



Facing unprecedented change, energy company aligns IT strategy with ambitions

National Grid is one of the world's largest investor-owned utilities, focused on electricity operations and gas transmission and distribution. The company connects millions of people to the energy they use, bringing heat, light, and power to customers' homes and businesses—safely, reliably, and efficiently.

The needs of its customers, shareholders and communities are at the heart of National Grid's business operations. With a vision that looks continually at the future, the company wants to deliver value every day and play an active role in helping to shape the energy landscape. However, with the energy sector undergoing an unprecedented rate of change, it was essential that National Grid's IT strategy aligned with its ambition to develop and transform.

David Westwood, ServiceNow Platform Manager at National Grid, explains: "Evolving business models, the economic landscape, developments in technology, and changes in consumer behaviour mean our organisation is constantly evolving. Our IT and digital teams needed to react to these changes faster than has ever been needed in the past to support the business vision."

To keep pace, National Grid needed to review its approach to managing the huge volume of processes across multiple departments to make work simpler, while at the same time driving measurable business value.

nationalgrid

Customer

National Grid

Highlights

One of the world's largest investor-owned utilities saves £1.2 million on its road to digital transformation.

Headquarters

London, UK

Geographies

UK and US

Employees

25,000

Industry

Energy



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– David Westwood, ServiceNow Platform Manager, National Grid

Automate and simplify

National Grid was already using ServiceNow to manage IT service delivery, but Westwood knew there was a big opportunity to fully align the use of the Now Platform® to National Grid's vision: "To exceed the expectations of our customers, shareholders, and communities today and make possible the energy systems of tomorrow."

In 2017, with the appointment of a new chief information and digital officer, the need to "automate and simplify" became a driving force. The Now Platform was placed at heart of this approach. The team jumped straight to the newest platform release to take advantage of the very latest technology developments.

"The implementation showed the real pace and agility of our team, upgrading in just six weeks to support 40,000 active users, and we achieved stability straight away," says Joe Ridgway, ServiceNow Platform Architect at National Grid. "We had instant access to additional benefits in service, business, and operations management, and could show value to the wider business instantly."

Optimising performance and growth

From an initial foundation of IT service management for incident, problem, and change management, National Grid has continually developed and built on the Now Platform to create a central control system for all IT and infrastructure-related support and development.

Westwood says: "Given the scale of our business even small improvements can have a huge impact on our overall performance. ServiceNow has enabled us to prioritise efficiency and productivity by bringing automation and best practice processes."

A dedicated National Grid ServiceNow team leads the strategy for the service platform and is tasked with aligning activities with the overall business strategy to optimise operational performance, create opportunities to grow, and equip National Grid for the future.

"ServiceNow has been key to our digital transformation and helped us to save or mitigate £1.2 million in costs in just 12 months, through a combination of cost avoidance, consolidation, and a smooth delivery model," says Westwood. "This will continue as the automation we are implementing will lead to more cost savings with suppliers and give us commercial leverage with other vendors."

A delivery network for the future

Today, National Grid's service delivery technology is fully future-proofed against the effects of a changing energy landscape and set up to meet the evolving needs and expectations of its customers.

"ServiceNow enables us to stay current and keep moving forward, with a roadmap for platform development that removes the need for custom builds," explains Westwood. "ServiceNow keeps us one step ahead so we can upgrade continually and gain instant access to the latest standards and innovations."

The team is taking an agile approach to service development, with regular sprints and releases that add value to the business. Additionally, they are continuously re-assessing how processes can be changed to optimise the end user experience.

Bespoke applications are also in the plan, focusing on specific areas of the business where immediate gains can be made to improve manually-driven processes. This includes control room incident management, where Ridgway is testing a streamlined way to handle incidents that occur on the electricity grid, moving the process off emails and spreadsheets onto the Now Platform.

Challenges

- The need to increase the pace of IT change to keep up with the rapidly evolving energy sector and end-customer demands
- Pressure from the business for IT to demonstrate value and react quickly to a fast-paced, evolving energy market
- Risk-averse stakeholders fearful of bleeding-edge technology

Solution

- IT Service Management
- IT Operations Management
- Business Applications through CreateNow

Results

- £1.2 million in mitigated costs in 12 months, by driving operating efficiency and adopting a continuous delivery model
- IT fully aligned with National Grid's ambition to develop and transform, through its "automate and simplify" strategy
- Full confidence in the IT operation from stakeholders, with innovation and new services driving business value

"Our approach has instilled confidence with our stakeholders. ServiceNow is enabling the team to guarantee reliability while driving innovation and developing new services in a nimble way. It's an exciting time to be an IT professional at National Grid," said Ridgway.

Driving value across the business

The dedicated Now Platform team at National Grid is now looking to extend the platform to IT Business Management (ITBM) business management for financial modelling and management and to gain visibility of the cost of service delivery and better manage demand, resources and budgets.

HR case management is another area for expansion where National Grid is keen to automate employee requests for information and the onboarding and offboarding process, freeing managers from manual tasks.

"With ServiceNow, we have the capability to do significantly more and sprint to keep ahead of market trends," says Ridgway. "The platform offers so much potential to take our IT service management mentality to other business functions to advance organisational processes to make work simpler and drive value for the business."



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