

elimination of data validation issues

ElectraLink's DUoS e-Billing service removes the overhead associated with processing over a million paper invoices per year, eliminating the cost, validation errors and invoice payment delays suffered with the manual process it has replaced. DUoS invoices and remittances are transferred over the highly secure and reliable Data Transfer Network.

ElectraLink continually invests in its network infrastructure to ensure technology currency. Recent significant hardware and software upgrades to the Data Transfer Network (DTN) have further helped establish ElectraLink as critical to delivering Britain's Smartenergy future, with the capabilities to handle the increased e-Billing requirements of Smart metering.

THE BACKGROUND

DNO's are responsible for distributing electricity to all sites within their own region. The DNO's receive a market average of 17% of the electricity cost to the end consumer for distribution charges. The charge is known as DUoS (Distribution Use of Systems).

Approximately 1.25 million paper invoices were being sent annually by distribution businesses to suppliers for DUoS charges. This paper process required:

- Monthly hard copy invoices for half hourly and non-half hourly sites
- Manual upload into reconciliation systems
- Financial penalty for late payment

This manual process resulted in significant levels of data entry errors which in turn resulted in increased levels of manpower costs to investigate, understand and correct. These errors also had a significant impact on cash flows as invoices could not be validated and cleared for payment until the errors had been corrected.

THE CHALLENGE

Electricity suppliers and distribution network operators (DNO's) sought economic, operational and cash flow improvements through sending and receiving Distribution Use of System (DUoS) invoice and remittances electronically.

THE MISSION

To design and deliver a robust solution

that would validate and automate the cumbersome existing paper based DUoS invoicing process.

THE SOLUTION

ElectraLink, working in partnership with the energy companies and HM Revenue and Customs, developed the DUoS e-billing service using the DTN platform. We worked together to develop a shared understanding of the problem, design the new data flows and achieve HMR&C e-billing system sign off. ElectraLink then developed the system, carried out extensive testing and implemented the service for live operation within budget and on time.

The DUoS e-Billing service was built utilising the industry strength Data Transfer Network platform. Customers automatically benefited from its high levels of functionality and service levels, further underlining the robust, flexible and extensible nature of the core network.

RESULT

Since going live in 2002, the service has delivered ongoing value and process improvements between suppliers and DNO's. The service supports all 14 of the DNO's, the 6 major Electricity Supply groups, as well as a number of the independent supply companies.

Real benefits have been delivered to businesses through cost savings, increased security and earlier validation and payment of invoices.

Costs savings have been achieved, invoices and remittances being fed directly into the validation systems of electricity suppliers. This has led to the elimination of data validation issues and the associated cost incurred with manual input. DNOs have benefited through improvements in payment processes and accelerated cash flows. Utilities are under constant pressure to deliver efficiencies into their business and our DUoS service has helped our customers achieve their goals.

ABOUT ELECTRALINK

ElectraLink was created in 1998 as an independent service to provide data transfer capabilities to the electricity industry. We are proud of our reputation in the energy market for providing high quality, secure, cost effective services and solutions to meet the needs of our clients.

We now operate a state-of-the-art data network which facilitates customer switching and other key business processes within the electricity and gas industries. These services are complemented by comprehensive in-house governance and professional services capabilities.

We continuously invest in our capabilities to provide additional value and expertise to our customers and partners.

We are the only people who do what we do. A truly independent organisation owned by the UK's Electricity Distribution Network Operators (DNOs), we have a unique capability to transfer and process energy data as we are connected to and sit at the heart of the entire industry.

ElectraLink is fully accredited with ISO 9001 and ISO 14001.

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