

Case Study

Utilities & Power



ABOUT MATRIX-DATA'S BILLING SOLUTIONS

Matrix-Data's Revenue Assurance solutions are used by leading telecoms and utility companies throughout the UK and Europe.

At the heart of these solutions is our *FastPath* database software, capable of rapidly loading and transforming huge volumes of data into one "virtually joined" and compressed repository.

Once built, complex and onerous queries can be run extremely quickly against *FastPath's* 100% indexed mirror of the original data. Being versatile and scalable, any business seeking greater insight into customer intelligence can apply this technology effectively and choose the level of support and spending appropriate to the business.

Insight: Major UK power utility sheds light on customer revenue leakage.

The de-regulation of the UK energy industry in May 1999 was a result of a government initiative to introduce efficiency through the application of market forces. The new competitive market has given energy suppliers new challenges as customers both within and outside traditional supply boundaries have changed their gas or electricity supplier, often a number of times.

"Around 50 per cent of UK customers have now switched supplier. Rates of switching are still high, with an average of about 150,000 customers changing supplier each week" - Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM) April 2004.

Background

As each energy supplier is able to sell its product anywhere, and can also provide the infrastructure for other power suppliers selling into its territory, the complexities of the customer data systems have been significantly magnified. Additionally, the trend to "brand" energy products for other corporations makes the ability to track and bill customers energy use extremely complex.

The utility company we worked with provides gas and electricity to more than 2.5 million homes and 5 million customers. Using Matrix-Data's Revenue Assurance Solution, the utility was able to consolidate and analyse customer information.

Our solution reviewed information at every stage of the "meter to bill" process and delivered new insight into the billing system's efficiency and accuracy. A total of eight core systems are required to power the Meter to Bill process, ranging from the national distributors' meter point administration system (MPAS) to the company's own billing system records.

Results

By cleaning and loading data from numerous sources into Matrix-Data's *FastPath* data accelerator records were matched for the first time across disparate silos of information. By comparing Meter Point Administration Numbers (MPANs) between these silos, broken or conflicting records were filtered, researched and corrected efficiently.

All this was achieved in a 2-3 week project and with no prior detailed knowledge of the client's data or business rules. Over 250 queries were run on 2.5 million records in each system.

The results of any exceptions found were prioritised according to their severity and cost to the business. Many thousands of meter usage records were found where no billing record existed offering the potential for multi million pound savings. This was the first time the client had been able to see its customers billing landscape as a single, joined up process. It enabled process review and change to maximise billing revenues and minimise data errors between enterprise systems.