

The SAP[®] Utility Template Powered insight

Many utility companies today have implemented — or may be considering — SAP systems to help them provide better services for their customers. But faced with rising cost pressures and customer demands, these utilities need better ways to deliver even higher levels of service because their current customer relationship management (CRM) systems may just not be up to the task.

At the same time, many of the same utilities are testing smart meter technology that will greatly improve operational efficiency. However, their current systems may not provide the functionality and flexibility to help utilities realize all of that potential. How can they upgrade their systems to enhance functionality while keeping implementation costs and risks down?

Get smarter, faster

Ask leaders at any large or mid-market investor-owned, cooperative, or municipal utility what their top concerns are and they will likely cite managing costs, enhancing services, improving operations, and using advanced technologies to increase revenues. They also recognize that improvements to contract management, enhanced customer service, and smart meter technology through upgrades or system transformation are all ingredients in meeting those challenges.

Some utility leaders may hesitate because upgrading their systems can involve a lot of complexity and higher costs. But there is an alternative. Deloitte Consulting has revamped the pre-configured Power & Utilities SAP Utility Template, initially introduced in 2004 to help electric, gas, water, or combined utilities achieve faster implementations and results. The upgraded template includes new functionality, industry-specific workflows, and greater speed and efficiency that can help utilities achieve their objectives faster and at a lower cost.

The SAP Utility Template, which can be tailored to each utility's specific needs, provides user-friendly and efficient customer interaction screens in CRM 7.0 and integration with smart grid processes. These processes include meter lifecycle management, automated meter reading, and billing; leveraging advances in meter data management integration to support the journey toward demand side management.



How we can help

For utilities that want to improve their customer relationship and billing systems — or are considering a first-time deployment — the upgraded, pre-configured SAP Utility Template provides the technology, leading practices, and processes to help enhance system value and drive benefits. With these changes, utilities can provide better customer service and jump-start design and deployment for smart meter integration in less time at a lower cost, and with fewer risks. The result? You can be faster to market and improve performance.

Deloitte's broad functional capabilities include significant experience implementing ERP, customer care, and workflow management systems into utilities of all sizes. We provide the in-depth knowledge and understanding to help meet challenges facing you. Plus, our close collaboration with SAP means that we can deliver effective business solutions targeting customer concerns. And when challenges arise that call for other disciplines, we can tap into a range of capabilities such as consulting, financial services, and risk management.

Key components of the upgraded SAP Utility Template include:

- Quicker and more accurate customer identification
- Improved contract management and customer move-in/move-out
- Streamlined and efficient processes to quickly address 80 percent of typical customer inquiries
- Enhanced account administration and payments
- Better payment processing and arrangements
- Customer alerts and agent inbox
- Industry-specific workflows for utilities

Other features and business scenarios include:

- Integrated contract management capabilities (replication checks, bill adjustments, date adjustments)
- Automatic alerts generated based on customer and service location status
- Performance configuration and search functionality enhancement to quickly identify relevant contract accounts, premises, and customers
- Alignment between CRM and contract accounting for key areas, such as enhanced account balance view, payment plan, security deposits, credit history, payment search, adjustments
- Management of mass owner allocation processes for customers
- Follow-up task management to enable timely tracking of pending customer inquiries/services
- Low-income program enrollments and payments
- Ability to mask sensitive customer data based on business role
- Framework to easily integrate with third-party software for bill presentment
- Ability for customer service representative to trigger notifications for service investigations
- Mass create devices (enhanced for advanced metering infrastructure (AMI)-related fields)
- Deployment planning and installation of new smart meters

Bottom-line benefits

- Accelerate development of user interfaces through pre-built customer service screens that can handle 80 percent of typical customer inquiries
- Provide tested CRM 7.0 enhancements
- Reduce implementation costs and risks
- Get to market and adapt to customer needs faster
- Jump start the integration with market leading meter data unification systems for AMI and complex billing

Technical attributes

Created on an ECC 6.0 EHP6 and CRM 7.0 EHP2 platform

How to get more value from the SAP Utility Template

Effective upgrades to a CRM system and the integration of smart meter technology are major initiatives. Here are a few things we've learned that can help:

Spend wisely. Pre-configured solutions like the SAP Utility Template require less investment and are faster to implement. Our solution can be tailored to your specific requirements to drive performance.

Don't reinvent the wheel. It is time-consuming and expensive to build interfaces that link older enterprise systems and applications with other internal and external services. An out-of-the-box solution like the SAP Utility Template offers content that can be leveraged to develop the required interfaces quickly and provide other custom development.

Learn from others. Deloitte's SAP Utility Template has a variety of enhancements and workflows, which were adapted through numerous implementations and support experiences gained from previous utility initiatives.

Get leading practices now. Why take the time to figure out how to be the most effective and efficient in your implementation or upgrade? The SAP Utility Template includes common leading practices to help you get there faster and more effectively, saving you time and money.

For a demonstration of how the SAP Utilities Template can help your business please contact:

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