJ Mobile not only wanted to deliver an easy and seamless customer experience thanks to electronic interfaces," noted Arnaud Demesse, "they also needed to minimize calls to their call center, because every customer contact via the center costs the company five euros. This is why it's essential for the company to 'outsource' the largest possible transaction volume to the customers themselves."

Reloading of prepaid cards was also designed to adapt to customer preferences. New passwords are easily activated using a scratch card (purchased at tobacconist/café), by confirming a bank card number stored on Web or WAP portals (or the interactive voice system), or by calling the customer service center. Moreover, customers can set a monthly consumption ceiling and credit their account with a single click.

Another major challenge was specifying how distribution channels would be managed and remunerated. Depending on the kit and options sold—personalized number, ring tones, logos, chat services, etc.—the commission paid to business partners varies. What's more, NRJ Mobile needed to provide a monthly report detailing subscriptions and the corresponding invoice to each of its distribution partners.

Accenture was also responsible for specifications governing management of the supplier procurement process (SIM cards, phones and accessories). This included inventory in/out data, regardless of the order fulfillment channel (Web, distribution networks, etc.). Initially scheduled for four months, the mission assigned to the Accenture consultants has since been extended. The expertise deliv-

ered by the Accenture team enabled NRJ Mobile to meet its deadlines and roll out a reliable, efficient sales and marketing information system. The next stage will see development by the prime contractor of an online administration system to let NRJ Mobile's sales and marketing units update the Web portal with new offers and products.

High Performance delivered

By teaming with Accenture to develop a new wireless delivery center, NRJ has significantly advanced toward high performance. The most dramatic business results is the significantly reduced time to market for NRJ.

"We were selected by this new Mobile Virtual Network Operator (MVNO) because our team has amassed extensive experience with mobile phone companies. We had previously worked for SFR, which provides the wireless network infrastructure for NRJ Mobile," says Arnaud Demesse, Senior Manager with Accenture France's Communications & High Tech department. "So NRJ Mobile knew that we would respond very swiftly, and that we had an intimate grasp of key elements like billing, customer relationship management, and managing multiple distribution channels." "Our strength," concludes Arnaud Demesse, "was an ability to leverage in-depth experience in all of the project's key aspects, from marketing to highly technical areas. This allowed us to steward efficient communications across teams and guarantee the viability of the overall project."

For more information on this case study or on Accenture, please contact the Marketing and Communications department: marketing.france@accenture.com