

■ Waste Management Leverages a Flexible Platform and Reusable Assets to Drive Customer Experience and Incremental Business Value



Executive Summary

Residents of the U.S. and Canada create more waste per capita than in any other contiguous part of the world. Houston-based Waste Management (WM) has made disposing of it a lucrative and highly innovative business. With 50,000 employees and 21M residential, municipal, commercial and industrial customers, WM is the largest provider of environmental and sustainability services in North America.

To build on their leadership, WM places a premium on operational efficiency and agility. As well as delivering a consistent, high-quality customer experience (CX) across 17 regions, each comprised of multiple states and municipalities with unique characteristics and regulatory controls. Data analytics and management play a critical role in all of these initiatives.

The company chose Stibo Systems to help solve a variety of challenges, including empowering data-driven decisions, that called for a data management platform and partner with the flexibility to look at things in new ways. "We're a data start-up in a Fortune 250 business," said Peter Kapur, head of Data Governance & DQ at WM. "That requires a certain mindset. You need to do things differently."

The Business Impact

Enabling consistency and change across the company

Securing business partnership at WM depends on delivering tangible results "tactically" while tying it to an overall data strategy for reusability. Working together, the team used the solution as a rapid application development platform to create reusable assets that drive consistency – and support business process reengineering (BPR) – enterprise-wide. Now, instead of having data associated with only one part of the business, it resides in a flexible data model and platform that serves as a single source of truth delivering value across the company.

The Customer Experience

Flexible platform and partner to drive superior value

It is said, at WM, good enough is never good enough. The company takes pride in going beyond. Something Kapur also sees in his Stibo Systems partners. "If you are not in the game, you're not going to win it," he says. "We are full partners of the business making joint decisions and not letting any dogmatic principles influence decisions that are best for WM Business & Digital." That positive experience has also translated to value for WM's own customers, who can now access consistent offerings online, via customer service and downstream systems.



Challenge

Waste Management brought national scale and efficiency to an industry that was once very local. Yet, the services offered, and regulatory controls, still vary widely according to location, making it difficult to implement an enterprise solution to consistently manage service offerings across markets. And to support them through traditional and digital customer service and associated downstream systems.

Peter's team needed to implement a solution to manage their business-critical reference data, ensuring it would be identical across applications. More importantly, it needed to deliver demonstrable benefits to the business. "Unless someone can say, this is going to save me \$2M or help me make \$10M," Peter said it would not happen. "It had to be about solving problems in true partnership with the business."

Solution

WM implemented a cloud-based multidomain solution, combining product/service and location data, that provides consistent, governed data to downstream consumers, channels and domains. Stibo Systems' model-based environment provided flexibility to support a range of BPR initiatives, with auditable, standardized business rules and processes, and empowering data stewards enterprise-wide. By placing all necessary master reference data at the center of the enterprise, it can now be centrally managed, while making it accessible anywhere via API.

This enabled WM to match their online experience with the reference data behind it for a consistent channel experience. Now, whether they contact customer service by phone or connect at WM.com, customers can access a consistent scope of services customized for their individual needs by customer type, location (including market area, district and zone) and regulatory environment.

By creating reusable assets, WM was able to support other critical initiatives, including their first online customer self-service capability, benefiting customers and company, alike. As well as major updates to WM's business hierarchy, making a variety of new data sets available to their new corporate financial system, providing, for example, a valuable new insight to support cost optimization for landfill operations.

Results

WM customer service agents can now access the same product/service information across all markets. Coupled with their new self-service capability – enabling automation of activities such as stops/starts and bulky pickup – Waste Management has made significant, measurable improvements in customer experience, retention and acquisition. Matched by equally impressive reductions in customer service calls and associated operating expenses.

The solution helps speed delivery of operational business changes with a standardized enterprise approach. This removes the cost and complexity of implementing and maintaining one-off IT solutions to serve specific business needs. "Data governance must be an enabler for the business to build and sustain value, architecture and standards," Peter says. "our Business Critical Reference Data strategy aligns with our Data Stewardship 2.0 framework where we partner with our data stewards as data change agents."

Future

Looking ahead, the solution will play an important role in route and revenue optimization, so drivers are always aware of the most cost effective facility to dispose of their waste at any given time.

Sustainability weighs heavily in WM's future, too. Data will play an important role and their current solution provides a strong head-start. "The kernel of the system is the site," Kapur says. "It can be for disposal, hauling, landfill, all with different environmental criteria. Now that we have them, it's just a matter now of building the data model for sustainability."

“That’s the whole point of a flexible platform. It can be used in how you service the needs of the business. It is an exciting time to be a part of the data revolution and WM is leading the way”

— Peter Kapur, head of Data Governance & DQ, Waste Management



About Stibo Systems

Stibo Systems, the master data management company, is the trusted enabler of data transparency. Our solutions are the driving force behind forward-thinking companies around the world that have unlocked the strategic value of their master data. We empower them to improve the customer experience, drive innovation and growth and create an essential foundation for digital transformation. This gives them the transparency they require and desire – a single, accurate view of their master data – so they can make informed decisions and achieve goals of scale, scope and ambition. Stibo Systems is a privately held subsidiary of the Stibo A/S group, founded in 1794, and is headquartered in Aarhus, Denmark. More at stibosystems.com.