

Information Builders enables agile information solutions with business intelligence (BI) and integration technologies. Flexible, scalable, and secure, WebFOCUS – the most widely utilized BI platform – permeates every level of the extended enterprise through a simple and intuitive user experience.

Scottish and Southern Energy

Snapshot

Organisation

Scottish and Southern Energy, a full service energy provider with 17,000 employees, 8 million customers and 40% of the UK's renewable electricity generation capacity.

The Challenge

Help customers manage their energy consumption and control costs.

The Strategy

Give all 420,000 business customers timely, accurate, actionable billing and usage data on their electricity and gas consumption.

The Results

Built Business Energy Centre (BEC), a self-service customer portal that provides 'day plus one' billing and usage data dynamically updated every 24 hours.

Information Builders Solution

WebFOCUS Pro Server
WebFOCUS Workload Distribution Facility
WebFOCUS Web Services Enablement Option



Using the unrivalled data access and integration capabilities of the WebFOCUS operational business intelligence suite, SSE combined powerful query and reporting tools into a single, high-performance solution.

WebFOCUS Brings Energy Consumption and Cost Control to 420,000 Scottish and Southern Customers

UK's Second Largest Energy Supplier Drives Growth Through Customer-Centric Service while Cutting Costs

"WebFOCUS boosts competitive advantage by enabling us to give business customers 24/7 access to timely, actionable energy consumption data," Phil Collard, Head of Business and Operational Support, Scottish and Southern Energy.

Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE), one of the largest vertically integrated electricity and gas companies in the UK, is enhancing customer service while cutting support costs using a self-service portal built on WebFOCUS from Information Builders. Known as the Business Energy Centre (BEC), the website gives SSE's 420,000 corporate customers online access to 'day plus one' billing and usage data dynamically updated every 24 hours. Developed by the company's IT team and Information Builders Consulting Services, BEC provides accurate, detailed intelligence that helps organisations identify usage peaks and troughs, spot trends and take prompt action to reduce consumption levels. The solution was built using Information Builders' flexible WebFOCUS Service oriented architecture to access customer billing information from SSE's existing back office

system and publish customer usage reports, as Web Services. These Web Service reports present usage data via an intuitive portal interface and can be exported to multiple output formats such as PDF and Excel. The reports generated are helping companies cut costs and meet environmental sustainability targets through smarter gas and electricity consumption.

23% Customer Take up in 6 Months

Following its launch in March 2008 BEC's self-service functionality and ease of use made it instantly popular with SSE's business customers, more than 23% of whom signed up in the first six months. In a recent survey the portal's most frequent users gave it a score of four out of five for performance, speed of access and quality and relevance of the information provided. The migration of 50,000 customers to BEC has enabled SSE's call centre to support an increasing number of customers without the need for additional resources. Following knowledge transfer from Information Builders' educational services team, the company's four IT staff are largely self-sufficient in system management, support and ongoing development, which minimises cost of ownership. SSE is continuing to extend the portal's functionality and reach and is confident of converting 90% of business customers to self-service within three years. BEC is also an important sales support tool for the utility when bidding for new contracts. Online service support and round-the-clock access to billing data are key to SSE's 10-year plan to grow the value of each customer and expand its client base while continuing to drive down overheads.

Timely, Universal Customer Access

BEC replaced a legacy online tool that offered limited energy consumption data to SSE's largest electricity customers with half-hourly supply agreements. Smaller monthly and quarterly billed customers requiring updates on their consumption needed to contact their nominated account manager or the company's call centre. Data was extracted manually from SSE's billing system to create a report containing data up to a week old that was then mailed to the customer.

"SSE recognises that controlling energy costs is crucial to operating efficiently and maximising performance and profitability for today's businesses," said Phil Collard, head of business and operational support, Scottish and Southern Energy. "We have always been committed to helping our customers avoid unnecessary cost by optimising their energy use. Allowing customers to self-service their information requirements via a business-to-business website would put control in their hands."

High Performance, Low Cost Solution

SSE evaluated the time and cost implications of developing the infrastructure for BEC in-house but rejected this in favour of commercial off-the-shelf software that would reduce risk, cost and development time and be more flexible than a customised solution. "Our technical architects considered the reporting tools available," said Mark Russell, project manager, Scottish and Southern Energy. "WebFOCUS was the best solution for combining information from multiple databases and heterogeneous enterprise systems and publish customer reports as reusable Web services via our existing MS. NET portal."

Using the unrivalled data access and integration capabilities of the WebFOCUS operational business intelligence suite, SSE combined powerful query and reporting tools into a single, high-performance solution. Information Builders Consulting Services provided implementation support, helped build advanced reporting functionality and trained the SSE team.

"Information Builders helped us develop real-life reports that would actually be used by customers. Their consultants and educational services team worked closely with us and provided invaluable support at all stages of the project and beyond."

**- Roger Skinner
Services Team Leader
Scottish and Southern Energy**

"Information Builders helped us develop real-life reports that would actually be used by customers," said Roger Skinner, services team leader, Scottish and Southern Energy. "Their consultants and educational services team worked closely with us and provided invaluable support at all stages of the project and beyond."

End-to-End Intelligence in Seconds

BEC has extended free-of-charge self-service access to electricity and gas customers of all sizes and provides not just raw usage data but a detailed breakdown of hourly consumption at each client site for the previous four years. Registered customers gain access to BEC via www.ssebusiness.co.uk and log on in just a few seconds. After viewing their energy profile and the portfolio of standard reports available, users can convert consumption data into graphs, spreadsheets, pivot tables, pdfs, XML and other reporting formats for manipulation and analysis. Information can also be exported to all commonly used business intelligence and enterprise performance management tools. The portal also gives customers updated market news and provides links to regulator and energy services websites.

BEC was promoted by SSE's account managers during regular service review meetings with customers. "Customers were quick to see the benefits of the business centre which took off without any major sales effort on our part and grew by reputation," said Phil Collard. "In smaller businesses owners and directors access the site. In larger organisations finance and utilities managers are frequent users, as are business cost consultants employed by multi-site companies to audit their energy consumption and find ways to take out cost."

Building Competitive Advantage

SSE has also seen benefits to its own business through the improved productivity of account managers and call centre agents who can now focus on resolving complex customer enquiries and on up-selling activities. Access data from BEC is fed into SSE's customer relationship management solution, which helps the company track hit rates and identify the most popular information requests.

BEC also enhances the company's sales proposition when talking to prospective customers. "Online access to billing and usage data is becoming an increasingly common condition in competitive tenders," said Phil Collard. "We are one of the first energy companies to offer this kind of service, which enhances our reputation as an innovative, proactive supplier."

Maximising Growth Opportunities

The flexibility of WebFOCUS means that SSE can build new capabilities into BEC rapidly and cost effectively in line with customer demand. The company is continuing to enhance functionality by allowing customers to perform ad hoc analysis on their usage data and plans to offer tailored reports to its largest customers. BEC also provides SSE with a platform on which it can offer a range of other online solutions, such as e-billing, to its customers.

"BEC helps us meet the challenge of being a cost cutter and an innovator at the same time, while offering uncompromising service quality to our customers," said Roger Skinner.

Find Out More

To find out how our solutions can help your company succeed, talk to an Information Builders representative today.

Contact your local Information Builders office, visit us at

www.informationbuilders.co.uk

or call **0845 658 8484**.

Sales and Consulting Offices

North America

United States

- **Atlanta,*** GA (770) 395-9913
- **Baltimore,** MD Professional Services: (703) 247-5565
- **Boston,*** MA (781) 224-7660
- **Channels,** (800) 969-4636
- **Charlotte,** NC Professional Services: (704) 494-2680
- **Chicago,*** IL (630) 971-6700
- **Cincinnati,*** OH (513) 891-2338
- **Dallas,*** TX (972) 490-1300
- **Denver,*** CO (303) 770-4440
- **Detroit,*** MI (248) 641-8820
- **Federal Systems,*** DC (703) 276-9006
- **Hartford,** CT (860) 249-7229
- **Houston,*** TX (713) 952-4800
- **Los Angeles,*** CA (310) 615-0735
- **Minneapolis,*** MN (651) 602-9100
- **New Jersey,*** Sales: (973) 593-0022
- **New York,*** NY Sales: (212) 736-7928
Professional Services: (212) 736-4433, ext. 4443
- **Orlando,*** FL (407) 804-8000
- **Philadelphia,*** PA Sales: (610) 940-0790
- **Phoenix,** AZ (480) 346-1095
- **Pittsburgh,*** PA Sales: (412) 494-9699
- **St. Louis,*** MO (636) 519-1411
- **San Jose,*** CA (408) 453-7600
- **Seattle,** WA (206) 624-9055
- **Washington,*** DC Sales: (703) 276-9006
Professional Services: (703) 247-5565

Canada

Information Builders (Canada) Inc.

- **Calgary** (403) 538-5415
- **Ottawa** (613) 233-0865
- **Montreal*** (514) 421-1555
- **Toronto*** (416) 364-2760
- **Vancouver** (604) 688-2499

Mexico

Information Builders Mexico

- **Mexico City** 52-55-5062-0660

Australia

Information Builders Pty. Ltd.

- **Melbourne*** 61-3-9631-7900
- **Sydney*** 61-2-8223-0600

Europe

- **Belgium*** Information Builders Belgium
Brussels 32-2-7430240
- **France*** Information Builders France S.A.
Paris 33-14-507-6600
- **Germany** Information Builders (Deutschland)
Eschborn* 49-6196-77576-0
- **Netherlands*** Information Builders
(Netherlands) B.V.
Amsterdam 31-20-4563333
- **Portugal** Information Builders Portugal
Lisbon 351-217-217-400
- **Spain** Information Builders Iberica S.A.
Barcelona 34-93-344-32-70
Bilbao 34-94-452-50-15
Madrid* 34-91-710-22-75
- **Switzerland** Information Builders Switzerland AG
Dietlikon 41-44-839-49-49
- **United Kingdom*** Information Builders (UK) Ltd.
London 44-845-658-8484

Representatives

- **Austria** Raiffeisen Informatik Consulting GmbH
Vienna 43-12-1136-3870
- **Brazil** InfoBuild Brazil Ltda.
São Paulo 55-11-3285-1050
- **China**
InfoBuild China, Inc.
Shanghai 86-21-5080-5432
Rongji Software Technology Co., Ltd.
Beijing 86-10-5873-2031
- **Denmark** InfoBuild AB
Kista, SE 46-735-23-34-97
- **Egypt** Al-Hisn Al-Waqi (AHAW)
Riyadh, SA 996-1-4412664
- **Ethiopia** MKTY IT Services Plc
Addis Ababa 251-11-5501933
- **Finland** InfoBuild Oy
Vantaa 358-207-580-840
- **Greece** Applied Science
Athens 30-210-699-8225
- **Guatemala** IDS de Centroamerica
Guatemala City 502-2412-4212
- **Gulf States** Al-Hisn Al-Waqi (AHAW)
■ Bahrain ■ Kuwait ■ Oman
■ Qatar ■ United Arab Emirates ■ Yemen
Riyadh, SA 996-1-4412664
- **India*** InfoBuild India
Chennai 91-44-42177082
- **Israel** SRL Group Ltd.
Tel Aviv 972-3-7662030
- **Italy** NessPRO Italy S.p.A.
Genoa 39-010-64201-224
Milan 39-02-2515181
Turin 39-011-5513-211
- **Japan** K.K. Ashisuto
Osaka 81-6-6373-7113
Tokyo 81-3-5276-5863
- **Jordan** Al-Hisn Al-Waqi (AHAW)
Riyadh, SA 996-1-4412664
- **Malaysia** Elite Software Technology Sdn Bhd
Kuala Lumpur 60-3-21165682
- **Norway** InfoBuild Norway
Oslo 47-23-10-02-80
- **Philippines** Beacon Frontline Solutions, Inc.
Makati City 63-2-750-1972
- **Poland/Central and Eastern Europe** InfoBuild SPJ.
Warsaw 48-22-657-00-14
- **Russian Federation** FOBOS Plus Co., Ltd.
Moscow 7-495-124-0810
- **Saudi Arabia** Al-Hisn Al-Waqi (AHAW)
Riyadh 996-1-4412664
- **Singapore**
Automatic Identification Technology Ltd.
Singapore 65-6286-2922
- **South Africa**
InfoBuild South Africa (Pty.) Ltd.
Gauteng 27-83-4600800
Fujitsu Services (Pty.) Ltd.
Johannesburg 27-11-2335911
- **South Korea**
Unitech Infocom Co. Ltd.
Seoul 82-2-2026-3100
UVANSYS
Seoul 82-2-832-0705
- **Sweden** InfoBuild AB
Kista 46-735-23-34-97
- **Taiwan** Galaxy Software Services
Taipei 886-2-2586-7890
- **Thailand** Datapro Computer Systems Co. Ltd.
Bangkok 662-679-1927, ext. 200
- **Venezuela** InfoServices Consulting
Caracas 58-212-763-1653

Toll-Free Number

- **Sales, ISV, VAR, and SI Partner Information**
(800) 969-4636

*Training facilities are located at these branches.