



Transformation Leader Navigant Transforms to Guidehouse

Conversation with Guidehouse global energy practice leaders
Jan Vrins and Dan Hahn

First, in May 2018, PricewaterhouseCoopers sold its public sector consulting business, with nearly fifteen hundred partners, to the private equity firm Veritas Capital. Then, in July of that year, the consultancy was named Guidehouse. Not much more than a year later, last August, Guidehouse and Navigant Consulting – a firm very familiar to the utility regulation and policy community – announced a merger, that was closed last October. Guidehouse, after this merger, grew to \$1.3 billion in revenues and some six thousand employees.

The former leaders of the Navigant energy practice are now the present leaders of the Guidehouse energy, sustainability and infrastructure practice. Including the ever-present Jan Vrins, who heads ES&I at Guidehouse. Check out the interview with Jan below, together with his new sidekick Dan Hahn – who heads the energy group in ES&I – and you’ll see that Jan has lost none of that drive for helping his clientele transform their businesses both sustainably and successfully.

PUF’s Steve Mitnick: Jan, what’s this big news that’s been happening?

Jan Vrins: This is exciting for our people and our clients as well. Navigant now is part of Guidehouse. Guidehouse may be a new name for you and others in the industry, but Guidehouse was formed in 2018 through an acquisition by Veritas Capital, a private equity firm of PwC’s former public sector consulting team.

Then Guidehouse acquired Navigant Consulting in the fourth quarter of last

year. Together, we have about seven thousand consultants serving healthcare, financial services, and the public sector.

We continue to serve our clients in the energy industry as well. We’re forming this new-generation global consulting firm, and it’s focused on some of the biggest issues that our clients face.

In my energy team of seven hundred people, we’re still passionate about climate change and sustainability, and we help our clients navigate the energy transformation. That hasn’t

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changed. We added infrastructure and sustainability, and it all evolves around those pieces.

PUF: Dan, how are you going to add to the Guidehouse pie?

Dan Hahn: I recently joined Guidehouse. I came here after twenty-five years with Accenture and worked in a lot of capabilities across the industry sectors but focused on energy over

the past twelve years. The role I'm in is the global energy company leader, responsible for all our utility accounts in North America, Europe, and the Middle East.

The impact I hope to make is focused on driving value for our clients, especially in this new world of Guidehouse. Taking the industry and thought leadership expertise we have with the legacy Navigant folks, combined with the management consulting capabilities from the legacy Guidehouse team, and combining those two significant capabilities into one and bringing that value to our clients, so we can drive value for them, is number one.

PUF: Jan, with Dan responsible for all those things, what's ahead for you?

Jan Vrins: I'm excited that Dan now heads up all our work with energy companies and utilities globally. We have Karen Wilson from Guidehouse who's heading up all our work with our government clients, at the federal, state, and local levels.

We have Jan-Willem Bode who takes care of all our projects with large corporations that need help with sustainability, climate risk mitigation plans, and investors. I'm still much involved.

I will continue to be involved and focus on thought leadership, strategy, and how can we grow our impact. We want to continue to innovate for our clients and apply our broad skills and capabilities to solve our clients' most complex issues, shape the future, and make the world a better place.

That's important. That's why people are excited to be part of our team and excited to work with our clients.

PUF: Will this transformation to this bigger firm Guidehouse, allow you to have more of an impact, and go deeper or broader?

Dan Hahn: We absolutely have more tools to bring. First, our core capability of being thought leaders in the industry is still front and center. The ability to

drive that value for our customers and clients is key.

Exciting aspects are extended capabilities we can bring to our customers, like cybersecurity. There is a tremendous capability that we have with folks from the federal sector that understand cybersecurity on both a national and global

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level that are now part of our team.

In addition, a lot around analytics, machine learning, and artificial intelligence, innovative technologies, and enabling our consulting practice with technology are key for us, which the new company allows us to do. The other key areas are around our portfolio of capital projects and infrastructure.

Additional areas are integrating with state and local communities. When you think about sustainability and climate change, the effect it has on our communities, taking our state and local practice from Guidehouse and integrating that with our energy practice brings a special value. That's what's important. That's a flavor of what I'm excited about regarding what we can bring to our clients in a broader sense.

Jan Vrins: As Dan mentioned, we still have our core capabilities and core work that we will continue to do, our market modeling work, energy efficiency program work, and grid modernization work, like in Puerto Rico and other places.

Another exciting bit of news is that Navigant is doing full-time research

on new energy and technology topics. We'll change the name to Guidehouse Insights, and they will look at some of the broader topics around infrastructure, resiliency, and cyber and physical security.

PUF: You talk about sustainability and progressive strategies. Talk about how important that is for your firm and for the clients. Why is that such a passion?

Jan Vrins: It's a passion because it's important for the world we live in. We have to bend the curve of carbon and methane globally. We're passionate about how we can help prepare companies to navigate through this whole climate change and energy transition.

Whether it's issues like the role of natural gas, which we think is important to talk about, renewables, offshore wind, and hydrogen production, we want to continue to show and share with our clients and the broader industry, what is feasible right now? What can we do?

We believe strongly that the technology is here, and we look for business and regulatory models where we can implement some of these new clean energy technologies and solutions.

Then there are the clients of our utilities – the policymakers, regulators, governments, cities, states, and the world. We're trying to help utility clients find the right solutions and scale those solutions so they can drive more value to customers and to shareholders.

PUF: Dan you spent a good period of time at a great firm, Accenture, but you've joined Guidehouse and take on a big responsibility. What drove you to make that big change?

Dan Hahn: What excites me about this role is the ability to be part of something new with the combined groups to bring to the market. Accenture is a great company. I've worked for them for twenty-five years.

I had seen a lot of changes from

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being a private company as Andersen Consulting, becoming a public company, and worked with a wide variety of clients and industries delivering value across different parts of the business. I had a great career there.

Looking forward to what we have at Guidehouse, and what attracted me is the overall holistic ability to start with this brand new enterprise and create a name for ourselves in the market in a new way.

PUF: Jan, in three years, five years, and beyond, where do you think this is going to go, and what are your aspirations?

Jan Vrins: It's easier to talk about your clients and where they are three to five years from now sometimes than if it's about yourself. But in three to five years, if you were to ask our CEO Scott McIntyre, we want to be a next generation global, cultural, consulting powerhouse.

There are a lot of good consultants, but what makes us unique and what positions us as a leader in our industry is that we take our deep industry and technical expertise that we have with areas like policymaking, or regulation, and how to operate a utility or financial institution.

We want to take that and combine it with strong strategy and management

consulting capabilities and drive transformation. Those are issues like change management, how you move people along and how you redesign processes.

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— Jan Vrins

Combining those two are absolutely needed. Again, let's solve some of the world's biggest problems. That's who we want to be three to five years from now. We want to be one of the top three firms in the world that help society and our clients deal with the issues in such a way that we can secure a future world for our kids and our grandkids.

PUF: Dan, in three to five years, what will you have accomplished with your team that contributes to this vision Jan talked about?

Dan Hahn: I agree with what Jan said. Three to five years from now, I want our clients to look to us as the people they call, reach out to, and engage on a strategic level for all the

challenges they have. That's especially true around sustainability, and risk.

One of the unique qualities we can offer, and we're working on this now, is what we call integrated risk management. It's a holistic approach at the CEO level where the conversations are around bringing together all these risk factors when they think about, how do I create a presence in our community? A lot of our utilities are focused on economic development, people development, and community development.

If you think about risk management, there's enterprise risk, security and compliance risk, regulatory risk, market and credit risk, just to measure what we're going through right now. There are also climate change risks.

These are what we're calling a super solution. We're able to provide solutions for our customers that go beyond traditional roles of I'm going to look at risk and compliance, or just look at climate risk.

I share that story because three to five years from now, that's the kind of relationship at a broader scale that we can have with our clients because these are going to be the top of mind challenges they're going to be facing.

Three to five years from now our business is completely focused on not only providing that, but then also executing that vision. That's going to be critical, in measuring the value we bring. **PUF**

FALL IN NATURAL GAS PRICE DRIVING DOWN C&I ELECTRIC AND GAS RATES

The average price of electric power paid by commercial customers in the U.S. this March fell by one and a half percent as compared to March of the prior year, 2019. While the average price paid by industrial customers fell by nearly three and a half percent. The main driver of these drops in commercial and industrial electric rates was the falling price of natural gas that electric utilities and other power plant operators pay. This price was nearly nineteen percent lower this March relative to the average price in March of 2019. Commercial and industrial customers of natural gas utilities benefited as well. Commercial natural gas rates are down by over five and a half percent on average. Industrial natural gas rates are down by twelve percent on average.