

Media release – FINAL

24 November 2003

Time is money –Transpower’s email reduced by 50%

By implementing effective communication protocols, specialist utility consulting and services firm UtilityAP has helped Transpower slash the number of emails processed by its staff.

In doing so the company has assisted Transpower, New Zealand’s national grid operator, to free up productivity, decrease server traffic and reduce communication costs.

Stephen Fox, IT&T service delivery manager for Transpower, says the software tools and business analysis used to create the savings could be applied to many other facets of business within the utility sector.

“The procedure we adopted not only helps streamline communication, but can be used to improve data validity. It has great potential in high volume areas of the business – for example mass market billing – where greater accuracy can reap huge benefits.”

He says the success of the project was due to the combination of excellent business intelligence delivered by the analysis tools and a comprehensive change management strategy involving policy, process reviews and training.

Transpower owns and operates New Zealand’s national electricity grid, linking generation to the local network businesses that connect customers. With over 400 staff and many external service providers, communication plays a vital role in delivering services to the market.

Transpower was seeking a methodology and business tools that would simplify the handling and analysis of large data volumes.

“Given the big volumes of email and telephone traffic, we wanted to highlight any patterns and anomalies in the flow of information and arrive at an improved understanding of the processes and underlying performance issues.”

Critical to the success of the project was the use of analysis software from Netmap Analytics. Using Netmap, UtilityAP assisted Transpower in reviewing six months worth of data, which involved an estimated 3.5 million emails and over 15,000 help desk requests in a variety of formats.

The study produced a set of results that provided an extremely visual and intuitive platform for identifying and analysing data anomalies and patterns.

“When we applied our business domain expertise to the results we were able to convert them into a meaningful business context that specifically pointed to factors that impacted on our operating efficiency.”

The analysis pointed out high volume areas, but also allowed Transpower to assess its internal and external sender/recipient partnerships and overall communication paths.

Highlighting the areas of weakness with email communication was important. “However, more crucially, what we were able to do with the help of UtilityAP was institute an approach to encourage more effective email usage.”

As a consequence of the new policies regarding appropriate email use, over the last five months total email volumes have dropped from around 1,200,000 a month to under 500,000.

“The real impact of this reduction is in the productivity area. For example, if each email transaction took 30 seconds to process (read or write) the reduction of 700,000 per month translates into compelling productivity gains.”

The study also provided an improved understanding of help desk workflow and has assisted Transpower to improve service delivery performance and turnaround times for support requests.

About Transpower

Transpower is New Zealand’s national grid company. A State-owned enterprise, Transpower New Zealand Ltd is owner and system operator of New Zealand’s high-voltage electricity transmission grid - linking generators to distribution companies and major industrial users.

About UtilityAP

UtilityAP is a software implementation and consulting company specialising in solutions for the utilities sector.

Based in Auckland, UtilityAP combines extensive deregulated industry knowledge with experience of a wide range of software products to deliver practical, product-independent business outcomes to its clients.

UtilityAP specialises in best product, best practice solutions for all key business processes – for example, outage management, trouble call, finance, customer service, work, maintenance and asset management.

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