

Case Study

Tokyo Gas triples online visits and increases membership by 600%

Avanade delivers a Sitecore platform that helps build loyalty and attract new business through personalized campaigns



"I finally feel like I have the freedom to do many things. I can see customer reactions to our content very easily and then I can give them more of what they want through a better portal."

Hajime Nakamura
Digital Marketing Group Manager
Living Sales Planning Department
Tokyo Gas

Overview

Tokyo Gas is Japan's largest natural gas utility and when Japan deregulated its electric energy market in 2016, Tokyo Gas also began to enter retail electricity market. But success depends on more than just expanding the business. It requires innovation. To stay competitive, Tokyo Gas knew it needed to understand, interact with and provide customers with a higher level of service that would build long-term loyalty. This meant providing content that is both informative and attractive, including awareness campaigns, tips, recipes and service updates in addition to billing and usage. So it leveraged a new online platform that better engages customers with personalized content, making it the first—and most appealing—choice for gas and electricity users.

Situation: Legacy platform limits scope of content and engagement

Tokyo Gas embraced the opportunity to enter the electricity market, but it also faced the challenge of serving current and prospective customers in new and exciting ways.

On its legacy platform, it took a long time to release, add and modify content because requests had to be sent to multiple external vendors and undergo numerous review processes. Customers hardly visited the site because it only had a single online view—usage and gas charges. Instead, Tokyo Gas relied on stores within local communities to support and inform customers about energy issues. But ensuring Tokyo Gas was synonymous with gas and electricity required communicating more than just billing. It had to promote its expanded services and offerings—and keep it interesting!

The company knew it needed a stronger web presence to communicate these issues more effectively to drive loyalty and growth. It also had to broaden and diversify its services to accommodate the needs and interests of new electricity customers. It envisioned expanding its outreach through a modern online platform that could quickly and easily release a variety of relevant content to different types of customers.

Solution: Sitecore with analytics database expands marketing capabilities

Tokyo Gas decided to shift the company's customer portal site, myTOKYOGAS, onto the Sitecore Experience Platform because of its target marketing capabilities. But it needed a partner with the technical expertise to execute the plan. Tokyo Gas chose Avanade, which, in addition to guiding the migration, helped design and architect the new portal site to align with the company's overall digital marketing strategy.

- **Sitecore** provides an array of capabilities, including on-premise content release processes, templates for swift and easy content changes and personalization campaigns.
- The **Analytics Database** provides a coordinated and efficient method for tracking, collecting and analyzing information on trends in site traffic and action history, which helps shape more informed marketing campaigns. The information collected on the form helps the company track customer interactions.
- **Web Form for Marketers** provides personalized surveys and questionnaires, giving Tokyo Gas better insight and understanding of its customers so that it can deliver specific content.

Benefits: Enriched content nearly triples the number of online visitors

While the value of the portal site lies in its content, the benefits arise from how this content is delivered and accessed and by whom.

New platform functionalities allow Tokyo Gas to define customer journeys, identify personas and then tailor its services to meet the specific needs and interests of its various customers. This positive interaction not only enhances loyalty, but it also increases the potential for attracting new gas and electricity customers. Both Tokyo Gas and its energy users are realizing significant benefits:

- **Streamlined content release process.** Tokyo Gas has greatly shortened the content release cycle by moving the approval process in-house, allowing employees to do everything from developing and uploading content onto the Sitecore server to obtaining final approval for content that requires speed. So while Tokyo Gas still relies on external vendors to create some of the content, it now has the internal capability to add urgent or current updates and information directly to the site. Analytics help verify the relevancy of and interest in the content, helping to inform future releases.
- **Increased website traffic.** The monthly volume of traffic has almost tripled for Tokyo Gas, increasing from 35,000 to 91,000 visitors. Content updates are also improving the rate of re-visits.
- **Expanded customer outreach.** The membership portal experiences 6-7 times more visits than it did before the migration, averaging 7,000 logins per day. The pace of new registrations is also growing at about 300 members a day, with a current total of 400,000 members.

- **Improved engagement.** Customers now have multiple channels to interact with Tokyo Gas and can easily access information about their personal service contracts, energy usage and information on specific topics and products of interest (i.e., gas, electricity or both). Through the personal portal site, they can also get member-exclusive content and related incentives and benefits.

"With digital marketing, we no longer need to print, send and wait for people to respond to questionnaires," said Nakamura. "We can create them within days and have answers within a week or two. It has saved us quite a bit of time, effort and costs. This is a big difference."

By leveraging digital channels to offer personalized and real-time content, Tokyo Gas is energizing the customer experience. In turn, these new digital marketing capabilities are boosting its brand and growth potential.

About Tokyo Gas

Tokyo Gas is the largest natural gas utility in Japan. Founded in 1885, it serves more than 11 million households in Tokyo and surrounding cities. Tokyo Gas provides production, supply and sales of city gas, appliances and related construction. Since the de-regulation of the utilities market, it also supplies electric energy to the region.



About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital and cloud-enabling services, business solutions and design-led experiences, delivered through the power of people and the Microsoft ecosystem.

Majority owned by Accenture, Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation and has 30,000 professionals in 24 countries.

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