Zazoo launches Utility Vending System for prepaid electricity, water and gas meters

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Zazoo, previously referred to as Net1 Mobile Solutions, a financial services provider in the mobile space, has launched its Utility Vending System at African Utility Week (AUW) held in Cape Town. This turnkey vending solution simplifies tariff management and consumer arrears collection, allowing utilities and municipalities to manage prepaid vending for electricity, water and gas meters more efficiently and cost effectively.

"The system gives utility companies and municipalities the ability manage and control prepaid vending to their electricity, water and gas meters in a turnkey solution," says Philip Belamant, Managing Director of Zazoo. "As a meter-agnostic vending solution, this means that utility companies have the freedom to choose their preferred meter technology without fear of changing vending systems."

The Utility Vending System is an enterprise-grade solution created for the management of prepaid services where high performance at high volume is essential. The solution includes fully managed token distribution across multiple channels, management of meter keys with remote key loading, and high level security with identity-based access and password control, as well as role-based authorisation to ensure system integrity. Detailed transaction logging and comprehensive data reporting gives operators insights into trends and performance, equipping them to make the best business decisions going forward.

Philip Belamant, Zazoo Managing Director

Utility Vending infographic

Zazoo offers an alternative solution for smaller installations, known as the Sub-Meter Vending System. This is self-contained and ideal for smaller vendors and resellers, such as residential body corporates and managing agents. This system offers detailed transaction reporting which covers core data such as meter serial numbers, token generation and other information. Users are able to configure their own filtering and sorting to offer the best possible insights into system management, including audit trails.

"The technology that makes the Utility Vending System secure and efficient is locally developed to respond to South African needs, although it can be adapted to the needs of utilities and their customers anywhere in the world," says Belamant.

Zazoo exhibiting at AUW

Zazoo is also working with mobile network operators ("MNO"s) to offer the Utility Vending System Platform as a Service ("PaaS"), ensuring that the solution is secure and always available to consumers. "This makes it possible for utilities to use the MNOs' comprehensive distribution channels, giving consumers the power to purchase electricity, water and gas whenever they need to, and wherever they may be," adds Belamant.

The Utility Vending System integrates seamlessly with Zazoo's award-winning Virtual Top Up ("VTU") technology, which turns any mobile phone into a powerful, secure vending device, enabling distributors and vendors to easily distribute a wide range of prepaid and VAS products such as prepaid airtime and data, prepaid electricity and Lotto tickets, for example.

VTU allows distributors to effectively oversee the vendors in their distribution network

and focus on their sales efforts, while a feature-rich management interface provides transparent access to vendors and distributors. Stored-value PINs on VTU allow for online products on the platform to be redeemed by the consumer after purchase through an easy to use USSD menu.

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