

Naturgy, One of Spain's Leading Utility Companies, Signs Hybrid Cloud Services Agreement with IBM to Boost Digital Transformation

- The Agreement is part of Naturgy's hybrid cloud strategy to build the utility of the future

- IBM will help create the technical environment required by the industry to remain competitive, enabling IT and business process redesign based on cloud, AI and blockchain capabilities

BARCELONA, Spain and MADRID, June 20, 2019 [/PRNewswire/](#) -- Naturgy, one of Spain's largest suppliers of gas and electricity, serving more than 18-million customers in more than 30 countries, has announced a ten-year agreement with IBM [NYSE:IBM] to help implement a hybrid cloud strategy to support a secured and flexible network.

In taking advantage of a hybrid cloud environment, Naturgy will now have the means to help digitally transform its internal and customer-facing operations. This effort is to help Naturgy adapt to today's digitally savvy consumers and rising customer demands including broader self-service, and greater billing transparency with flexible prices.

Naturgy will host its core grids' data on an on-premises private cloud with the added flexibility to rapidly integrate it with a public cloud to create new AI applications that can help the company to monitor its grid.

"Over the last year we've undertaken strategic steps to help drive our organization to the future with access to IBM advanced technologies. IBM's deep industry knowledge and access to researchers via the innovation hub allows us to provide the level of innovation and customer engagement required to be a global leader in our industry," said Miguel Ángel Aller, LEAN chief project officer. "We are excited about laying a solid foundation for the future of energy and utilities as customer and market expectations evolve."

Juan Zufiria, IBM Senior Vice President for Global Technology Services, said "Consumers are demanding new types of services and access to more ways of engaging with their utility companies. Industry leaders like Naturgy have set the strategic direction for this industry overall by embracing advanced technologies like hybrid cloud and AI that can help enable them adapt to new energy consumption models," and added, "We are excited to collaborate with Naturgy to help enable them to move forward on their hybrid cloud journey and support their digital transformation."

The agreement also includes the creation of a virtual IBM innovation hub, giving Naturgy direct access to IBM Research that explores new and disruptive IT applications and innovations using IBM AI, Internet of Things and Blockchain. For example, with advanced analytics and AI technologies, Naturgy will be able to obtain insight from the increasing data flow from connected devices like smart meters to create services or applications for customers or field workers.

Additionally, with IBM Watson's AI capabilities, Naturgy's employees will have access to virtual assistants and other automation solutions for quicker IT resources and support, which can result in less professional down time.

The IBM solution is the latest step in the implementation of the 176-year-old utility giant's plan to build a company that supports current and future demands.

This agreement is designed to support Naturgy's **LEAN**. A project to redesign its business model to adapt to the significant transition period that the global energy industry is going through. The changes required to advance towards a decarbonized economy and the disruptive effects that digitalization is having in the energy industry value chain are demanding new levels of both efficiency and innovation.

In taking advantage of the capability hybrid cloud provides, IBM is helping create the technical environment required by the industry to remain competitive and innovative, enabling advanced IT and business process redesign based on key capabilities like AI, blockchain and automation solutions.

Also, as utility grids and operations become more digitalized, cybersecurity, fueled by cognitive systems, must become a core industry capability. IBM will help Naturgy to protect the utilities information assets providing a security control framework to monitor risks and threats and better prepare for incidents response.

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