START CREATING A SMARTER UTILITY NOW

ESRI'S UTILITY NETWORK WILL CHANGE THE WAY UTILITIES MANAGE ENERGY. MATT CROOKS EXPLAINS HOW YOU CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ITS NEW CAPABILITIES WHILE ENSURING THE TRANSITION IS AS SMOOTH AS POSSIBLE

We are in the age of digital energy. New technologies are enabling the broader distribution and connection of it, driven by the efforts around decarbonisation, decentralisation and digitisation. As consumers, we're redefining the way we consume energy.

As utilities, we are redefining the way we manage data, power and the grid. New business models are being considered, more accurate, real-time intelligence is being sought, and collaboration across your organisation has never been more important.

In an industry accustomed to small-scale or incremental changes, these fundamental shifts in business approach and practice can seem overwhelming. And yet, without the ability to increase visibility, collaboration and flexibility throughout your organisation, you risk being left behind.

Preparing for the Utility Network

One of the biggest changes on the horizon is Esri's Utility Network, which will enable you to improve your business in different ways with a more modern GIS architecture. But how do you prepare for such a change? GIS data touches nearly every aspect of your organisation, from outage management to customer engagement to engineering analysis and more. From a technology and business process standpoint, how do you ensure a transition that minimises disruption while still moving you ahead?

Ensure quality data

Improving the integrity, timeliness and fidelity of data is key when preparing for the move to new technology architecture. You probably have custom autoupdaters in place that automate business processes and ensure that GIS data is complete and accurate. Under the Utility Network, a new scripting language will be used to write cross-platform Attribute Rules and replace the framework as it is today.

You will need to determine whether your critical custom autoupdaters will convert to this new scripting language, migrate automatically or need to be rewritten. As the development of the Utility Network progresses, more information will be available on Attribute Rules but, in the meantime, it's important to review existing custom autoupdaters that contain specific business logic and determine if they need to be migrated forward.

Application collaboration

Examine the applications through which your GIS data flows. By improving and updating those solutions, you'll have an immediate impact on how quickly, easily and accurately the data moves throughout your utility. Solutions are available now, such as Schneider Electric's ArcFM Mobile, that allow you to map corrections in the field and seamlessly communicate them to the GIS editor in the front office or easily incorporate a site visit or customer meeting into the design process.

for your GIS-based solutions. Before transforming to the new Utility Network architecture, these integrations and customizations will need to be re-evaluated. To make the most of the future architecture, assess your current customisations and reports to understand whether the same functionality is available on the new architecture or if rewrites will be needed.

Start preparing

The Utility Network is still on the horizon, but you can refresh and reposition your GIS solutions now and gain time and space to test, train and implement. Does your organisation need a new mobile application to more easily get data out to your crews? What about a new design tool that can be used in the field? How about a new HTML5 web experience that can be used on any device?

By examining solutions that help you improve the quality of your data, improve collaboration and streamline processes, your entire organisation will start to connect previously disconnected workflows, deliver better customer service and ultimately operate more efficiently and profitably.

Get smarter now

Redefining our use of energy and the way we manage it requires unprecedented changes on the part of utilities. And yet it's important to move at your own pace toward this new architecture with a phased approach. Start creating a smarter utility that meets the challenges of our new energy reality: assessing your current environment and leveraging advanced GIS solutions that are available today will help you bridge the gaps on your journey toward the new Utility Network

A new desktop experience

An important question to answer is whether your teams are familiar with the new desktop experience of the Utility Network. A new ribbon-based interface will be required for consuming and editing the Utility Network at the first release.

Like moving to from Microsoft Word 97 to Word 2016, some aspects of the experience will be familiar but others will need to be learned for effective operation. The current release of ArcGIS Pro can consume a Feature Service published from data that is based on the Geometric Network – what are your plans to get acquainted with the new desktop experience?

Assess integrations and customisations

You've likely spent time, resources and money on integrations and customisations

START CREATING A SMARTER UTILITY THAT MEETS THE CHALLENGES OF OUR NEW ENERGY REALITY

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