Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) is one of the key players in the Indian city gas distribution (CGD) market. During the previous fiscal year, it further consolidated its infrastructure in the Delhi National Capital Region. With its growing sales volume and expanding network, the company has been resorting to various technology measures to enhance its operational efficiency, as well as improve the customer experience and customer reach.

IGL continues to invest in IT solutions such as customer relationship management, business communication management and multichannel foundation for utilities (MCFU). These new IT applications are aimed at enhancing the customer experience. The company has also implemented an Android-based mobile application, called IGLCONNECT, which is available on the Google store and provides self-help services such as bill-related information, payment options, complaint redressal and online connection requests.

The company has taken a major initiative to upgrade its business processes and introduced a technologically advanced platform for customer interface. The application has been successfully rolled out on mobile phones. Piped natural gas (PNG) customers will be able to avail of key services pertaining to their PNG connection through this mobile customer application. The application will bring qualitative improvements in the service levels of the company.

CRM

IGL has a portal that uses IBM's solutions to address customer needs. It has a complaint redressal system as well as a 24x7 customer care facility. Customers can manage their PNG account online and apply for new connections through the portal. In addition, it offers services such as online bill payment through credit card/net banking. Payments can also be made through the electronic clearing service, under which the PNG consumption amount is automatically debited from the customer's bank account. Cheques or cash can be deposited at IDBI Bank or Kotak Mahindra Bank branches. IGL's website allows customers to view their e-bills by sending an SMS and subscribing to the service. Further, customers can post their feedback on the website and submit their meter readings online.

The company regularly imparts training to its employees and contract staff at various CNG stations. A dedicated group of trainers conducts training programmes and practical demonstrations. IGL has also taken disaster recovery initiatives at its CNG stations.

BCM

IGL also utilises BCM by SAP. This is an all-internet protocol (IP) solution that is used for commodity networking equipment. The solution has open communication standards and offers multiple channel support to users, including those using email, chat sessions, phones, faxes and mobiles. All the communication platforms have been receiving significant attention of late, as these can be utilised for altering service centres. Besides, they enable the company to provide an edge in customer service and enhance the service experience.

MCFU

IGL utilises SAP's MCFU, which is a customer-facing solution based on the SAP NetWeaver Gateway. It allows utilities to interact with their customers through different communication channels, for example, the web (online self-service), mobiles and social networks. The solution comprises a set of standardised and reusable data services that can be used by end-user applications to access data and processes from the SAP business suite.

The standard services consist of self-service scenarios that enable customers to securely access and manage key account information, and perform important activities online such as bill payments, enquiries and sending requests to a utility company. In addition, a web application template for customer self-service is also included with the solution.

IGLCONNECT

IGL has implemented the Android-based mobile application, IGLCONNECT, which provides self-help services such as access to bill-related information, payment options and online connection requests. This application can be used by PNG as well as CNG customers and enables them to access their accounts from anywhere at any time. It allows customers to view their billing history and payment history, lodge a complaint, view their complaint status, share feedback, update phone numbers, submit meter readings and make online payments. Customers can also search for the nearest CNG stations in a particular area.

Going forward

Technology deployment has become more of a necessity than a choice, in a bid to gain operational efficiencies as well as to enhance the customer experience. To this end, the company has made significant headway in technology deployment. IGL is expanding its footprint in the gas distribution industry. This growth is visible through its consistently increasing sales and a wider customer base. However, going ahead, it needs to keep abreast of industry best practices through the utilisation of new innovative modules/technologies. s

Based on a presentation by N.C. Mangla, chief general manager (ERP and IT), IGL, at a recent tele.net conference

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