

BETTER TOOLS ENABLE BETTER SERVICE AT CALIFORNIA UTILITY

SDG&E USES CENTRALIZED CALCULATION ENGINE TO OFFER CUSTOMERS MORE OPTIONS

Consumers expect more value from utilities in the way of lower bills and more flexible options. These requests may seem simple, but they often involve complex changes at utilities. Delivery usually requires the complete reconfiguration or replacement of multifaceted systems to enhance the way utilities process and distribute data. These changes often mean long, multi-year endeavors that require careful planning, coordination, and execution, before utilities or customers see results. Even still, a leading utility embraced the challenge to help customers save by using better data to deliver better options.

San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) evaluated their complex billing capabilities in 2014 and determined that the accuracy, reliability, and speed of the current system was insufficient for to meet customer expectations. SDG&E needed better data, faster and opted for a dynamic new system to improve internal and external processes. The resulting custom Centralized Calculation Engine (CCE) transformed data processing and analysis at SDG&E.

These changes improved operations throughout the organization and lead to new, customer-focused initiatives to drive engagement and satisfaction. The CCE also enables stakeholders to evaluate the potential impact of future change on various customer groups to ensure that proposed adjustments are fair for all.

The More You Know

WHAT IS A CCE?

Tool that uses real-time customer data to determine the potential impact of rate adjustments on various customer populations without changing or otherwise impacting actual customer information.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The CCE combines Oracle's Billing Component, Load Profiling & Settlement, and Quotations Management application, to create a single destination for customer data, meter interval usage data, and rate scenario data. Together, these disparate sources reveal powerful new insights that help improve operations and service.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

With a new CCE, SDG&E provides more value to customers, partners, and other stakeholders. The new, completely automated system reduces processing times and errors while introducing new opportunities to engage customers.

OUTCOMES:

Better, faster: complete automation cut calculation times from several months to within a week—reducing error and associated corrections along the way. More accurate calculations, enable SDG&E to find answers more quickly and have more confidence in their veracity.

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CREATING VALUE:

End customers win with this new system thanks to its ability to quickly analyze data and provide insights that support new programs. One of these new offerings encourages customers to compare their existing rate- selection to other, potentially more cost-effective options, recommended to them based on their unique usage patterns. This tool models potential monthly and annual savings amounts to help customers understand how changes could impact costs in the short and long term.

THE SDG&E DIFFERENCE:

SDG&E takes pride in being a leader in American energy. Their work with regulators, service providers, and industry experts yields groundbreaking advances in service and response for utilities. The implementation of this custom CCE enriches SDG&E's ability to do even more. Using such granular information to drive strategy and engagement creates a model for other utilities around the nation and the world. For instance, SDG&E's use of the CCE ahead of General Rate Case (GRC) filings cuts the time it takes to present and defend new rates to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). In preparation for these filings, SDGE tests the impact of new rates on various customer populations and compares them to existing rates and outcomes. These comparative analytics allows SDG&E to quickly respond to rebuttals or changes requested by the CPUC or other stakeholders. As a result, SDG&E shaves months off the overall process while delivering more accurate results.

1. DETERMINED WHICH COMPONENTS ARE REQUIRED:

- Billing Component (BC)
- Load Profiling and Settlement (LPS)
- Quotations Management (QM)

2. IDENTIFIED WHICH DATA POINTS WILL FEED THE SYSTEM:

- Customer information data
- Meter interval usage data
- Rate scenario data

3. INCORPORATED USER PREFERENCE INTO THE DESIGN:

Red Clay worked with teams across SDG&E's organization to determine which functions would enhance their ability to perform. Their input resulted in the development of a popular feature of the CCE, Rate Scenario Manager (RSM); an individual virtual environment that allows users to modify rates and settings without disturbing the integrity of real data. RSM allows users to modify six dimensions of account populations at will.

- Base Rate
- Interval Data
- Number of Tiers
- TOU Schedule
- Pricing
- Customer Charge Type

With these new capabilities, users can explore how changes in supply, demand, and price impact load within specific periods among certain customers. This information helps SDG&E understand and predict how solar and other factors could impact business.

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How did they do it?

SDG&E commissioned Red Clay, a leading software integrator serving utilities, to implement a custom-configured CCE. Using Oracle products, Red Clay enhanced SDG&E's ability to serve customers. After working collaboratively with various SDG&E stakeholders, Red Clay determined which product features to augment to deliver the functionality required.

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“Creating the right solution and implementing it in a collaborative environment were key components to the success of the project.”

— NATALIA AGRELA, DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

SDG&E's implementation of CCE helped clear the way for new initiatives and rate structures. SDG&E launched a program to allow customers to charge Electric Vehicles cars at multiple locations under a single account. Real-time pricing data from California's Independent System Operator and meter data from multiple third parties charging stations unite via the CCE to calculate single bills for users. This initiative makes driving EVs easier and more convenient for environmentally-conscious Californians and is just one of the ways SDG&E is using the CCE to improve their service to customers.

To learn more about this project or any of Red Clay's work, contact:

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ABOUT SAN DIEGO GAS & ELECTRIC

San Diego Gas & Electric serves a diverse geographical territory that encompasses approximately 4,100 square miles and serves customers in the counties of San Diego and Orange, including approximately 25 cities. SDG&E provides both natural gas and electric services in San Diego County and electric services in Orange County. SDG&E has approximately 1.4 million electric customers and 850,000 natural gas customers throughout the service territory. SDG&E is a subsidiary of Sempra Energy.

ABOUT RED CLAY

Red Clay, a leading consultancy for utilities, delivers seamless integrations of leading software systems. Industry experience, technical expertise and an unyielding commitment to client success combine to deliver turnkey solutions that maximize value. As a Gold Level member of the Oracle Partner Network (OPN), Red Clay Consulting is the preferred choice for software integration and managed services among utilities. Their unparalleled experience, expertise and execution fuels project success. To learn more about Red Clay, visit www.redclay.com.

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