

Large Natural Gas Utility Uses LegaSuite to Leverage Mainframe for Online Self-Service



This utility is the largest gas supplier in the southwest United States, providing natural gas to more than 1.8 million customers.

Challenge

This utility serves three states, including two of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas in the U.S.

One of the most significant challenges faced by the utility is dealing with growth in the company's service territory. Over the past 10 years they've added almost 600,000 customers within the several states they serve. The increase in their customer base began to impact their ability to meet regulated service level agreements. They realized they needed a fast way to improve customer service levels without impacting call center costs.

Since online self service continues to be the most popular method for utilities to drive down costs and improve customer satisfaction, they decided to leverage their core mainframe customer information system (CIS) with a new customer web self service site.

Solution

The utility chose to reuse their mainframe system with a new web application rather than go through a rip-and-replace process. Using LegaSuite to automate SOA integration between their mainframe and a new Java front-end application, the utility implemented a new customer self service portal integrating with their mainframe CIS in a just a few months.

"Being able to reuse our mainframe applications and data with our self service portal has made a real business impact," said the application development manager. "It's very impressive how rapid we were able to make this a reality with LegaSuite."

Their new site lets customers do everything expected in a self service site:

- Start, stop and move services
- View and pay bills and view payment history
- Update account information—change email address and password and add new account
- Sign up for automatic payment, paperless billing and payment assistance plans

Users interact with an easy-to-use website, while in the background LegaSuite handles the interaction and changes to key customer information on the mainframe CIS.

LegaSuite lets the utility make their mainframe a key part of new business initiatives. The new website is on track to reduce call center volume and meet or exceed customer service levels. And as more customers migrate to the new site, the benefits to the business should only increase.

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Key benefits:

- Integrate mainframe customer information system with web self service site
- Reduce costs, meet service level agreements and comply with regulatory requirements
- Fast time-to-market
- Cost savings by leveraging existing applications

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—Application Development Manager

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