

CIS OR 'GENERIC' CRM? NEITHER. CHOOSE INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC FOR UTILITY



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“Best-of-breed” versus “single suite” technology solutions? The debate has raged over decades and through several computing eras, from client-server to enterprise to the modern era of mobile and cloud. Utilities today face similar technology choices as they work to rapidly drive digital transformation efforts that are critical to their future competitiveness.

The problem is, many utilities face a false choice. Transform your CIS system or implement a generic cloud CRM solution? The fact is, neither CIS nor generic CRM offers the speed, flexibility and agility that you will need to deliver a modern, customer-centric experience across every channel. Thankfully there is a third option and it's called industry-specific.

For most utility customers, data is locked in legacy CIS/Billing systems. These systems represent serious investment in a utility's most valuable asset; customer data. But legacy systems carry baggage: maintenance as systems age, lagging or spotty vendor support, unmanageably complex software, etc. Many utilities go the route of customizing their legacy CIS/Billing system – despite the massive retooling, risk and cost these projects entail.

Other utilities opt for generic cloud CRM solutions. But these, too, are still quite costly to implement and to integrate to CIS, billing, or other systems. What's more, generic CRM is not specific to the utility industry. It doesn't know anything about a premise, meter, or service agreement, for example.

Industry-specific cloud solutions present a third, far more compelling way forward for utilities in the midst of digital transformation efforts when compared to legacy or generic CRM:

Drastically Reduce Development Cycle Times

Through the use of utility-specific data models, pre-built utility business processes, and “drag-and-drop” development environments that allow configuration over coding. We've seen real-world reductions of 30% in development cycles and a whopping 88% reduction in deployment times.

Reduced Development Costs

Companies have slashed development and implementation costs in half by utilizing industry-specific enhancements, rapid integration technologies and omnichannel reusable components.



**Kelly James, VP & General Manager,
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Kelly James is Vice President and General Manager for Vlocity Energy & Utilities. Vlocity turns Salesforce into the Utility Customer Cloud. Kelly has spent nearly 20 years building and delivering CIS, billing, and customer experience solutions to utilities worldwide, previously with companies including Oracle, Opower, and Salesforce. In her role with Vlocity, Kelly is responsible for industry strategy and for delivering solutions that delight customers and employees, and that positively impact both the utility top-line and bottom-line.



Reduce Infrastructure Costs

Eliminating on-premise infrastructure (servers, storage, staff, power, real estate) or costly single-tenant hosting fees can lower costs by 25%.

Lower Upgrade Costs

With automatic, native new enhancements and rapid release cycles companies can obviate the need for custom development. We've seen real-world savings in the seven figures.

Improve System Response Time and Efficiency

We've seen real-world reductions of 50% in application processing times and 80% improvements in CRM system speed when companies enable pre-built, configurable UI toolsets that present contextual content from disparate data sources in every channel.

Bottom line, don't succumb to a false choice. Industry-specific CRMs lower risk and save time and money. They deliver best-of-breed utility customer applications today and can flex and scale for tomorrow to allow for continual growth, agility and differentiation.