



About Avista

Avista Utilities is involved in the production, transmission, and distribution of energy. The company provides energy services and electricity to 375,000 customers and natural gas to 335,000 customers in a service territory that covers 30,000 square miles in eastern Washington, northern Idaho, and parts of south and eastern Oregon, with a population of 1.6 million. Avista Utilities, an operating division of Avista Corp. (NYSE: AVA), has over 1,600 employees. More information on Avista Utilities is available at www.avistautilities.com.

CASE STUDY

Challenge

Avista Utilities decided to upgrade their twenty-year-old customer information system (CIS) that they use to assist their 680,000 electric and natural gas customers that live within their service territory of more than 30,000 square miles. With the advent of evolving industry technology products and services, the maturing and changing workforce, and usable and less expensive off-the-shelf solutions, Avista determined that their homegrown CIS, work management system, and electric and gas meter application were so tightly integrated that it made sense to replace all three at once. They partnered with IntelliTect, who provided technical leadership, architecture, and integration services.

The tight integration between Avista's systems made the CIS replacement challenging. Updating the systems meant replacing the integration with the existing financial database as well as integrating both systems with a new asset management system. Avista settled on a three-phase project, called Project Compass: (Phase 1) technology decision and selection, (Phase 2) system integration, and (Phase 3) quality control and stabilization. Given the magnitude of the challenge, Avista selected IntelliTect early on in the process to help determine solutions as well as the selection of other partners. IntelliTect was also chosen to lead Phase 2, system integration. What was particularly attractive about IntelliTect was their wealth of utility industry experience coupled with their deep technical expertise, especially with integrations.

“ Avista successfully implemented Oracle CCB and IBM Maximo, one of the largest projects to impact our business, customers, and technology. IntelliTect partnered with our teams throughout the two-year timeframe providing expertise and commitment. They completed their work within given timeframes providing accuracy, creativity, and collaboration. We were very fortunate to have their software knowledge and diverse resources working with us during this challenging time!”

Vicki Weber
Director of Energy Delivery Business
Technology, Avista Utilities

Solution

During Phase 1 of Project Compass, the Avista team selected the Oracle Customer Care and Billing (CC&B) system to replace the outdated customer information system and IBM's Maximo to replace the work management and electric and natural gas meter systems. IntelliTect designed and implemented the architectural and system integration solutions, managed a mixed team of HP and IntelliTect engineers to implement the integrations, designed automated testing and deployment of the technology, and resolved escalated issues that arose during development. The scope of the project involved 120 separate integrations between line-of-business and custom systems including, CC&B, Maximo, Ventyx, Oracle EBS, ESRI's ArcGIS, and many more.

Two significant challenges were facing the Avista and IntelliTect data integration teams:

1. Understanding the end-to-end business process: This involved understanding the functionality of distributing data across multiple systems, as well as understanding the role of each user in the process.
2. Processing and interpreting the data: How is the data going to be consumed? What data must be made available within and among different systems?

IntelliTect, in collaboration with business and functional leaders, determined that the following integrations were needed:

Bill payment management

- Interface with external agencies to process customer payments and manage collection activities
- Provide access to online bill images

Customer management

- Manage automated customer communications
- Interface with the Avista's online customer portal

Financial management

- Deliver accounting information between and among the asset management system, the CIS, and the financial system

Inventory management

- Deliver inventory and supply chain management transactions between the asset management and Oracle financial system

Meter reading management

- Interface with several different meter reading systems to provide accurate billing information

Outage management

- Interface with the existing outage management system to support system health
- Provide outage information to customers and customer service representatives

Premise management

- Ensure that all systems are and remain current

Resource management

- Interface with timekeeping and payroll systems to provide labor transactions

Work management

- Control the workflow among the customer information, asset management, and mobile dispatch systems

The project team consisted of from 125 to 150 managers, business analysts, developers, documentation and training specialists. During the height of the project, this number included thirty IntelliTect employees.



Results

IntelliTect developed and implemented the integrated solution between the Oracle Customer Care and Billing system (CC&B), Maximo Asset Management system, and the Oracle Financial system, providing more than 120 specific integrations to meet the target go-live date. IntelliTect engineers and quality control personnel remained on the project past the initial release, creating new integrations to support Avista and ensuring stability and operational efficiency of the system's infrastructure.

“*IntelliTect consultants were used for the development of over 125 complex integrations for Avista's Project Compass. They were extremely competent professionals and were a key reason why Avista sees the project as a great success. I would recommend, without hesitation, the use of IntelliTect consultants on your project where achieving results, on budget and in a timely manner are keys to your success.*”

Greg Jones Ph.D.
Program Manager Project Compass, Avista Utilities

IntelliTect

IntelliTect provides high-end architecture consulting, full life-cycle software development, and training that enables our clients to solve their most challenging problems. Our expert principal and senior engineers specialize in the latest technologies, including Cloud Computing (both [AWS](#) and [Azure](#)), Big Data, Machine Learning, and Artificial Intelligence (AI), [.NET Development](#), [Azure DevOps](#), [Office365](#)/SharePoint, and Enterprise Application Integration. For more info, go to [intellitect.com](#).
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Products & Services

- Technical Leadership
- Application Architecture
- Integration Services
- CC&B
- Maximo
- Ventyx
- Oracle EBS
- ESRI's ArcGIS

“*IntelliTect was an important partner in ensuring that Avista met our goal of continuing to deliver exceptional customer service with fully integrated systems on day one. Their superior knowledge of BizTalk, our Enterprise Service Bus platform, allowed us to deliver a fully integrated business platform, from meter-to-cash, mobile workforce management, and material management.*”

Pat Dever
Chief Data Strategist, Avista Utilities