

Northern Powergrid's Shift from Fragmented Reporting to Unified Decision-Making

88-project portfolios unified

under a single decision-making platform

Time reclaimed

from manual version control and document management

Faster executive decisions

backed by visual data

Products:

SharpCloud

Introduction:

Northern Powergrid operates critical energy infrastructure across a heavily regulated landscape, managing complex programs across multiple departments. Northern Powergrid's Customer Services directorate, working closely with IT, oversees a complex portfolio of approximately 88 change initiatives. Each requires careful tracking and executive oversight, particularly to meet regulatory reporting requirements.

Like many organizations managing competing priorities and tight timelines, Northern Powergrid faced a familiar challenge: how to give leadership a clear, real-time view of progress without drowning teams in administrative overhead. The answer was moving from fragmented spreadsheets and presentation decks to a unified, visual decision-making platform.

The challenge:

Before SharpCloud, Northern Powergrid's project tracking was scattered across multiple tools—mainly PowerPoint decks and separate Excel documents. This fragmentation created significant operational challenges. Version control alone became a major bottleneck: multiple document versions required constant updates from the team, making it difficult to maintain governance and consistency across the portfolio.

The larger problem was strategic. Northern Powergrid didn't have a single executive view. Project updates were spread across multiple documents and platforms, forcing leadership to piece together a coherent picture from scattered sources. Data quality suffered too. Updates had to be aggregated manually from different Excel sheets, which meant executives couldn't fully trust the data they were relying on.

Most critically, the administrative burden crowded out strategy. "A lot of our time was spent trying to organize the updates in a reasonable fashion. And that was taking us away from the conversations that we needed to be having to make sure that we were getting the right stakeholders involved and making the right progress across programs and projects within the portfolio," said Harry Crowther, Customer Service Project Manager at Northern Powergrid.

Teams on the ground, already stretched thin, viewed reporting as an unwanted admin task rather than a value-adding activity, making adoption resistance and data quality challenges even more difficult.



The solution:

Northern Powergrid chose SharpCloud specifically for its specialized focus on visualization and dynamic portfolio management. The pace of collaboration stood out too. Mocking up a new use case, like resourcing, took about a week—far faster than the drawn-out requirements-gathering typical of other suppliers.

The team took an iterative, user-centered approach to building out SharpCloud. They designed tabbed forms tailored to different user roles, recognizing that time-pressed project managers needed an intuitive experience while managing multiple initiatives. To ensure data quality, validation rules were embedded directly into the tool—restricting field formats and limiting entries. Looking ahead, the team is planning role-based access controls so only relevant tabs and fields appear to each team member.

Critically, they kept the interface simple by design. Rather than loading the dashboard with every possible metric, they focused on what mattered for weekly team conversations and monthly executive reviews: a clean timeline view showing all projects simultaneously, with visual status indicators (red, amber, green) and completion percentages. The platform allowed the same underlying data to be presented one way for operational teams and another for the senior leadership team—all the data could live in one place, then be abstracted and visualized differently for different audiences.

Results:

The shift to SharpCloud established consistent governance frameworks across Northern Powergrid's teams. Weekly team updates now surface successes, challenges, and risks—all grounded in visual data—while monthly executive reviews provide senior leadership with unified visibility. This structured cadence creates continuity: the same conversation framework week to week ensures nothing falls through the cracks in a fast-paced environment.

Decision-making became faster and more defensible. Where priority decisions once went to the loudest voice in the room, SharpCloud provides objective data and visual evidence.

Administrative overhead disappeared. The time previously spent collating updates and managing document versions—an ongoing drain on team capacity—is now reclaimed. The platform captures, aggregates, and presents data automatically, leaving the team free to focus on strategy rather than version control.

Looking ahead, Northern Powergrid is exploring resource management and risk management use cases, positioning itself for company-wide adoption.



We saw a huge amount of time wasted collating the updates and managing the different versions of the document, which just isn't a problem anymore because we're in a BAU routine with [SharpCloud] now, which is fantastic. It's a far more efficient machine that we've created here.

— **Harry Crowther, Customer Service Project Manager, Northern Powergrid**