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Intelligent

E.ON electrifies customer communications strategy with Quadient Inspire



Challenge

- The E.ON Group, one of Europe's largest operators of energy networks, energy infrastructure, and provider of innovative customer solutions for 50 million customers, reached a crossroads in 2017 when its two core customer correspondence platforms—one for mass communication and another for ad-hoc communication—were reaching end-of-life, forcing a choice between upgrading, or rethinking its approach to communications
- At the same time, E.ON was rolling out a rebrand and needed to guarantee uniformity across the entire business and customer base

Solution

- Rather than running separate platforms in parallel, E.ON moved to one single platform, [Quadient® Inspire](#), that covered both elements
- This gave E.ON a centrally-managed landscape, with reusable templates, designs and fonts/layouts

Results

- E.ON can create complex customer-facing documents two times faster than before
- E.ON is able to provide central changes within minutes, where previously it would have taken months

- Business teams are empowered to take more of the customer correspondence process into their own hands, while IT teams are freed up
- Easy access due to intuitive use of Inspire Designer and Interactive let E.ON drive digital transformation collaboratively between business and IT



Time to change

E.ON is one of Europe's premier energy networks and provider of advanced energy solutions and infrastructures to more than 50 million customers. With its presence in 15 countries supported by over 75,000 employees, and a focus on sustainability and climate protection, E.ON is ideally positioned to lead the energy transformation in Germany and Europe.

E.ON had been running two core legacy customer correspondence platforms—one for batch communication with its entire customer base—and another for ad-hoc communication when it needed to interact with customers on an individual basis. In 2017, with E.ON undergoing a corporate rebranding, both platforms were reaching their end-of-life. E.ON decided it was time to change its approach.

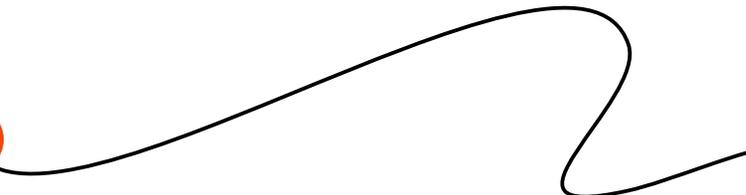
The team took a step back and reviewed the challenges posed by the existing approach. Firstly, having two platforms meant it took more resources than necessary to create a consistent communications channel landscape. One of the platforms sent plain text HTML messages while the other used rich emails, meaning the extra work to ensure consistency between the two made the customer communication process more complex and expensive to run than it should have been. E.ON also had to spend time and effort maintaining and upgrading the two legacy systems in tandem—well aware

that if people with the knowledge needed to manage this highly-engineered system left the business, the process would become even more of a challenge.

Switching to one platform and merging templates for all correspondence and communication channels would make the process much more efficient, allowing E.ON to communicate with customers quicker than before and reducing complexity for the business. This would also take away the burden from knowledge held by individuals, future-proofing with a setup better prepared to adapt to change.

E.ON also had to be conscious of its obligations under EU unbundling regulations. The network and sales parts of the business have to operate completely separately, with no instances of collaboration or collusion. A platform that would allow both parts of the business access to templates, blueprints, knowledge and interfaces they need, without the risk of those parts sharing information or otherwise interacting, would greatly reduce the complexity and expense of needing a separate approach for each part of the business.

Finally, with E.ON's new branding rolling out imminently, it was important the platform would be able to combine data and present uniform communications in the new branding flawlessly from the get-go.



Taking action

E.ON began by evaluating customer communication management platforms to determine what best met its needs. Having seen multiple service providers and partners successfully using Quadient Inspire, E.ON entered a discovery phase with the technology. After seeing what it was capable of, Inspire came out on top in E.ON's evaluation.



“WE TURNED TO QUADIENT AFTER HEARING SEVERAL PARTNERS TALKING POSITIVELY ABOUT QUADIENT INSPIRE AND HAVING DIRECTLY SEEN SOME OF THE CAPABILITIES QUADIENT PROVIDES FOR THEM. WE WANTED TO MOVE QUICKLY WITH THIS PROJECT—YOU CAN'T SIMPLY 'TURN OFF' YOUR CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS FUNCTION—AND IT WAS IMPRESSIVE HOW QUICKLY THE QUADIENT TEAM PUT EVERYTHING TOGETHER. IN AN IT PROJECT, YOU EXPECT A FAIR NUMBER OF INITIAL SNAGS, BUT THE ROLL-OUT AND GO-LIVE ALL WENT SMOOTHLY. THE BIGGEST TAKEAWAY IS THAT WE CAN NOW REUNITE BUSINESS AND IT—A HUGE STEP FORWARD THAT WE NEEDED TO MAKE.”

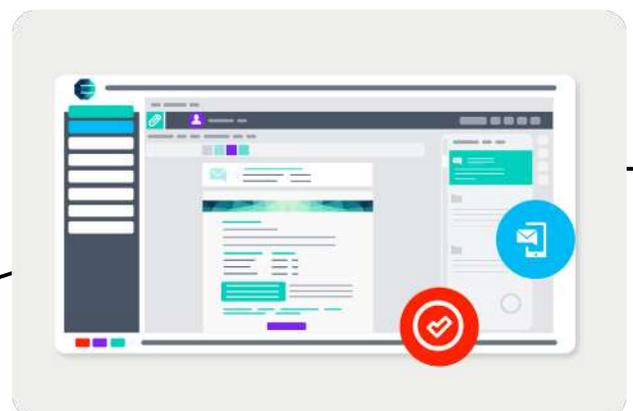
—Katja Betz, E.ON Vice President Customer Correspondence Management

The solution

Quadient Inspire enables E.ON's customer service teams to create and deliver personalized, compliant customer correspondence across all digital and traditional channels, from one centralized hub. It gives E.ON unified design and content management, providing a central version-controlled library of content that makes it easy to create, modify, and manage its entire communications portfolio. Inspire's no-code approach makes it easy for people across the business to manage communications, reducing the need to rely on IT to complete day-to-day tasks.

E.ON now uses Quadient Inspire for synchronized communications across all different channels, including print, postal, email, phone, archive and fax. This includes key activities across all parts of the business, such as sharing invoices, storing banking information, and writing letters.

Quadient Inspire enables E.ON to communicate with customers in a consistent way, regardless of which of its customer databases and key sources of data the information is coming from. This isn't only important from a branding perspective, but also in ensuring E.ON meets its compliance requirements.





Making the move

In June 2017, batch production processes for mass communication moved across to Quadient Inspire before personalized correspondence for individual communication was switched away from the old system too. E.ON broke down the activity by moving communications related to one location or external service provider one at a time, starting with the smallest, and constantly checking performance. Key staff members were retrained during the process to ensure nobody was missing the skills needed before they were asked to use the new system for the first time.

Locations and service providers would only go live on the system once set checks and performance requirements were met—for example, checking whether customers received documents and notifications within a set time limit.

“We benefitted from the location-based roll-out as it ensured we could be 100% happy when sites went live, without the concerns you would typically have if you switched everything on at the same time,” continued Katja Betz. “Quadient and E.ON carried out diligent and detailed checks, such as monitoring average handling times for different types of interactions, to ensure that all tasks and processes were performing correctly. When it comes to customer communication, you cannot leave anything to chance as it risks damaging the brand and facing compliance failures. So we were pleased that things were up to standard once switched on.”

There are now more than 5,000 Quadient Inspire users within E.ON. Across E.ON’s 18 European regions, Quadient Inspire is live in Germany and Hungary. The Netherlands and Sweden will follow suit shortly, and other regions have been earmarked as the next regions to onboard.

Results

E.ON emerged with a faster customer communication capability—creating new content for complex customer-facing documents two times faster than before. “Content that is used in multiple or all documents can now be updated within seconds by using central components and master templates,” explained Sven Husmann, Solution Architect and Lead Expert - Correspondence Management at E.ON. This eases the strain on staff who would have previously had to perform manual updates, and also reduces the risk of mistakes or omissions.

“Previously, it was hard to understand just how much effort had been involved in the customer communication process. When using legacy systems, developers and IT staff leaving the business and taking with them the shortcuts they’ve used to reduce layers of complexity can spell serious problems,” added Sven Husmann.

“QUADIENT INSPIRE GIVES GREAT VISIBILITY OVER WORKFLOWS, EMPOWERING USERS TO PINPOINT OPPORTUNITIES TO COMPLETE TASKS MORE EFFICIENTLY.”

—Sven Husmann, E.ON Solution Architect and Lead Expert - Correspondence Management

The functionality of Interactive—like spell checker, formatting options like tables, bullets, images—allows E.ON to provide high quality templates to the agents two times faster than before. Using the Interactive wizard allows agents to interact with customers faster without the need of retraining for every template change.

Overall, the business team now has much more ownership of the customer communication management process, which not only improves the service quality and speed, but also eases the burden on IT teams. Previously, tasks such as creating custom emails had to draw on outside support, but with the power now in the business team’s hands, IT teams have more time to focus on their core responsibilities.

Moving to Quadient Inspire has also underpinned compliance within E.ON. Overall, the platform’s ability to replicate template logic across different formats makes it



“Quadiant Inspire has enabled us to be helpful and concise with customers. We are always careful to avoid overwhelming customers with unnecessary information,” said Katja Betz.

What’s next?

E.ON wants to build on its initial success by rolling Quadiant Inspire out further. It is doing this through internal roadshow events—driving buy-in from different regions and business units by educating internally on the benefits.

Ultimately, E.ON wants to keep increasing the number of internal Quadiant users, establishing Inspire as the central group-wide platform for customer communication management. In the future it will expand from the core capabilities ([Quadiant Inspire Scaler](#) and [Quadiant Inspire Interactive](#)) to email marketing and customer experience management.

easier to implement new legal requirements for customer communications across multiple markets. It also enables E.ON to meet EU unbundling regulations: the network and sales parts of the business need to operate completely separately, and the flexible nature of Quadiant Inspire allows both parts of the business to access the data and communications they need without running the risk of accidentally sharing information or otherwise colluding.

“OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH QUADIENT IS A CRUCIAL ELEMENT OF E.ON’S CORRESPONDENCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY, BOTH NOW AND IN THE FUTURE. THE BENEFITS OF OUR ENDEAVOUR WITH QUADIENT ARE APPARENT, AS WE SEE INCREASING ADOPTION ACROSS THE COMPANY. I WAS VERY HAPPY WHEN I FIRST SAW EVERYTHING IN PRODUCTION; IT IS THE BEST SOLUTION ON THE MARKET FOR E.ON’S NEEDS.”

—Christian Bandilla, E.ON Center for Enablement Lead - Correspondence Management

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About Quadiant®

Quadiant is the driving force behind the world’s most meaningful customer experiences. By focusing on Intelligent Communication Automation, Parcel Locker Solutions and Mail-Related Solutions, Quadiant helps hundreds of thousands of customers worldwide simplify the connection between people and what matters. For more information about Quadiant, visit quadiant.com.