

The 20/20/20 co-ordinates of energy policy – should we continue to wait?

Elster steps up to its responsibility

Energy policy in Europe is looking intently at the objectives of reducing consumption by 20% by increasing energy efficiency, decreasing CO₂ emissions by 20% and increasing the share of renewable energies to 20% by 2020. Measuring energy consumption plays a key role in this. Currently, decentralized electricity and gas injection meets the historical recording of consumption values from centralized injection. In the future, this will not be enough. Transparency from the point of low voltage and low pressure grid through to the point of consumption is part of the infrastructure requirements needed to achieve the aforementioned energy policy objectives.

The Elster Group sees itself as a responsible provider on the market for energy data measurement and energy data management. It stands for innovative and recognized solutions for industrial as well as mass consumption measurement. With its products, Elster would like to contribute to helping electricity, gas and water supply companies make their efficiency improvements clearly visible to everyone by providing precise measuring results. It is only on this basis that "smarter grids" (smart grid control), the topic of the future, can be implemented.

Smart metering / Smarter grids – more than just remote meter reading

For Elster, smart metering is more than simply extending remote meter reading to the mass market. It is one of the fundamental infrastructure components for reaching the 20/20/20 targets. Greater quality and quantity of data are needed for this. In the future, transparent consumption profiles of customer segments will form the necessary basis for investment decisions for all levels of the energy supply chain, from generation and grid operation through to the consumer, who may be a producer at the same time. Smart metering delivers this data.

Yet many energy supply companies are still waiting for an agreement on the standardization of all levels of communication, which does not appear to be imminent. Elster is therefore prepared to relieve its customers of a large part of the pros and cons argument, and offers complete solutions as a package from a single source (see also the following article).



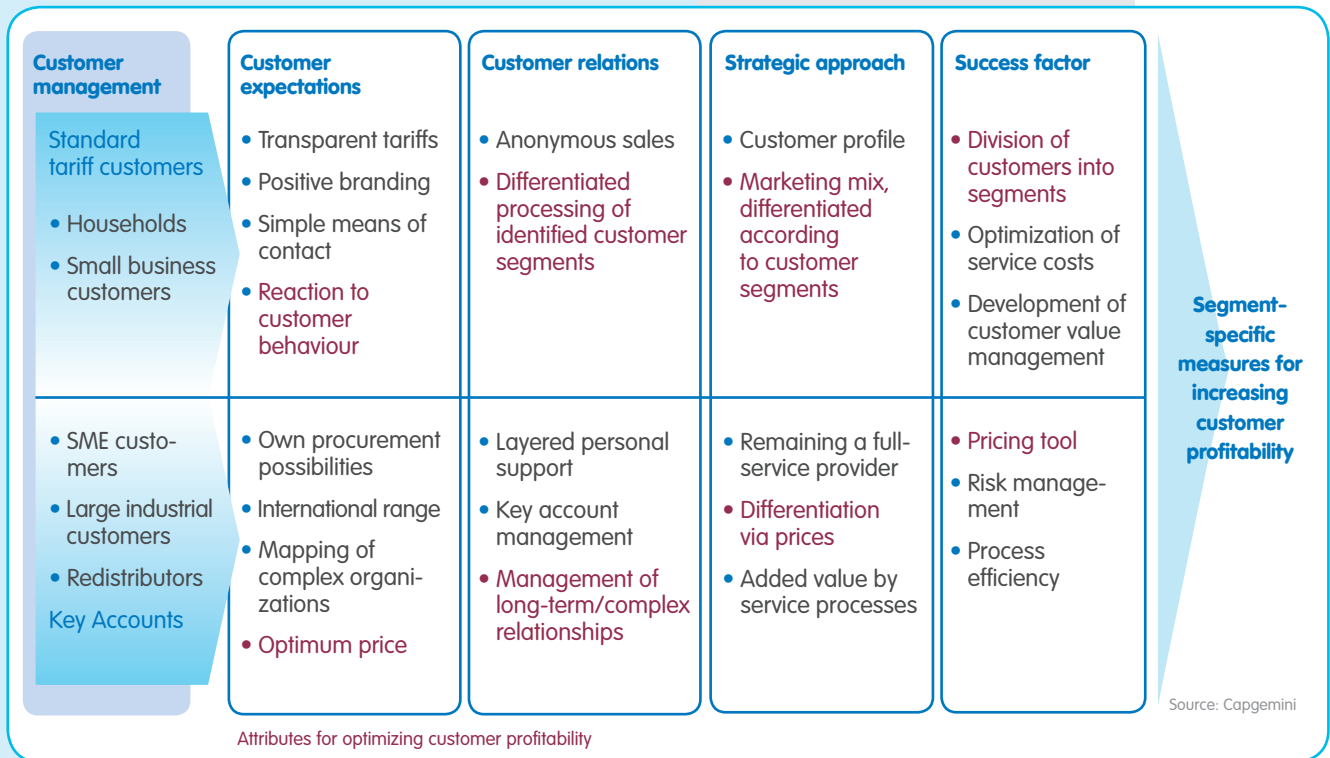
Meter data management supports a number of business processes, including sales, grid operation and procurement

Meter data management as part of the Elster smart meter package

At the heart of the Elster utilities package for developing a future-oriented and efficient system for recording and processing meter data is the meter data management system (MDMS) EIServer (Energy Information Server). EIServer completes the Elster Group meter and communication portfolio so that energy supply companies can receive a solution that covers everything from the metering point to the interface at the downstream billing, customer management, planning and financial systems from a single source.

Use of the EIServer is offered to customers as a service. This means that the user does not need to install or make available any additional resources for the IT infrastructure.

EnergyICT, a member company of the Elster Group, already supports notable customers from all over the world with its Software as a Service (SaaS) concept. The success of this concept is due to the reliability of a renowned electronic data processing centre, as well as experience in operating smart metering and energy management solutions by experienced system engineers.



System engineers work on the support concept together with the energy supply companies, which is then expressed in a service level agreement (SLA). The service level can also be increased during operation, depending on the requirements.

The overall introduction, planning and commissioning of the necessary information and communication technology is controlled by Elster Integrated Solutions (EIS). This leads to a considerable reduction in unpredictable points, and the customer may therefore focus on its core business, namely the provision of meters and the associated services.

Focus on business processes

This method also means focussing on modified business processes for the customer and the development of new service packages for market partners. This includes the analysis of links with existing back-end systems and business processes.

Service portfolios can be developed with suppliers in the network, which allow them to prepare segment-specific offers based on load profiles. On this basis, customers may be divided into different consumption-oriented segments, which enables the creation of new tariff models using further criteria. The supplier can gather experience as to how the consumption profiles positively or negatively influence his procurement plans below the RLM limits. Division of the customers into segments is, as for other branches of industry, the driving force of customer profitability (see figure).

Specific analyses can also be carried out for the grid operator at a regional level on the basis of detailed figures, with regard to the effect of injected renewable energy. The topic of smarter grids will be placed on a transparent foundation. The reliability of suppositions and hypotheses can therefore be tested.

This software solution enables us to fathom the future role of meter operators and service providers. They are no longer just a supplier for billing figures, but the competent point of contact for analyzing customer behaviour. They can take on this task without discrimination for all market actors as required.

Data protection and security

Data protection and data security must be integral components of smart metering. For this reason, the Elster Group is a committed member of the expert group 2 "Regulatory recommendations for data safety, data handling and data protection" as part of ESMIG (European Smart Metering Industry Group). ESMIG advises the EU commission on this point.

Summary

Elster is at your side as a responsible solution partner in order to allow you successful entry into the world of smart metering or the smarter grid. We would also be happy to talk to you personally in more detail.

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