Using ExoLink Online

User Documentation
Version 2.2

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1

OVERVIEW

ExoLink manages data transactions for the deregulated energy industry. We ensure that information collected by numerous participants in an energy market is communicated properly and efficiently between the market participants. In doing so, we explore the distributors' requirements for communication and validate that we have the proper interfaces in place to handle the receipt or submission of data. *"Using ExoLink Online"* explains how ExoLink's online solution allows you to interact with this information. Installation and configuration information is provided in Chapter 2, "Getting Started".

Audience Profile

This document will assist end-users, which are generally utility provider customer support personnel, in understanding their interaction with ExoLink's online solution. The knowledge of each end-user may range from a novice to experienced level. These users differ in background, skill level, level of computer experience, years of service within the utility industry, education, frequency in which they access the application, and motivation. This manual is written to meet the requirements of a novice-level end-user, thus ensuring usability at all other skill and experience levels. However, certain sections apply only to upper level and more technical users.

Chapter Name	Novice	Skilled	Technical
"Overview"	x	x	
"Getting Started"	x	x	
"Performing Tasks"	x	x	
"Administration"			x

In Review

Once you have completed your review of this manual, you should have a good understanding of ExoLink's online solution and its many functions that assist you in managing the transactions associated with your energy market. Use this document as your reference tool during the course of learning the application. The document has been organized in such a way as to provide information in the order in which you would initially use it and then be able to reference in the future.

Conventions Used

Within this document, certain conventions are used to assist you in your learning experience. The following type and font conventions are used to enhance your understanding:

- *Italic type* is used to emphasize the author's points or to introduce new terms.
- Window names, panel names, tab names, screen messages, field names, key names, and button names appear in **bold** type.
- Command samples and information that you are asked to type appear in `monospace type`.

Note

Notes present interesting or useful information that may not necessarily be essential to the discussion. A *Note* is used to provide additional information that may help you avoid problems, or to offer advice that relates to the particular topic.

CAUTION

Cautions serve to warn you about potential problems that a procedure may cause, unexpected results, and mistakes to avoid.

Industry Overview

This section provides information concerning ExoLink's online solution and how it relates to the utility industry.

Utility Industry

To assist with your understanding of ExoLink's online solution and the reasons organizations use it, we have provided a short overview of deregulation as it affects the utility industry, which has brought about a new concept to this industry—competition.

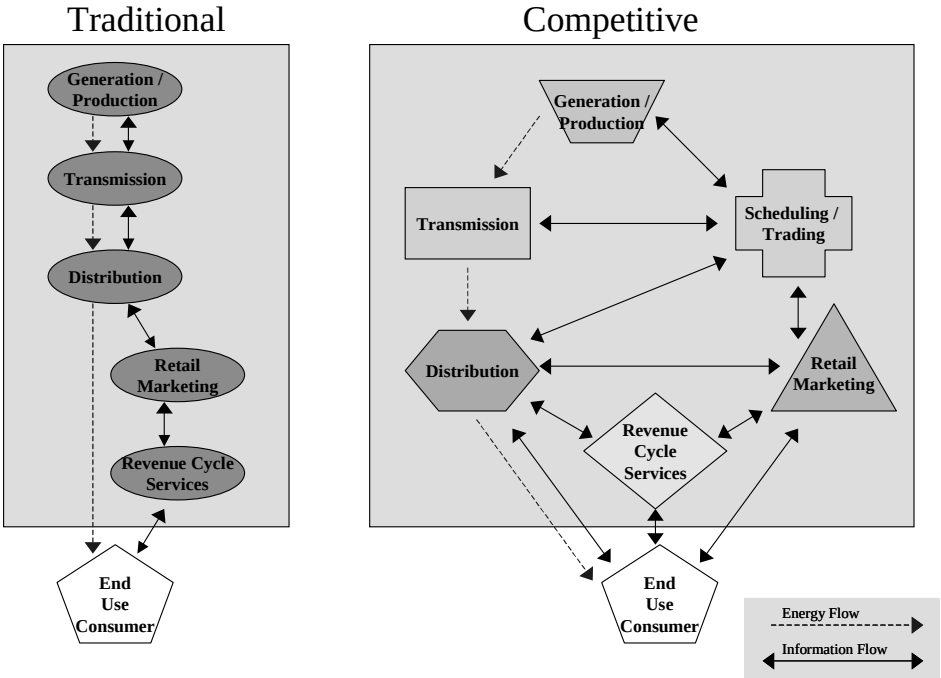


Figure 1.1 Utility Industry Overview

In the deregulated market, energy can be marketed by different energy service providers (ESPs) through the existing distribution framework, and the end-use customer now only deals with the competitor who trades and markets the energy. The competitor engages with the utility distribution companies (UDCs) responsible for generation/production and supply of energy to the end-use customer.

ExoLink's online solution facilitates seamless information flow and exchange among the trading and marketing companies, and the generation and production companies.

The ExoLink Solution

ExoLink's online solution is a transaction distributor that facilitates integration of dissimilar messaging systems between ESPs, UDCs, and the application, which is designed to provide the following:

- Framework to bridge unique messaging mechanisms, protocols, and data transport technologies
- Persistent message-to-business object information mapping mechanism to queue information for delivery
- Interface to clients with a view of all markets
- Easy and versatile interface with multiple providers
- Business-to-business e-commerce solution for clients
- Translation of multiple file formats, such as electronic data interchange (EDI) data, to a generic format
- Storage of all inbound and outbound records in the database
- Tracking of filenames, record status, and date and time of load into the application database
- Tracking associations between events and transactions
- Application of appropriate business rules to inbound and outbound files

Application Flow Diagram

The flow of information through ExoLink's online solution is depicted in the following diagram.

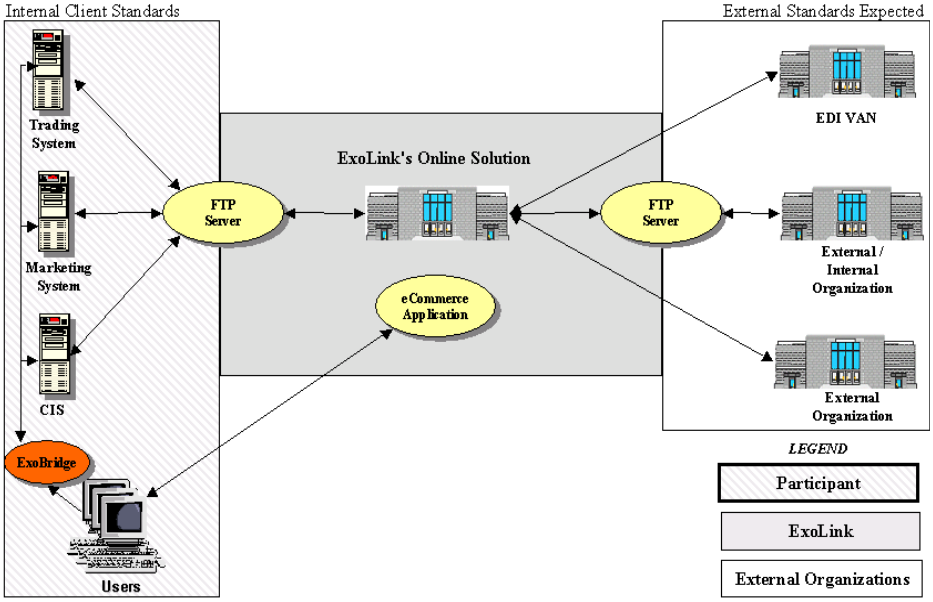


Figure 1.2 Services Flow

In this example, the client has three internal systems: trading system, marketing system, and customer interface system (CIS). The client works with providers in various markets that use flat files and EDI with proprietary formats. ExoLink's online solution enables the exchange of data between the client and providers by data translation in the different system-specific formats. Thus, the application provides a simple interface mechanism for each client system while doing business with many providers that utilize varying protocols and formats.

ExoLink's online solution builds the communication infrastructure for interaction between a growing number of market participants. Following are some of the challenges that need to be managed for this daunting task:

- Complex array of required interfaces
- Lack of common standards
- Different communication standards established by individual states with various entities interpreting these standards differently. National standards are slow to develop and unlikely to yield tangible results.
- Unresolved issues concerning incorrect or missing data, lost, or late transactions, etc., even with focus on communications standards

Currently, clients use different methods for exchanging information (e.g., flat files, XML, EDI, faxes, etc.). ExoLink's online solution handles all of these data exchange types and many more using the file transaction service packages that comprise the application to automatically transfer client data to and from the application database. ExoLink's online solution is used to exchange data with the utility companies in different markets.

Note

Keep in mind that the previous diagram contains "possible" entities, all of which may not be applicable to your market.

Business Events

A business event is a set of transactions that occur due to a specific event or request by a client, ESP, or UDC. A transaction is any transference of business information from one business entity to another, including information going from one business entity back to itself.

ExoLink's online solution centers around the following business events:

- **Enrollment**: Pertains to the enrollment options (i.e., enrollment, reschedule of an enrollment, or cancellation of an enrollment) for a new customer at a premise where service may have been provided previously, including a premise where service was provided previously, but requires a new meter. Enrollment also includes those transactions pertaining to the enrollment or cancellation of an enrollment for a customer that has existing service with another provider, and the customer is switching to a new ESP or provider of last resort (POLR).
- **Equipment Maintenance**: Provides detail information concerning maintenance performed on physical equipment. Equipment maintenance includes those transactions associated with meter changes, meter registers, index changes, and physical device attribute changes.
- **Account Maintenance**: Provides detail information concerning any maintenance performed on customer account data. Account maintenance includes those transactions associated with name changes, billing address changes, medical conditions, and social security (SS) or employer identification (EIN) changes.
- **Billing**: Provides detail information concerning any data required to update billing information. Billing includes those transactions associated with meter reads and invoices, which include both usage and other charges, as well as read and invoice cancellations.

- **Terminations**: Provides detail information concerning the discontinuance of services at a service point or premise. Terminations includes those transactions associated with meter pulls, terminations, final reads, and non-payment terminations.
- **Collections**: Provides detail information concerning collection activities for a specified service point. Collections includes those transactions associated with non-payment notification, payment notifications, and write-off notifications.
- **Payments**: Provides details of specific invoice payment batches. This pass-through transaction contains a payment total with an associated breakdown of payments by invoice.
- **Informational Requests**: Pertains to those services that may be performed independently of any of the previously listed business events. For example, a consumption usage history update may be received by itself or with an acknowledgement of enrollment of a customer. Note that some markets do not allow informational requests—meaning that no secondary transactions may be received outside of a defined business event, as previously listed.

File Processing

With ExoLink's online solution, information can be communicated between providers in a couple of ways:

- **Batch Process**: In this automated process, a large file containing several records or transactions for separate premises is sent to ExoLink where the data is merged into existing databases to update a each provider's record.
- **Manual Process**: Requires you to enter or update information through the online and forward the transaction to the receiving provider.

All error handling is performed online.

Bringing It Together

Simply put, ExoLink gathers data from one entity, stores it in a database, and communicates pieces of that data to other entities as required by business and industry process rules. This data is collected, one transaction at a time, for each business event.

The next chapters will assist you in accessing the application and performing specific tasks.

CHAPTER

2

GETTING STARTED

Getting started with ExoLink's online solution is relatively easy. Feel comfortable in knowing that hours of work have gone into researching markets and their data communication needs to ensure that your data is communicated effectively and accurately. Because you are sharing so much data—customer records, metering details, service start and stop dates, billing details, profile information, and balancing information—it is only logical that you use a clearinghouse to communicate those details. Using the application allows you to focus on customer enrollment, customer service, and other such business details without the worry of how you are going to relay the information to your associated partners.

Within this chapter you will learn the basics of ExoLink's online solution...how to access, log on, and exit the application:

Java™ Web Start is a Sun Microsystems (Sun) product that allows you to launch an application with a single click from your desktop. Java™ Web Start works on any operating system such as Unix, Mac, and Windows. A few clicks

of the mouse and you are ready to begin. Refer to “Installing Java™ Web Start” on page 2-8 for details.

System Requirements

ExoLink’s online solution is accessed through a browser and supports both Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE) and Netscape Communicator (Netscape). Java Web Start 1.0.1 is used to manage application instances. Additional requirements for using ExoTran are as follows:

- Microsoft Windows 95/98/NT/2000 operating system
- Pentium 90 or greater
- At least 64 MB ram
- At least 10 MB free hard drive space
- Internet connection
- local administrator authority over the PC when installing the java required for ExoLink’s online solution

Accessing ExoLink’s Online Solution

Accessing ExoLink’s online solution is easy...three methods of access are provided for your convenience. After launching your local browser, you can perform any of the following:

- Enter a specific Uniform Resource Locator (URL) and press **Enter** to display the application access dialog box.
- Access the main application URL and select the application of your choice.
- Use Java™ Web Start to launch ExoLink’s online solution without using your browser (refer to “Installing Java™ Web Start” on page 2-8 for details).

Note

A URL is the way the World Wide Web (WWW) tells one address from another—similar to the use of five- and nine-digit zip codes for the postal service.

Confused? In this day and age, it pays to know a little about the Internet, so read on for a quick update on technology.

A browser is software, just like a word-processing or spreadsheet program, only instead of cranking out pie charts or memos, a browser enables you to view web pages. The WWW is the most outgoing and accessible incarnation of the Internet. These web pages combined together make up an Internet site, an

intranet, or even an application. Everything you see on the WWW has its own distinct address, or URL, including web pages and images—now you understand why everyone refers to it as a URL.

Launching a program or document within a graphical user interface (GUI), such as the Macintosh (Mac) or Windows Operating System (OS), opens a window. In this case, you open a program with a browser window. These programs opened in windows can be resized, moved around, overlapped, minimized, and maximized by pointing, clicking, and dragging your mouse on the appropriate button (usually located in one of the window's corners).

Within your browser, you are able to view ExoLink's online solution—a Java-enabled application—to perform your everyday duties without contacting the ESPs or UDCs directly.

Using Internet Explorer or Netscape

ExoLink's online solution allows you to view and manipulate transactions online. To launch the application using a web browser, complete the following steps:

1. Double-click your Internet browser, whether it is Netscape or Internet Explorer—any version of each.
2. Perform the following action based on whether you know the application's URL you want to open:
   - If you know the specific URL you want to open, type it in your browser's URL field and press **Enter**.
   - If you do not know the specific URL, type http://exotran.com in your browser's **URL** field and select the appropriate application.

   For Netscape, the URL field is designated as the **Location** field; for Internet Explorer, it is the **Address** field.

Either option displays ExoLink's online solution's **Access** dialog box, requesting your **User ID** and **Password**.

Figure 2.1 Access Dialog Box

Logging On

Complete your logon by following these steps.

1. Type your **User ID** in the **User ID** field.
2. Type your **Password** in the **Password** field.

Note

The **User ID** and **Password** fields are case sensitive. If your **User ID** or **Password** was created with all lowercase letters, it must be typed in lowercase.

3. Click **OK** to proceed with accessing the application. If you do not want to log on, click **Cancel**.

   The application attempts to verify your **User ID** and **Password**, and performs one of the following actions:

- If accepted, the main window appears, an example of which follows:

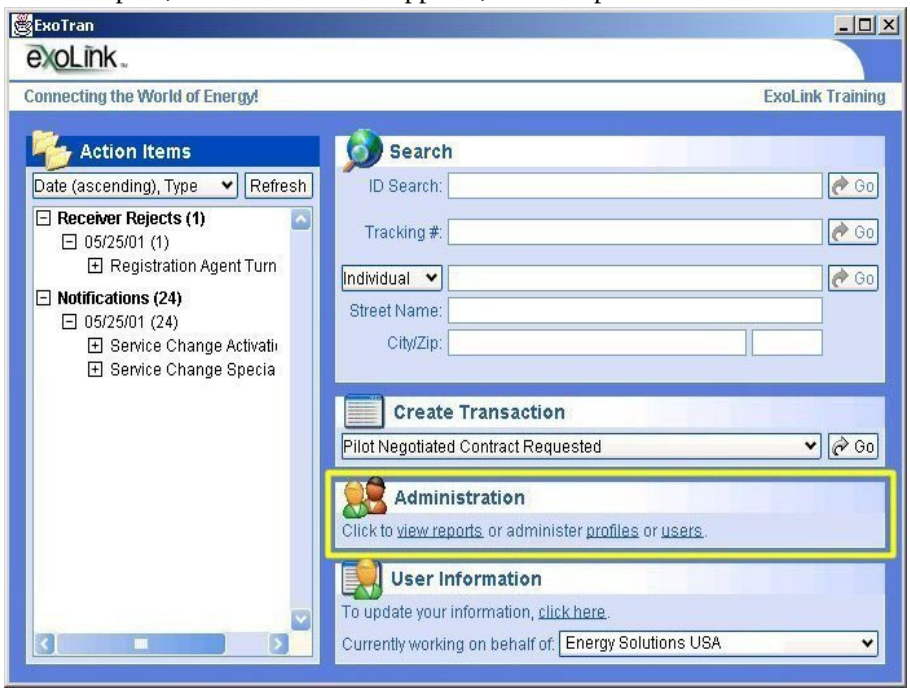


Figure 2.2 Main Window

Note

The **Administration** panel, highlighted in yellow, displays only for those users who have been granted the appropriate permissions. For users with both reporting and administrative permissions, the sentence reads as shown. With only reporting permissions, the message reads "Click to view reports." With only administrative permissions, the message reads "Click to administer profiles or users." Refer to "Administration" on page 4-1 for a detailed discussion of permissions and the **Administration** panel.

- If rejected, the application displays a Logon Failed or Expired Password error message, as follows.

Figure 2.3 Logon Failed Error Message

4 If you receive the Logon Failed error message, re-enter the logon information and click **OK**.

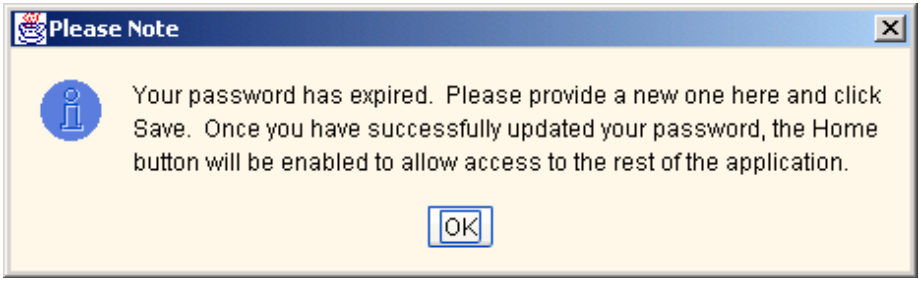


Figure 2.4 Expired Password Error Message

5 If you receive the Expired Password error message, change your password using the steps outlined in “Maintaining Logon Information” on page 2-6.

Maintaining Logon Information

At times, you may need to update your logon information (e.g., in the case of an expired password). At the bottom, right side of the main window is the **User Information** panel; you can maintain your logon information from here.

Complete the following steps to accomplish this task:

1 From the main window, click the **To update your information, click here** link in the **User Information** panel.

Figure 2.5 Example User Information Panel

The application displays the **User Information** dialog box.

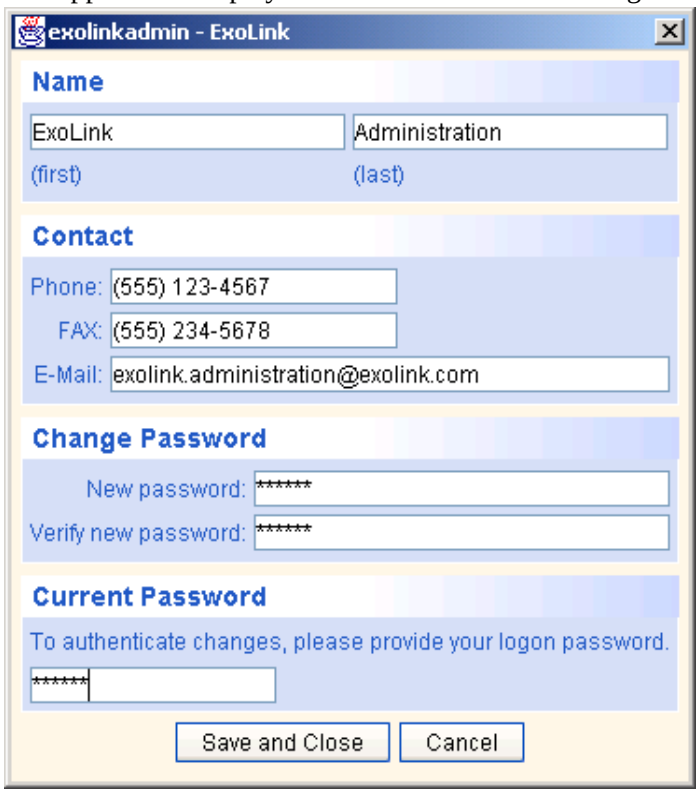


Figure 2.6 User Information Dialog Box

2 Update any of the **Name**, **Contact**, **Change Password**, or **Current Password** fields as necessary, and click **Save and Close** to save your changes and return to the main window.

Note

Clicking **Cancel** returns you to the main window without saving any changes.

If you receive the following error message, click **OK** to return to the **User Information** dialog box and re-enter your updated password information:

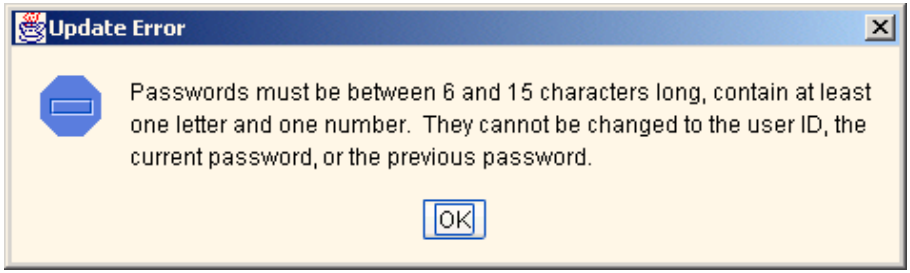


Figure 2.7 Password Error

Note — Password fields are case-sensitive. If you create your new password with all lowercase letters, it must be typed in lowercase.

Logging Off

The standard Windows **Minimize**, **Maximize**, and **Close** buttons are provided at the far right of the title bar. Be sure to exit completely out of ExoLink's online solution using the **Close** button whenever you take a break or when you have completed your work to ensure that no one is able to perform unauthorized functions using the application.

Note — ExoLink's online solution is not completely shut down until the last window is closed.

Installing Java™ Web Start

Using Sun's Java™ Web Start product allows you to download ExoLink's online solution and launch it without going through complicated installation procedures. Once installed, you can launch ExoLink's online solution through the following options:

- Single click from your desktop—with any web browser
- Java™ Web Start's application manager
- Desktop icon
- Windows Start menu item

Because Java™ Web Start runs independently of any browser, you can shut down your browser or surf to another web page and continue using ExoLink's online solution. To save time, days later you can re-launch the application anytime from the desktop icon, start menu, or Java™ Web Start, without powering up your browser again.

Downloading Java™ Web Start

With Java™ Web Start, you launch ExoLink's online solution by clicking on an application web page link. The first time you launch the application, Java™ Web Start automatically downloads all necessary files. It then caches the files on your computer so the application is always ready to be re-launched anytime you want—either from the desktop icon, the start menu, from the browser link, or from Java™ Web Start itself. And no matter which method you use to launch ExoLink's online solution, the most current version of the application is always presented to you.

To download Java™ Web Start, complete the following steps:

1 Enter http://exotran.com in your browsers URL field.

2 From the web page, click the link in the third bulleted item.

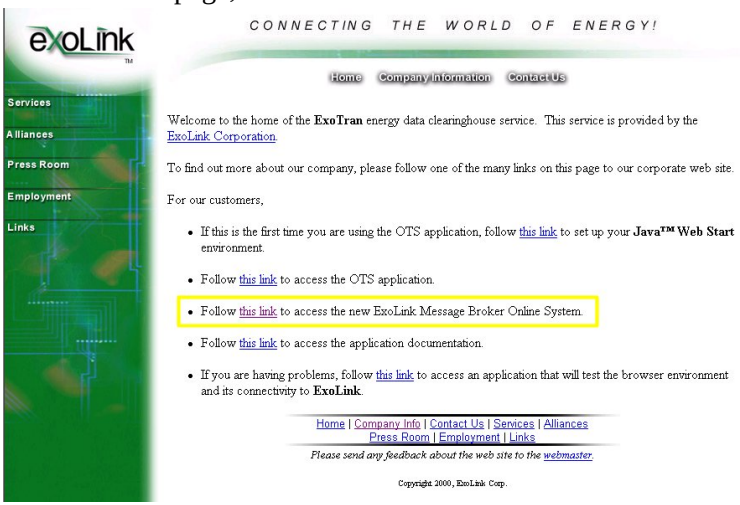


Figure 2.8 www.ExoTran.com

3 From the resulting web page, click the Get Java™ Web Start NOW! graphic.

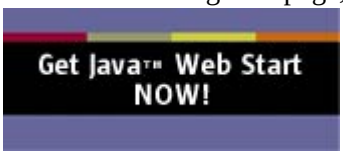


Figure 2.9 Downloading Java™ Web Start

4 Selecting this graphic provides access to the File Download panel.

Figure 2.10 File Download

You have the option of downloading Java™ Web Start from its current location, which automatically prompts you through the installation, or saving the application to your computer, allowing you to install the application at a later date.

We recommend the following guidelines when making this decision:

- Run this program from its current location: Use this option if you are using a T-1 line, DSL service, or cable modem.
- Save this program to disk: Use this option if you are using a 54k modem or less.

The following instructions assume that you have selected the **Run this program from its current location** option. If you are choosing the “Save Program to Disk” option, refer to “Save Program to Disk” on page 2-14.

4 Select the **Run the program from its current location** option and click **OK**. The download program displays the following status panel.

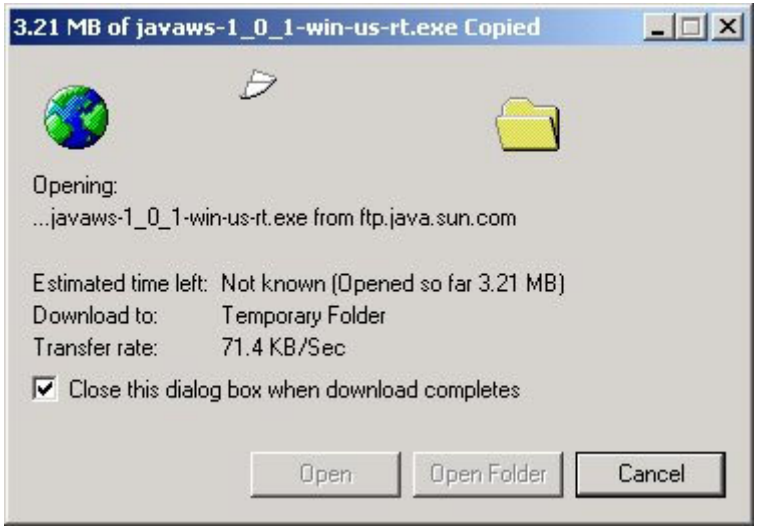


Figure 2.11 Run Program From Current Location

5 The Security Warning panel displays when the download completes.

Figure 2.12 Security Warning

6 Click **Yes** to continue with the installation and access Sun Microsystems, Inc.'s Software License Agreement.

Figure 2.13 Sun Microsystems Software License Agreement

7 Click **Accept** after reviewing the licensing agreement to continue with the installation and specify where you want the application installed.

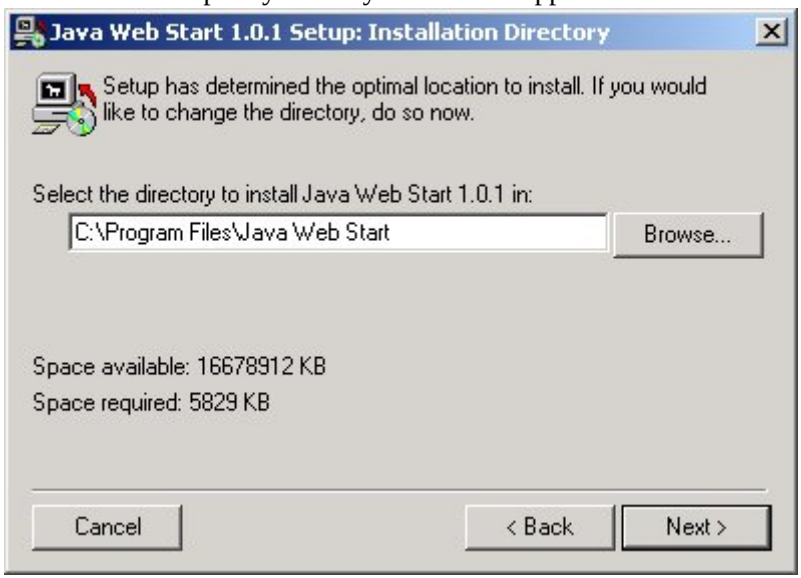


Figure 2.14 Choose Destination Location

8 Specify the directory where you want Java™ Web Start installed—using the **Browse** option if necessary, and click **Next** to complete the installation.

9 The following status panel displays.

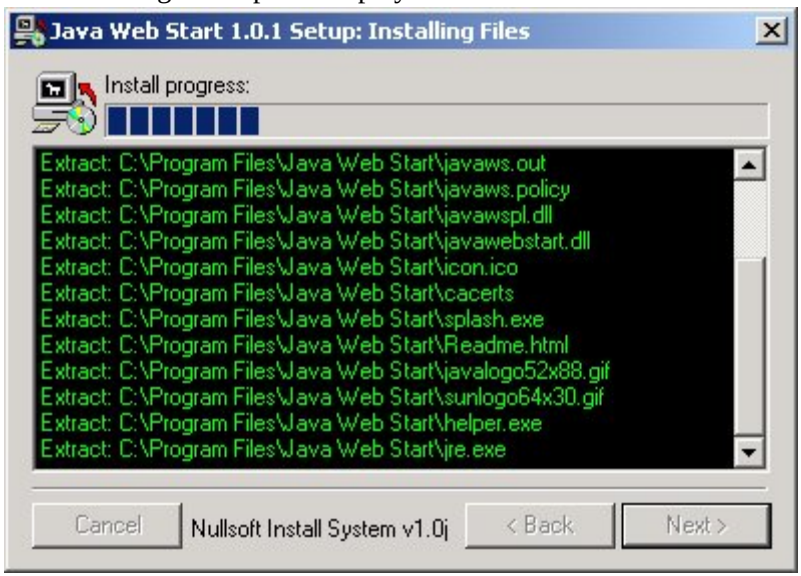


Figure 2.15 Installation Status Panel

10 When the registry update is complete, the following status panel displays.

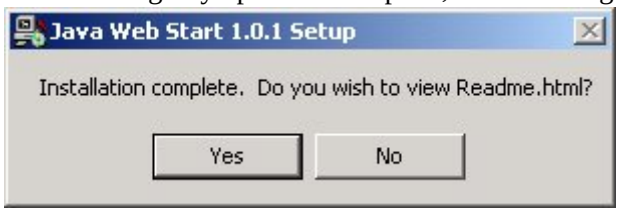


Figure 2.16 Installation Complete Panel

11 Click **Yes** to learn about the application or **No** to return to the www.ExoTran.com browser page.

Save Program to Disk

To save the Java™ Web Start download program to disk and install at a later date, complete the following steps.

1 Select the **Save this program to disk** option and click **OK**.

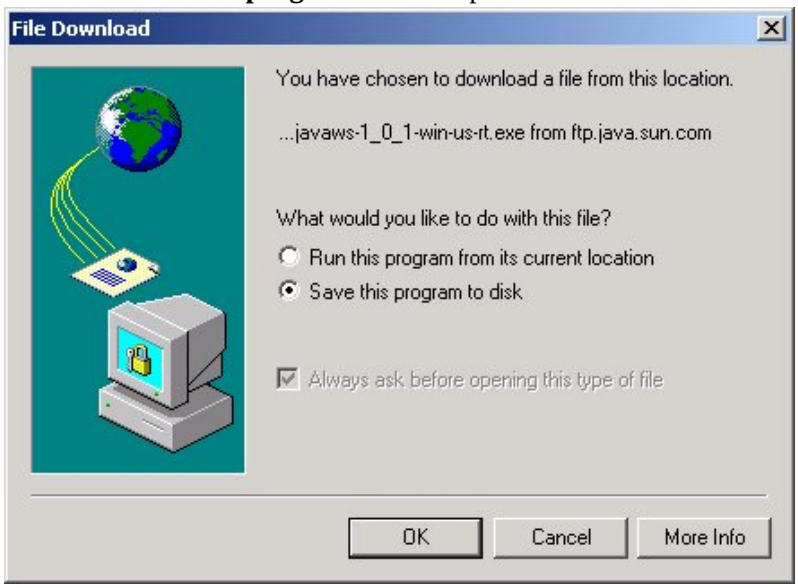


Figure 2.17 Save Program to Disk

2 Selecting this option displays the following Save As panel.

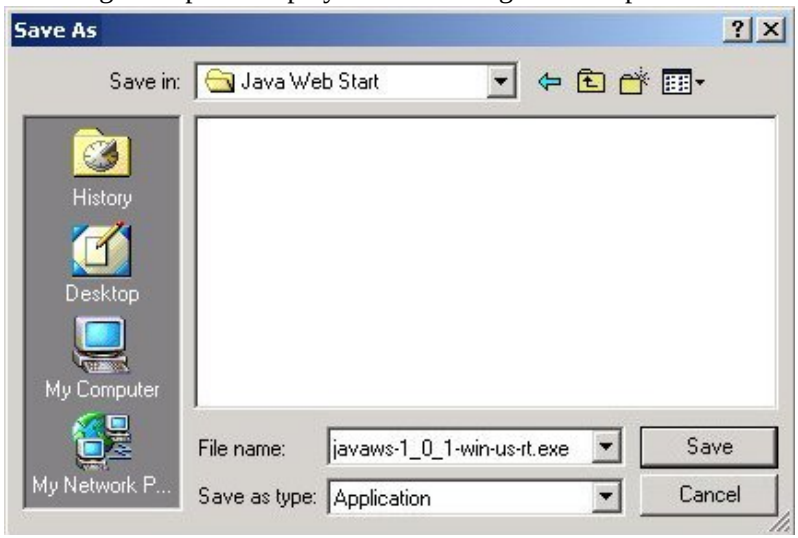


Figure 2.18 Selecting Save Location

3 Specify the directory location where you want the application installed and click **Save**. The download program displays the following status panel.

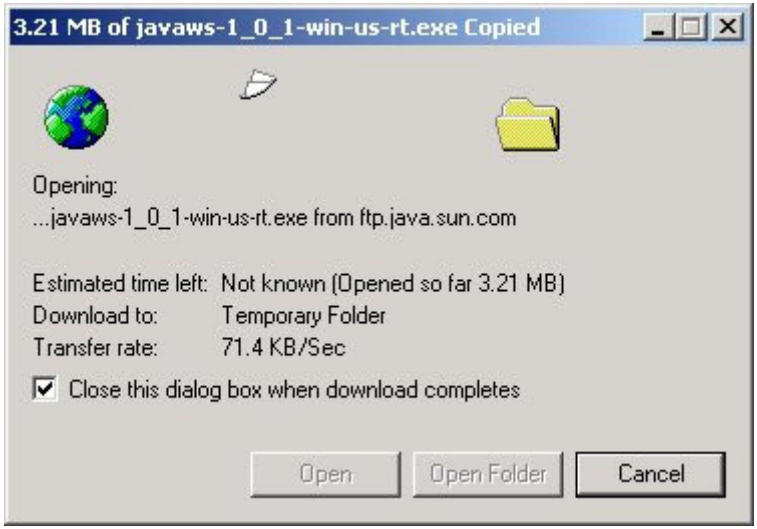


Figure 2.19 Download Status Window

4 When the download completes, you are returned to your desktop.

Install at a Later Date

To install the application once it has been saved to your computer, complete the following steps.

1 Click the Windows **Start** button.

2 Click **Run**.

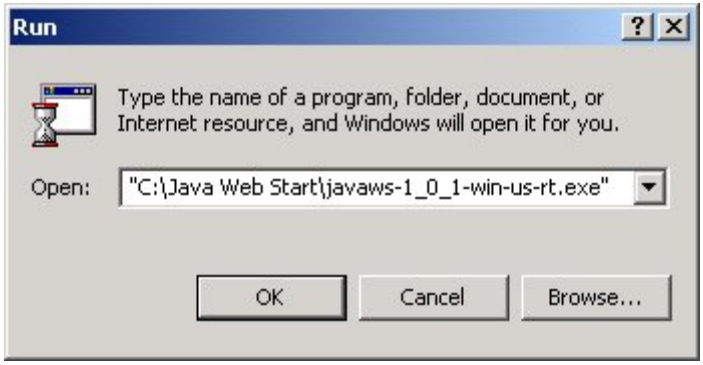


Figure 2.20 Run Install

3. Locate the Java™ Web Start executable file—using the **Browse** option if necessary. The file is located in the directory that you specified to save the download.
4. Click **OK** to begin installing Java™ Web Start.
5. Refer to Step 6 in "Downloading Java™ Web Start" to continue with the installation.

Using Java™ Web Start

Installing Java™ Web Start provides you the option of launching ExoLink's online solution from multiple locations:

- "Launching from Your Browser" on page 2-16
- "Launching from the Desktop Shortcut" on page 2-17
- "Launching from Java™ Web Start" on page 2-17

ExoLink recommends that you launch the application from a desktop shortcut created via Java™ Web Start or from your browser. To launch ExoLink's online solution from a desktop shortcut, you must first launch the application a second time from your browser to have Java™ Web Start automatically create the desktop shortcut.

Launching from Your Browser

To launch the application from your browser—after installing Java™ Web Start, complete the following steps:

1. Enter the following URL: http://www.exotran.com/embos.html.
2. Click the **Online System** link.
3. A Java™ Web Start splash screen appears briefly, followed by a status panel.
4. Once completed, a **Security Warning** panel displays.
5. Click **Launch** to access the **Logon** panel.
6. Enter your logon information as you normally would.

Note: If this is the second time you are launching the application from the browser—after installing Java™ Web Start, you will be prompted to create desktop shortcuts.

Launching from the Desktop Shortcut

To launch the application from the desktop shortcut, complete the following steps:

1. Click the **Shortcut to eMB** icon on the desktop; note the Java™ Web Start application icon.
2. A Java™ Web Start splash screen appears briefly, followed by the **Logon** panel.
3. Enter your logon information as you normally would.

Launching from Java™ Web Start

To launch the application from Java™ Web Start, complete the following steps:

1. Double-click the **Java™ Web Start** icon on your desktop to access the **Application Manager**.
2. Click **Cached Applications** in the **Group** drop-down list.
3. Click the **eMB** option in the **Applications** list box.
4. Click **Launch** to launch the application and access the **Logon** panel.
5. Enter your logon information as you normally would.

CHAPTER

3

PERFORMING TASKS

ExoLink's online solution contains windows and fields that facilitate viewing market participant communications. More specifically, you can manage information received from and sent to market participants.

Information presented within this chapter will assist you in understanding the components and processes that comprise the application:

- Viewing the Main Window
- Searching for Accounts and Events
- Possible Search Results
- Viewing Event/Participant Flow Diagrams
- Viewing and Acknowledging Notifications
- Opening and Editing Validation Exceptions
- Viewing and Acknowledging Receiver Rejects
- Creating and Submitting a New Transaction
- Viewing and Submitting Required Manual Completions

Viewing the Main Window

The main window for ExoLink's online solution is divided into the following panels:

- *Action Items Panel* on page 3-3,
- *Search Panel* on page 3-5,
- *Create Transaction Panel* on page 3-5,
- *Administration Panel* on page 3-6,
- *User Information Panel* on page 3-6

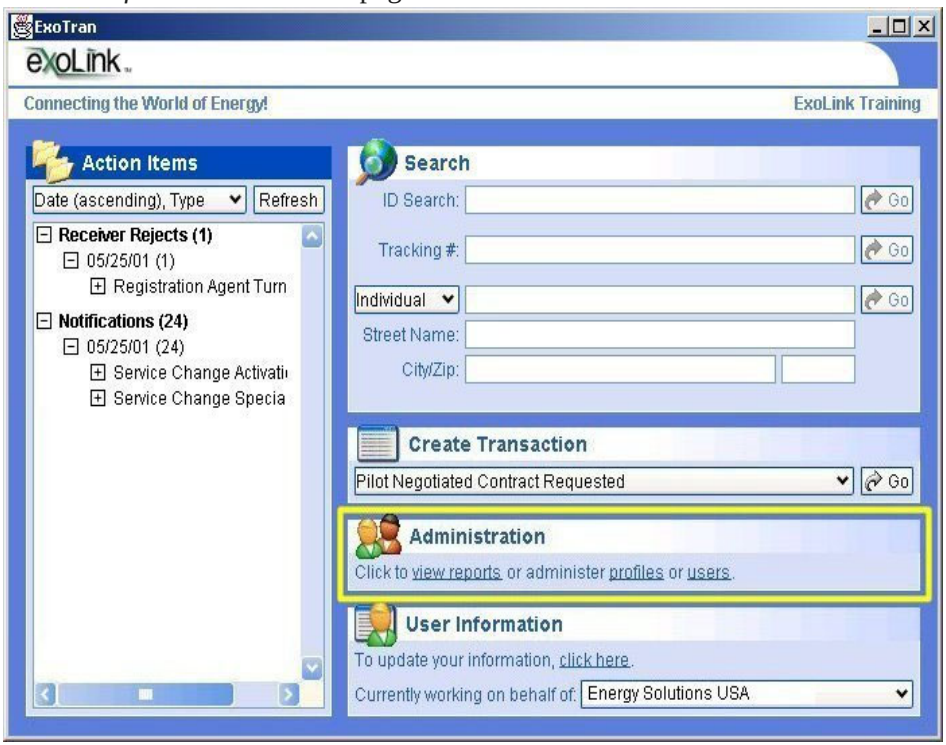


Figure 3.1 Main Window

Note

The **Administration** panel displays only for those users who have been granted the appropriate permissions. For users with both reporting and administrative permissions, the sentence reads as shown. With only reporting permissions, the message reads "Click to view reports." With only administrative permissions, the message reads "Click to administer profiles or users." Refer to *Administration* on page 4-1.

Action Items Panel

The **Action Items** panel, displayed on the left side of the main window, provides a list of transactions grouped by transaction types (refer to *Transaction Types* on page 3-4).

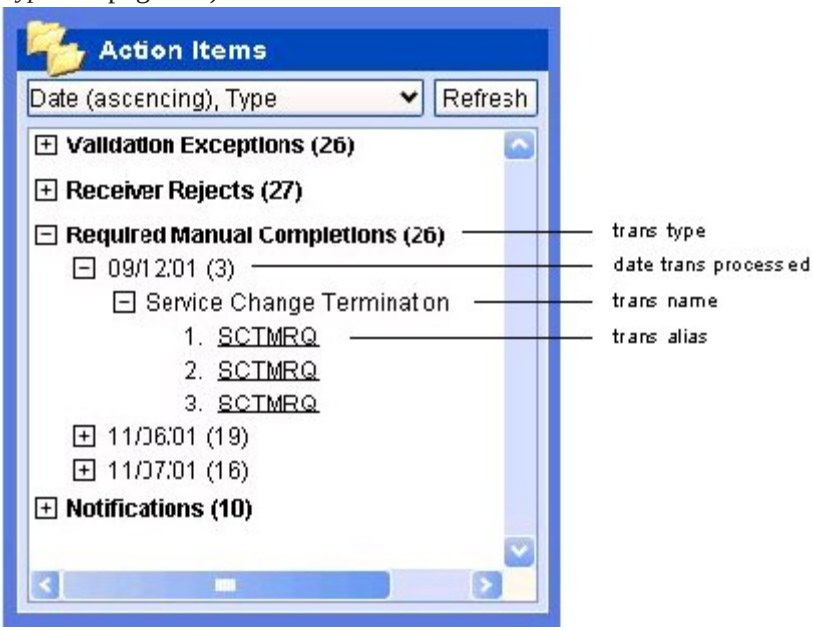


Figure 3.2 Action Items Panel

Selecting the drop-down arrow to the right of the sort description allows you to change the sort order. The choices for sorting the transactions beneath each transaction type heading are as follows:

- Date (ascending), Type
- Date (descending), Type
- Type, Date (ascending)
- Type, Date (descending)

Once you specify the transaction display order, you select a transaction type to display the transaction aliases associated with that type. The numbers in parenthesis following the transaction types indicate the number of transaction for that type.

ExoLink's online solution employs a standard, collapsible tree structure approach to expand and minimize displayed transactions that require some form of action. Clicking the plus sign (+) preceding a transaction type expands the structure, displaying all the transactions within that group. Conversely, clicking

the minus sign (-) preceding a transaction group collapses the structure so only the transaction type headings are displayed. This feature is available regardless of the sort method selected, either by name or date.

Additional functionality is discussed in the following sections:

- *Opening and Editing Validation Exceptions* on page 3-15
- *Viewing and Submitting Required Manual Completions* on page 3-20
- *Viewing and Acknowledging Notifications* on page 3-21
- *Viewing and Acknowledging Receiver Rejects* on page 3-22

Transaction Types

As previously stated, the **Action Items** panel provides a list of transactions grouped by transaction types. Following are descriptions of the possible transaction types:

- *Validation Exceptions* - Transactions that have been processed and failed your company's validation rules. Validation exceptions are only created when the original transaction was submitted through a batch process and requires correction and re-submission.
- *Required Manual Completions* - Transactions established by your company that require you to complete specific fields within the application before submitting to the provider.
- *Receiver Rejects* - Originally submitted transactions that have been rejected by the receiving market participant, requiring you to correct and submit a new transaction within the application.
- *Notifications* - Transactions that require you to acknowledge receipt of the transaction. These transactions typically indicate that you need to perform some internal processing outside of the application.

Transactions received from a market participant are categorized as to how they should appear within the **Actions Items** panel or whether they should even appear at all. As transaction data may be stored within ExoLink's online solution and sent to a market participant through a batch processing method, some transactions may never appear in the panel. Transactions appearing within the **Action Items** panel require manual processing of some sort, including but not limited to manual completion of specific fields as identified by your company or manual acknowledgements based on your company's requirements.

Search Panel

The **Search** panel, displayed on the top, right side of the main window, provides various options for performing account searches.

Figure 3.3 Search Panel

Specific search functionality is discussed in *Searching for Accounts and Events* on page 3-6.

Create Transaction Panel

The **Create Transaction** panel, displayed on the middle, right side of the main window, provides the ability to create new transactions.

Figure 3.4 Create Transaction Panel

You begin the transaction creation process by selecting a transaction from the drop-down list and clicking **Go**. Available transactions are defined by your company. Specific features are discussed in *Creating and Submitting a New Transaction* on page 3-17.

Administration Panel

The **Administration** panel, displayed on the lower, right side of the main window, provides the Administrator the ability to manage end-user access to the various online functions through the use of work profiles.

Figure 3.5 Administration Panel

Refer to *Administration* on page 4-1 for additional information concerning the **Administration** panel and its related functionality.

User Information Panel

The **User Information** panel, displayed on the bottom, right side of the main window, provides you the ability to maintain your logon information (e.g., name changes, expired passwords, etc.).

Figure 3.6 User Information Panel

Refer to *Maintaining Logon Information* on page 2-6 for additional information concerning the **User Information** panel.

Searching for Accounts and Events

The **Search** feature allows you to search for specific accounts using client-defined options.

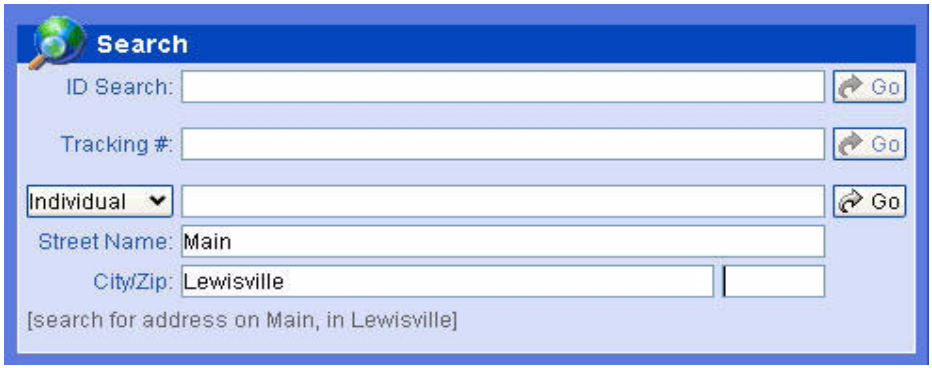


Figure 3.7 Search Panel

Use the following guidelines to perform the search type that best suites your needs:

Search Type	Conditions for Use
ID Search	Use when an account number is available, most frequently used.
Tracking #	Use when ESI-ID is not available and market participant tracking numbers are used.
Name, Complete Address, or Name & City or Zip	Use when the customer is on the phone and they do not have their account number handy.

Following are descriptions and explanations of these options. Refer to *Possible Search Results* on page 3-9 for descriptions of the results you may encounter.

ID Search

Use this case sensitive feature to perform a search using an account number (e.g., UDC account number, ESP account number, or site code). An account search typically is performed by entering the account number in the **ID Search** field and clicking **Go**.

Tracking

The **Tracking #** feature, which is case sensitive, allows you to perform a search using the market participant's inbound tracking number associated with the transaction. For example, if the UDC sends a tracking number in a record, then you may search for the UDC's tracking number. Enter the tracking number in the **Tracking #** field and click **Go**.

ExoLink's online solution does not create tracking numbers, this number is provided from a market participant. If a tracking number is not provided, it will not appear online. If more than one tracking number is available, a selection list of found transactions is provided.

Individual or Business Name

The name entry field allows you to perform a search for an individual or business name by entering the search information. This is not a case sensitive search and it only searches for existing sites receiving energy. The type of search is dependant upon your selection of Individual or Business. Enter the search information and click **Go**.

For an individual name search, you must provide one of the following sets of information:

- last name
- first initial and last name (in this order)
- first name and last name (in this order)

Avoid using a middle initial, as the application interprets the entry as the beginning of the last name. Additionally, the Search feature does not support partial searches. For example, if you enter “J Smith,” the application returns all Smiths whose first name begins with J (the J is not ignored). If you enter just the letter “J” by itself, the application returns only those names where the full last name is J, which probably would not be very many. You can view how the application interprets your search criteria by reviewing the information displayed at the bottom of the **Search** panel, which appears as you enter your search criteria.

Note

The search tool does return “fuzzy” matches. For example, if you enter “Smith,” the application may return accounts for Smithe, Smyth, Smythe, etc.

Selecting the business search allows you to perform a search using only the business name. The technology used to filter words allows only the first two meaningful nouns to be used. Words such as the, a, or, and, company, co., incorporated, corporation, corp., inc., and LTD are ignored.

Address

The address field feature, which is not case sensitive, allows you to perform a search using the account’s street name; however, you must provide the street name and city or zip code. The street number, if entered, is not used as a search criteria. Enter the search information and click **Go**.

Note

As you type information in the **Street Name** field, a text message displays at the bottom of the **Search** panel. This message indicates how the application interprets your search criteria.

Name & Address

The name and address search feature, which is not case sensitive, allows you to perform a search using a name and address combination; however, you must provide the name, and city or zip. A search using only a name and street name is not recognized. For example, a valid record may be found for **Individual** = `Smith` and **City/Zip** = `Houston`. Enter the search information and click **Go**.

Find Feature

Do not confuse the **Search** feature with the **Find** feature, which appears on such windows as when you open a Validation Exceptions transaction.

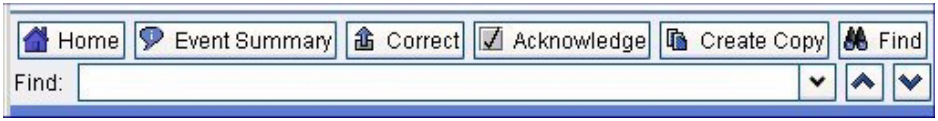


Figure 3.8 Example Validation Exceptions Transaction with Find Feature

Search allows you to search the entire application for the specified search criteria, while **Find** allows you to locate information that appears only on the current window.

Note that the **Find** button does not initiate the find action, it is simply a toggle that displays or removes the **Find** entry box. To initiate the find action, click the up or down arrows that appear to the right of the **Find** drop-down list box, which only retains the last 10 items and only for the current session. The up and down arrows perform the find action from the last found item; the first find action should be down.

Possible Search Results

This section discusses possible **Search** panels that can be returned when initiating any of the search options defined in *Searching for Accounts and Events* on page 3-6.

No Records Found

The “No records were found.” message displays when no matching criteria are found in any single transaction. This panel does not display as the result of an ID search. Verify your search criteria and search again:

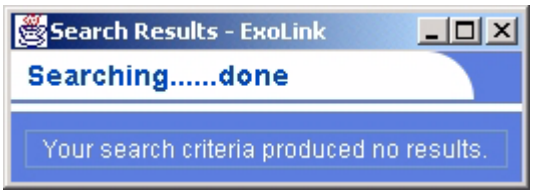


Figure 3.9 No Records Found

No Records Found - Search Enrollments

The “Your search criteria produced no results. To search for relevant enrollments, click here.” message displays when no matching criteria of existing sites to which energy is being provided is found; however, you are provided the option of searching incomplete enrollment events to locate the information for which you are searching.

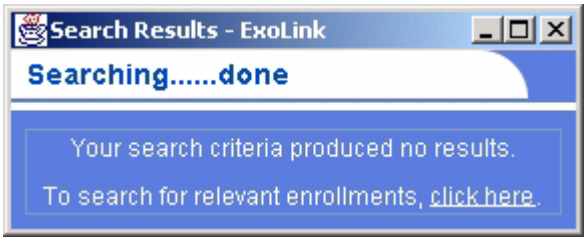


Figure 3.10 No Records Found - Search Enrollments

By clicking “click here,” the application displays the **Event Summary** panel, which allows you to view a transaction as it currently exists within the event process, such as a recent enrollment transaction that has yet to be sent to a registration agent or to a utility distribution company. Refer to the *Viewing the Event Summary Panel* on page 3-12 for additional information concerning the **Event Summary** panel.

Search Results - Multiple Matches

If your search request returns multiple matches, you will receive a dialog box from which you can make a selection. Click on the appropriate link to access the **Search Results** window for the selected customer.

Figure 3.11 Search Results - Multiple Matches

Search Results - Single Match

The **Search Results** panel displays when a single result is returned for your specified search criteria or you have selected a customer from the **Search Results - Multiple Matches** dialogue box.

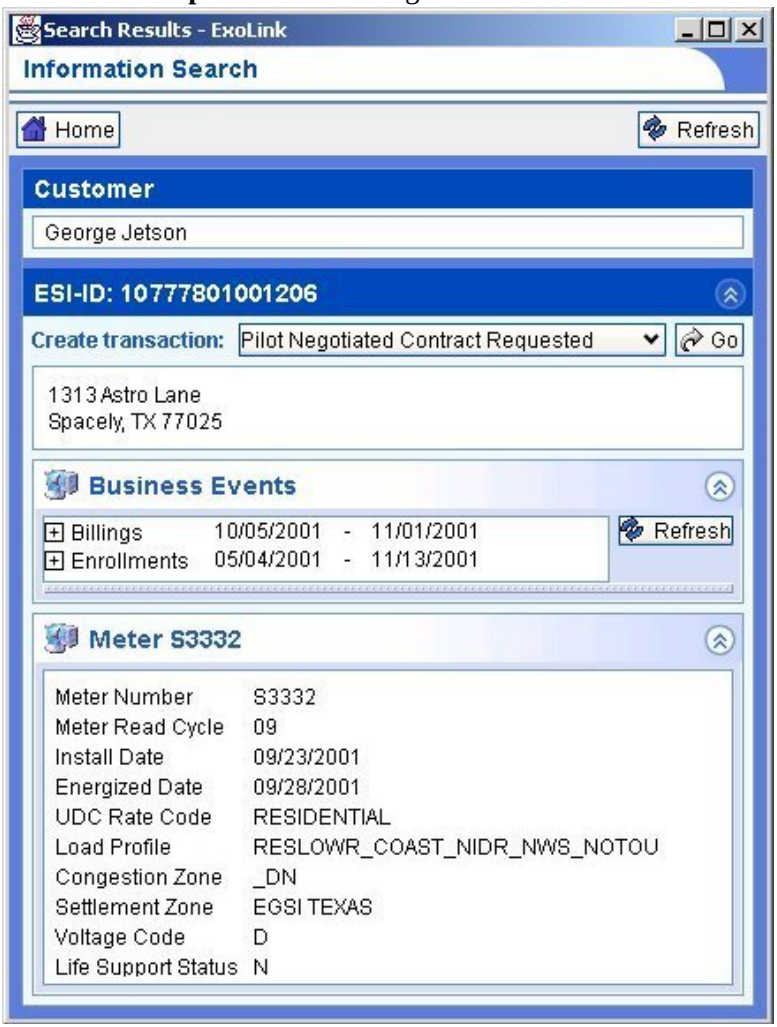


Figure 3.12 Account Information Search Window Results

Clicking the drop-down arrow next to the Create Transaction allows you to select a new transaction to send to your trading partner, by selecting the transaction and clicking **Go**.

Clicking a business event from within the Business Event display area displays the **Event Summary** window.

Viewing the Event Summary Panel

The **Event Summary** panel can be accessed through the following methods:

- Clicking the "**click here**" link that appears within the message that displays when no matching criteria is found for a search action (refer to *No Records Found - Search Enrollments* on page 3-10).
- Clicking a business event from within the Business Event display area on the **Search Results** window (refer to *Search Results - Single Match* on page 3-11).

- Clicking **Event Summary** at the top of the **A - Transaction Editor - Correct** panel, which is discussed in *Opening and Editing Validation Exceptions* on page 3-15.

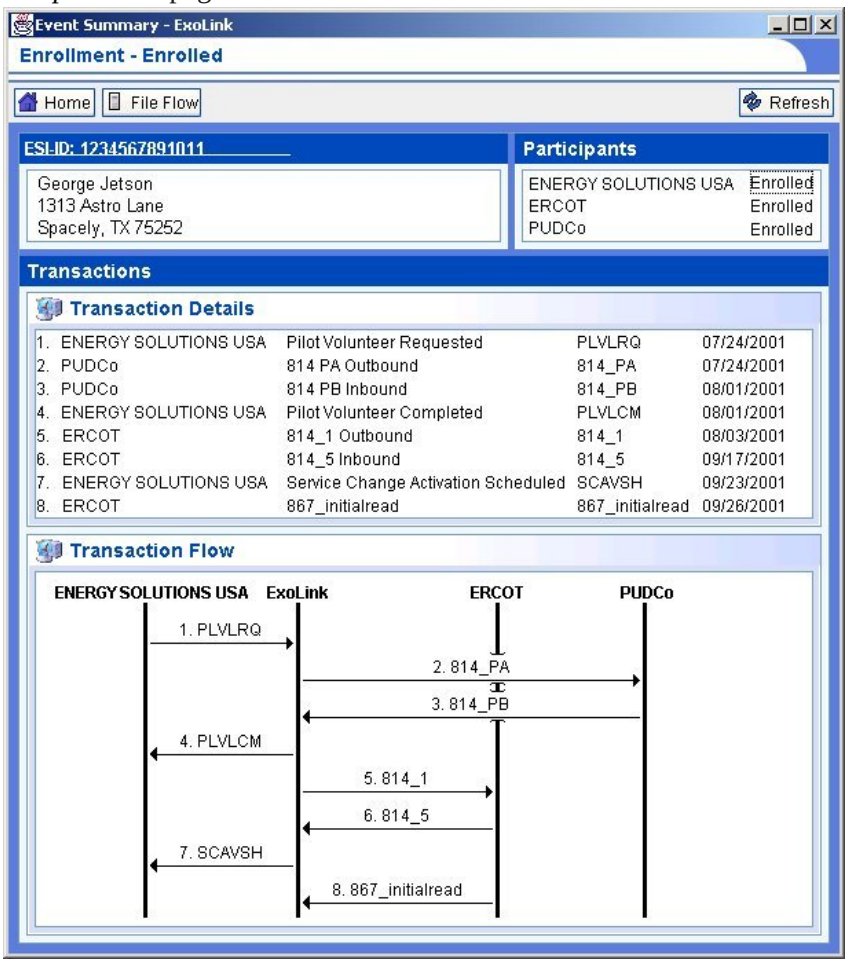


Figure 3.13 Event Summary Window

Clicking **File Flow** at the top of the window displays the **Related Files** window, where you can view the files associated with the event. Refer to *Viewing File Flow Diagrams* on page 3-14 for additional details concerning this panel.

Clicking the event status (in this case Enrolled) in the Participants display area displays the **Event/Participant Flow Diagram** window, where you can view the current state of the event within ExoLink's online solution. Refer to *Viewing Event/Participant Flow Diagrams* on page 3-14 for additional details concerning this panel.

Clicking the transaction alias (in this case PLVLRQ) in either the Transaction Details or Transaction Flow display area displays the **Transaction Editor - View** window, where you can view the transaction data. Refer to *Opening and Editing Validation Exceptions* on page 3-15 for additional details concerning this panel.

Viewing File Flow Diagrams

File flow diagrams graphically represent all the files associated with the event displayed on the **Event Summary** panel as well as the order in which the files were processed. You can access file flow diagrams by clicking **File Flow** at the top of the **Event Summary** window (refer to Figure 3.13, “Event Summary Window” on page 13).

These diagrams consist of rectangles that represent each of the associated files, as well as the order in which the files were processed.

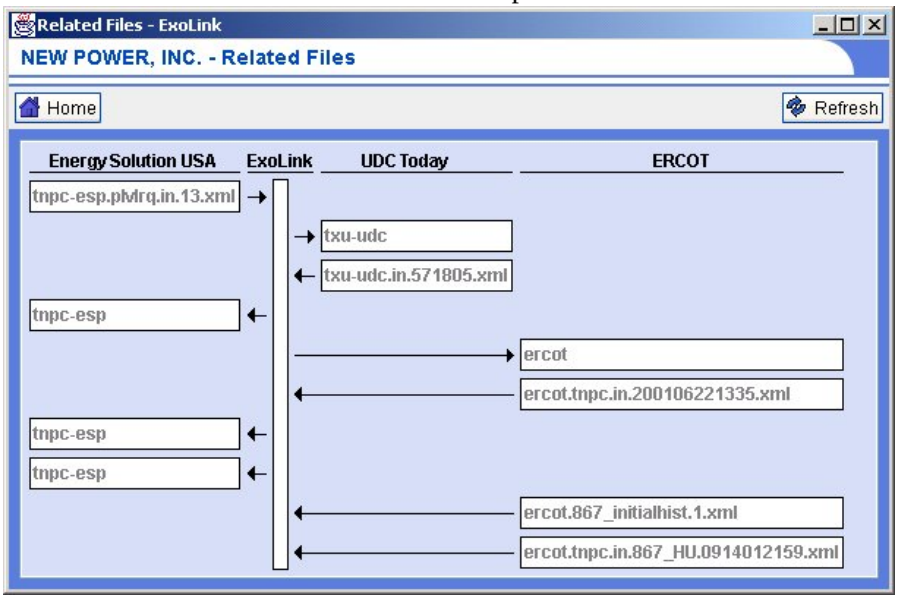


Figure 3.14 File Flow Diagram

This diagram allows a researching end-user to review the file flow as files have been sent to and from ExoTran.

Viewing Event/Participant Flow Diagrams

Event/participant flow diagrams graphically represent the current state of a particular event within ExoLink’s online solution. These diagrams consist of

rectangles, representing each of the possible states in which the provider may participate, and arrows, representing the possible transition paths between the states. You can access event/participant flow diagrams by clicking the transaction “status” displayed to the right in the **Participant** portion of the **Event Summary** window.

In the following example, note that some of the rectangles and arrows are “grayed” out. The prominent graphics represent states and paths through which the event has already processed, whereas the “grayed” graphics represent states and paths through which the event has not yet processed or will not process - as the event has processed beyond that point. Reverse-video rectangles (dark rectangles and light text) represents the current state of the event.

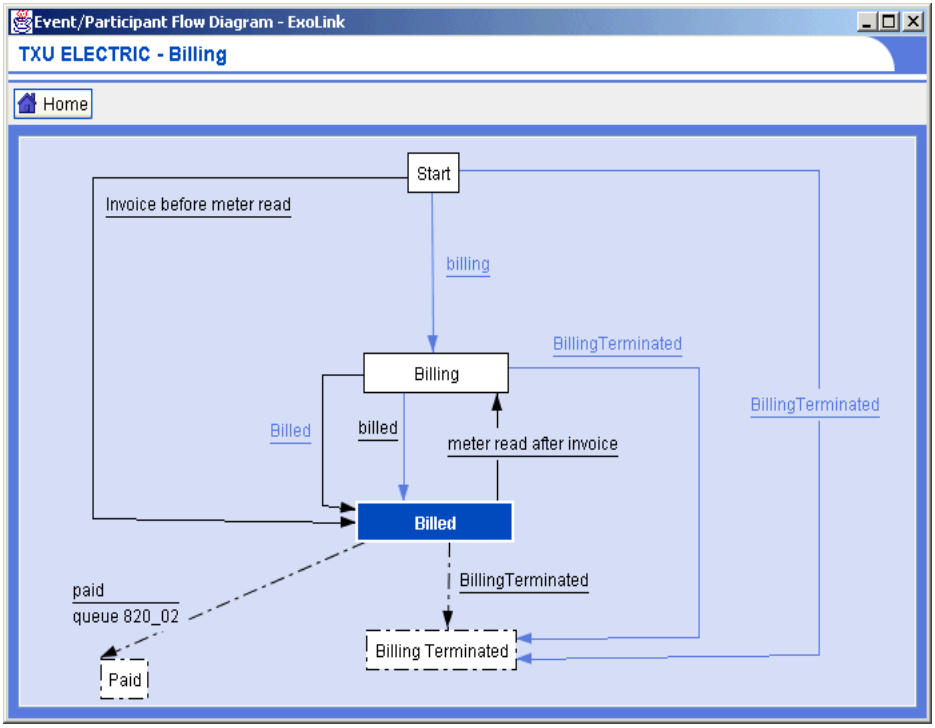


Figure 3.15 Event/Participant Flow Diagram

Opening and Editing Validation Exceptions

Batch files, which contain many individual transactions, are processed behind the scene through ExoLink’s online solution. Those transactions that fail your company’s internal processing rules may appear as Validation Exceptions, and could be returned for correction within the application. However, it is important to note that some organizations choose not to use the online to process these

Validation Exceptions and instead choose to receive the transactions through a pre-arranged batch process. The level of detail displayed for any transaction has been predefined by the provider for a specific market.

As previously stated, you have the option of correcting these errors online or through a pre-arranged batch process.

Validation Exceptions - Online

To resolve these exceptions online, complete the following steps:

1 Click a transaction from the Validation Exceptions list in the **Action Items** panel to display **A - Transaction Editor - Correct** window, which provides informational messages to assist you in resolving exceptions. This message, displayed at the top of the panel, contains links to the source of the errors.

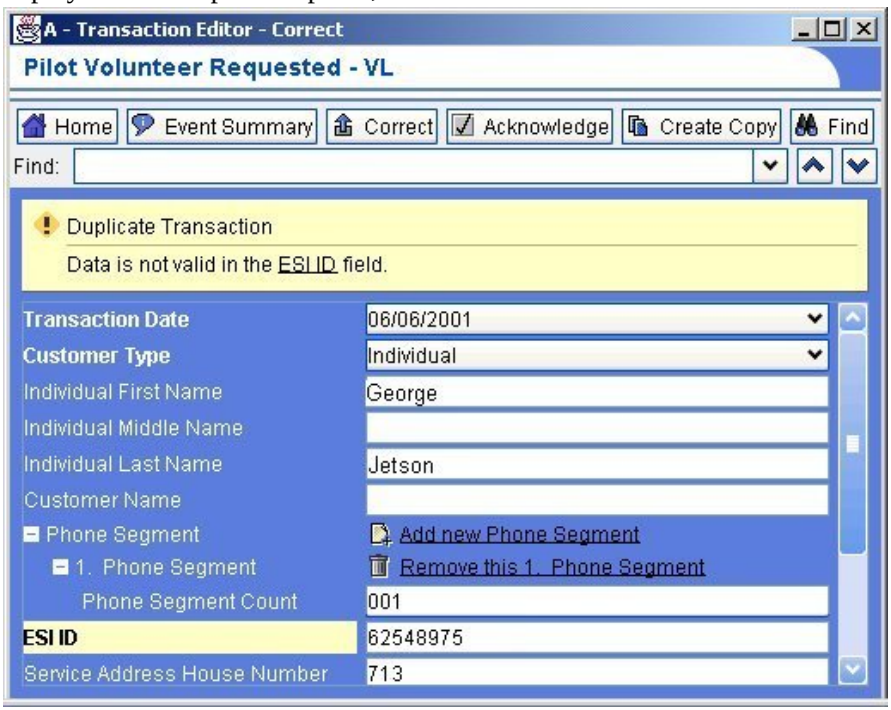


Figure 3.16 Example Validation Exception

2 Click these links to move directly to the problem fields and correct the errors.

3 Click **Correct** to process your changes.

ExoLink's online solution does not allow you to submit an invalid transaction. When **Correct** is clicked, the application verifies the information against the client's established set of rules. If another error is detected, the application returns you to the **A - Transaction Editor - Correct** window, displaying a new

informational message. Only when all fields pass validation will the transaction be processed, at which time you are returned to the main window.

If you close the **A - Transaction Editor - Correct** window prior to executing a successful submission, no changes are retained.

Validation Exceptions - Batch Process

To resolve these exceptions through a pre-arranged batch process, complete the following steps:

1. Perform any internal process, as dictated by your company's business process, to submit the transaction in batch process.
2. Click **Acknowledge** to remove the returned transaction from the **Action Items** panel.

Note

Updating the source system and then acknowledging the Validation Exception will keep these two systems synchronized.

Creating and Submitting a New Transaction

If your company decides to process certain transactions online within ExoLink's online solution, you may create new transactions based on those transactions that have been established as being able to be created online, as well as those that an end-user has authorization to create.

To create a new transaction from the main window, complete the following steps:

1. Select the desired transaction from the drop-down list.

Figure 3.17 Create Transaction Panel

Available transactions are defined by your company.

Once a transaction alias has been selected, all fields for that transaction are displayed, with required fields identified with a **bold** label. As part of the implementation process for your company, required details and validation rules were created to ensure that data is entered accurately. So, when you click **Submit**, the application identifies those fields that do not pass

validation rules and requires you to make corrections to those fields before allowing the transaction to be accepted and processed.

2 Click **Go** to display the **Transaction Editor - Create** window.

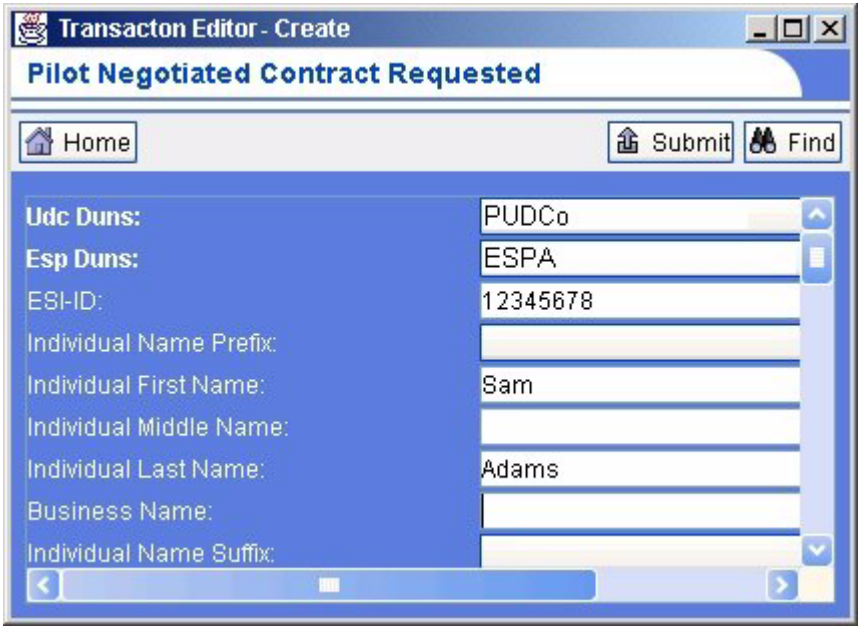


Figure 3.18 Transaction Editor

3 Complete the required fields, which appear in bold text. For this example, the only required field is ESI-ID.

Note

A transaction cannot be submitted until all required fields are populated. In those cases where one field or the other is required, neither are bold. When **Submit** is selected, the first of the fields that may be used is highlighted, requesting continued entry. For example, a market may require either an account number or a site code (ESI-ID—refer to *Figure 3.18, Transaction Editor*). One of the fields must be entered for **Submit** to work.

4 Click **Submit**.

Another method of creating a transaction requires selection of a transaction type from the **Search Results** window.

Figure 3.19 Search Results Window

Complete the steps previously defined to create a new transaction from this window.

Viewing and Submitting Required Manual Completions

Required Manual Completions transactions are those transactions that require additional information that could not be derived or pulled from an existing data source prior to being sent to a previously identified recipient. While some organizations choose not to process these transactions within ExoLink's online solution and instead receive the transactions back through a pre-arranged batch process, other companies elect to complete these transactions online and submit using the application. The level of detail displayed for any transaction is defined by the client for the current market.

Complete the following steps to view and submit a transaction:

1 Click the Required Manual Completion transaction from the **Action Items** panel to display the **A - Transaction Editor - Complete** window.

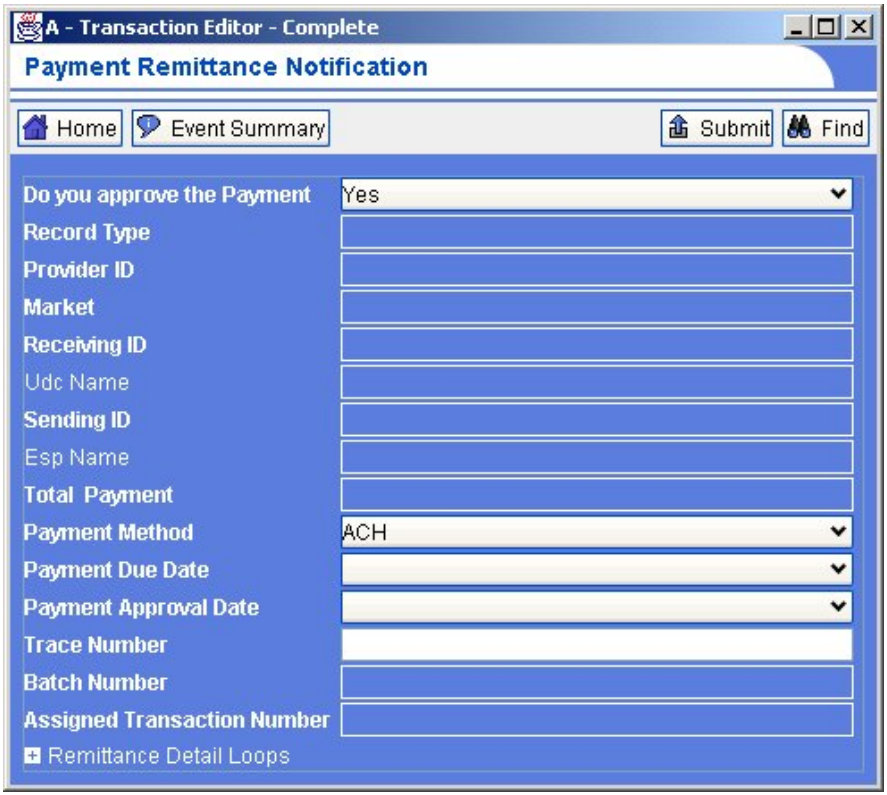


Figure 3.20 Example Required Manual Completion

2 Perform any internal process, such as updating a source system with added data, as identified by your company.

3 Update the required transaction fields as indicated by the informational message and corresponding links, if provided.

4 Click **Submit** to process the transaction and remove it from the list of transactions in the **Action Items** panel.

Note: A new recipient cannot be specified.

Viewing and Acknowledging Notifications

Notifications are those transactions that provide notification of information. Notifications appear in the **Action Items** panel under the Notifications heading so that you know to open and review information, perform any internal process as defined by your company, and mark the transaction as reviewed to remove it from the **Action Items** panel. ExoLink's online solution does not allow you to submit this transaction.

Complete the following steps to process this type of transaction:

1 Click the Notifications transaction from the **Action Items** panel to display the **Transaction View** window.

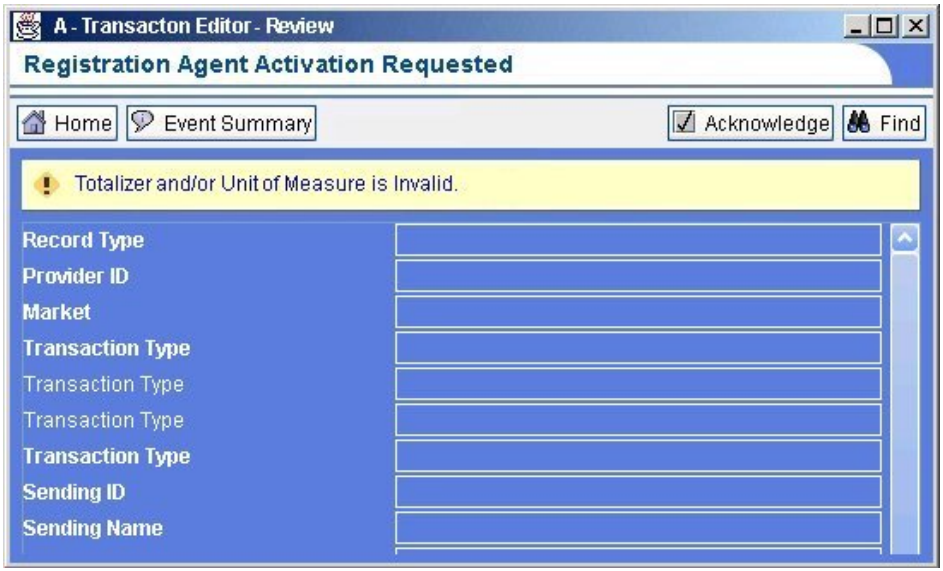


Figure 3.21 Example Notification

2 Perform any internal process, such as updating a source system, as identified by your company.

3 Click **Acknowledge** to remove the transaction from the **Action Items** panel.

Viewing and Acknowledging Receiver Rejects

A Receiver Reject is a transaction that has failed the intended recipient's rule set. The original transaction is displayed with the associated error code and description. These transactions require some online data change or additional data prior to being re-submitted. Keep in mind that there are times when a reject will indicate that a transaction cannot be corrected and must simply be acknowledged. For this reason, any Receiver Rejects that you open will offer you the ability to **Acknowledge** or **Correct** the transaction. You need to understand your market participants well enough to understand the rejection reasons, and know whether the transaction can be corrected or not.

Because different market participants process information differently, you may transmit transactions to ExoLink's online solution through batch files or completely online as defined by your company. You must know which of these processes your company uses to accurately handle each Receiver Reject.

Based on the choices made by your company, a rejected transaction could be handled in one of two ways.

Receiver Rejects - Batch Process

Use this option if you are viewing Receiver Rejects online, but correcting the transaction offline in a source system, or if the rejection is a result of a market constraint:

1 Click the Receiver Reject transaction from the **Action Items** panel to display the **A - Transaction Editor - Correct** window.

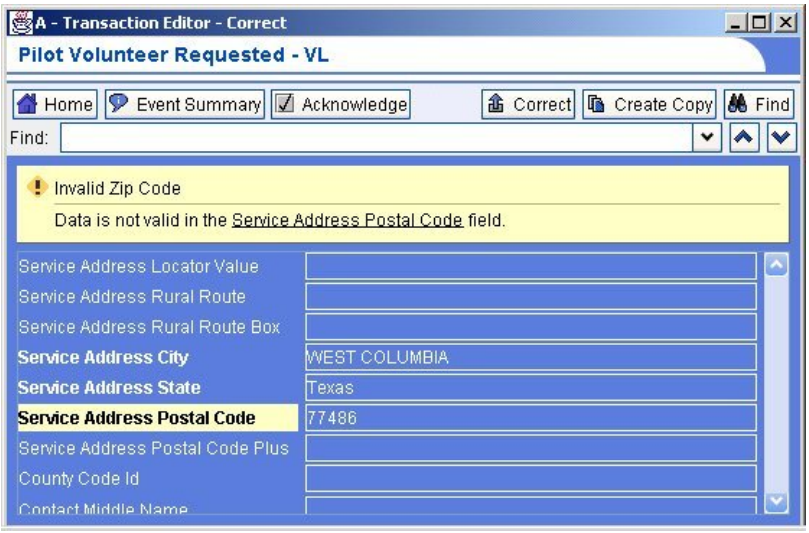


Figure 3.22 Receiver Rejects

2 Perform any internal process to correct the information in the source system and re-send via the source system.

3 Click **Acknowledge** to remove the transaction from your **Action Items** panel.

Note

Updating the source system and then acknowledging the Receiver Reject will keep these two systems synchronized.

Receiver Rejects - Online

Use this option if you are correcting Receiver Reject online within ExoLink's online solution:

1 Open and review the Receiver Reject transaction.

2 Perform any internal processes to correct the information in the source system.

Note

Failure to update the source system and then correct the transaction within the application may allow the two systems to become out of synchronization. Updating the source system and then processing the Receiver Reject with the same information will keep these two systems synchronized.

3 Click **Correct** to copy and display the **Transaction Editor - Correct** window containing originally submitted transaction data along with the rejection reason.

4 Complete all required fields as indicated by the informational message and links that appear at the top of the window.

The application will not allow the transaction to be submitted until all errors are corrected and all required fields, identified by bold labels, are completed.

5 Click **Resubmit** to process the transaction to the originally intended recipient and remove the rejected transaction from your **Action Items** panel.

CHAPTER

4

ADMINISTRATION

The **Administration** panel provides clients the ability to manage end-user access to the various online functions. For example, an Administrator can add or modify users (Users Section); add, modify, or delete work profiles (Profiles Section); and associate or disassociate users with specific work profiles. Additionally, users with the appropriate permissions can view or execute administrative reports (View Reports Section). As an Administrator, you are responsible for maintaining work profiles, user information, and associated permissions.

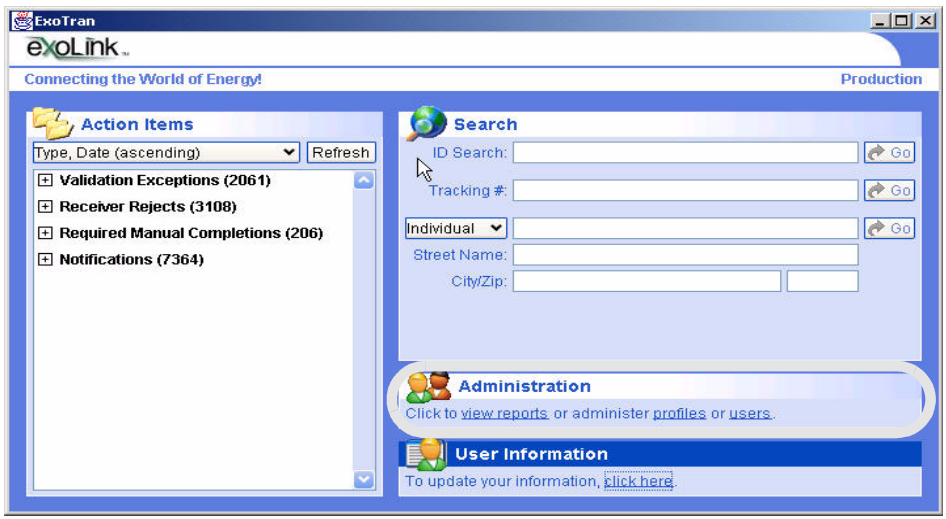


Figure 4.1 Main Window

Note The **Administration** panel, highlighted in yellow, displays for those users who have been granted the appropriate permissions. With both

reporting and administrative permissions, the sentence reads as shown. With only reporting permissions, the message reads “Click to view reports.” With only administrative permissions, the message reads “Click to administer profiles or users.”

Reports

Clicking **view reports** on the main window provides access to the reporting feature, which displays a list of available reports. This list includes reports common to all ExoLink clients, as well as reports created specifically for your organization, as long as you have the authority to view these reports.

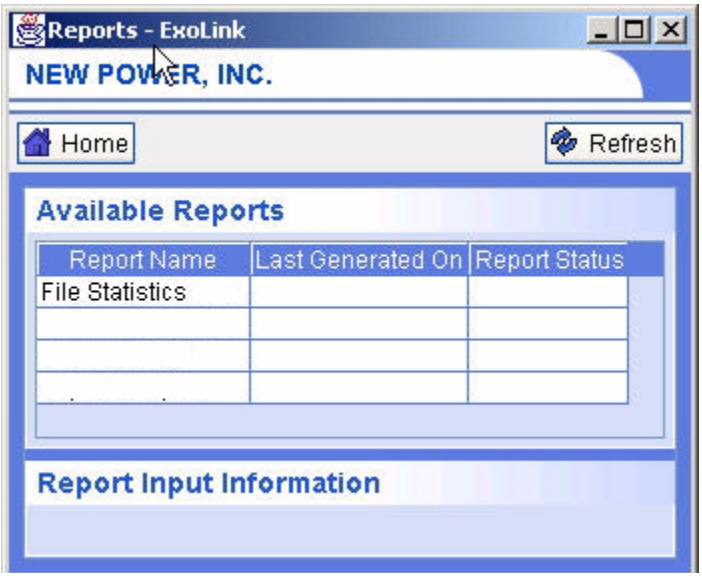


Figure 4.2 Reports Window

The **Available Reports** display area and **Report Input Information** work area comprise the major sections of the Reports window.

Clicking **Home** returns you to the main window. Clicking **Refresh** refreshes the contents of the **Available Reports** display area.

Available Reports Display Area

The **Available Reports** display area lists all of the reports available for use by the user. Information contained within this area include the report name, date the report was last generated, and the report status, which will either be blank or display “Running.”

All of the reports that appear on the Reports window fall into one of the following report categories; although these category types are not identified within the GUI, it is important that you review and understand this information:

- **Real-Time**: A real-time report allows you to enter the necessary input data and **Run** the report, displaying information as it was found in ExoLink exactly at the time it was run. These reports can only be run once at a time. If someone else is running a specific real-time report, the same report cannot be run until the first run is complete. Real-time reports are not stored on the server and are not available for other users after the first run. These reports may be saved locally or printed.
- **Asynchronous**: Asynchronous reports allow you to enter the necessary input data and run the report, displaying information as it was found in ExoLink exactly at the time it was run. These reports, or report results, are stored on the server once run so that others who have the authority may view the stored report by clicking **View Report**. If someone else is running a specific asynchronous report, the same report cannot be run until the first run is complete. Once complete, others may view the same report until the next report, of the same name, is run again to replace the original on the server. These reports are not archived. Once the second report of the same name is run, the first run results are replaced by the second run results. These reports may be saved locally or printed.
- **Scheduled**: Scheduled reports are run at scheduled times defined by ExoLink. An end-user cannot input data and run this type of report; as such, a scheduled report will never display **Run** within the **Report Input Information** work area. An end-user may **View Report** and review the last scheduled run of this report, as long as the user has the authority to do so. Once the subsequent scheduled time to run the report occurs, the first report is overwritten. These reports are not archived. These reports may be saved locally or printed.

Report Input Information Work Area

The **Report Input Information** work area displays various input fields for defining data parameters for generating reports. These fields change based on the report selected in the **Available Reports** display area as well as for the permissions granted to the user.

Completing the fields for a specific report and clicking **Run** generates the report. A **View Results** button may also be available for viewing the results of a previous run of the report.

Note

The Last Generated On and Status column fields in the Available Reports display area update on their own, as needed.

To generate a report, simply highlight the desired report name, specify any applicable input information, and click **Run**.

Profiles

Clicking **profiles** on the main window provides clients the ability to manage end-user access to the various online functions. As the Administrator, you use the **Manage Profiles** window to create and manage work profiles. You can also associate end users with work profiles to restrict their access to specific sets of functions.

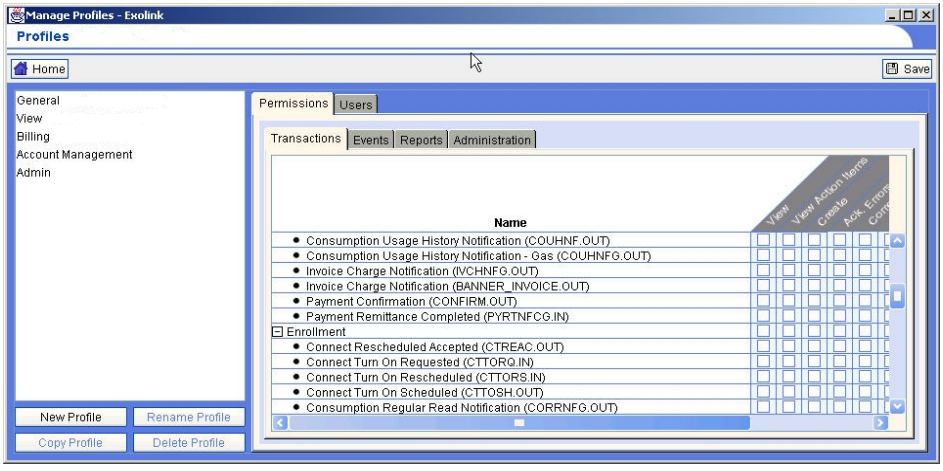


Figure 4.3 Manage Profiles Window

Specifically, you use the **Profile** command buttons (**New Profile**, **Copy Profile**, **Rename Profile**, and **Delete Profile**) displayed at the bottom of the **Profiles** display area to manage the available work profiles, and the **Permissions** and **Users** tabs to define permissions for the work profile and associate users to the work profile, respectively. The more work profiles a user is associated with, the greater their access to online functions.

Clicking **Home** returns you to the main window. Clicking **Save** saves the changes you made. If you forget to click **Save** and attempt to close the window, a confirmation dialog box displays, prompting whether you want to save your changes.

Note

The **Permissions** and **Users** settings displayed on the right side of the **Manage Profiles** window change as each profile is selected, indicating the different permissions and users associated with each profile.

Profiles should be created with consideration to the smallest area of work necessary. As an example, the base work profiles may consist of:

- **General -** Ability to correct and resubmit, acknowledge errors and notifications, and create those transactions identified.
- **View Only -** Ability to view transactions and action items.
- **Admin -** Ability to manage profiles and users.

A worksheet should be maintained that defines the profiles for your organization, including a description, when users are to be associated with this profile, and other pertinent information regarding those profiles.

Profile Name: View Only

Ability to view transactions and action items.

Note that all permissions imply the View permission.

Event Type	View	View Partner Txns	All	Trading Partners (A, B, ...)
All				
Account Maintenance	☑	☑	☑	
Billing	☑	☑	☑	
Contract	☑	☑	☑	
Enrollment	☑	☑	☑	
Equipment Maintenance	☑	☑	☑	
Information Request	☑	☑	☑	
Termination	☑	☑	☑	

Transaction Aliases	View	View Action Items	Create	Ack Errors	Correct	Ack. NF	All	Trading Partners (All Defaulted)
All	☑	☑						

Reports	View	Execute	All		Name	Has Permission
All					All	
File Statistics					Administer Profiles/Users	
Rejects Report					View File Flow Window	

Figure 4.4 Authority Definition Worksheet

Profiles Display Area

Current profiles are displayed on the left side of the Manage Profiles window. The command buttons displayed at the bottom of this list are used to manage these profiles:

- **New Profile**: Allows you to create a new work profile. Use this option to create a new work profile that is substantially different than any existing work profile. Profile names cannot exceed 35 characters.

Figure 4.5 Create New Profile Dialog Box

- **Copy Profile**: Allows you to create a new work profile by copying an existing work profile. Use this option to create a new work profile that is similar in nature to an existing work profile.

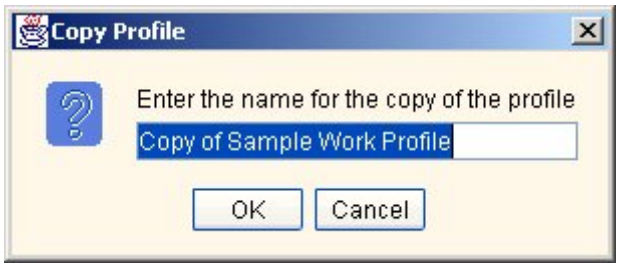


Figure 4.6 Copy Profile Dialog Box

- **Rename Profile**: Allows you to rename an existing work profile. Use this option to manage the naming of work profiles.

Figure 4.7 Change Profile Name Dialog Box

- **Delete Profile**: Allows you to delete an existing work profile. Use this option to remove outdated work profiles.

Figure 4.8 Confirm Profile Deletion Dialog Box

Permissions and Users Work Area

Permissions and users associated with each profile display on the right side of the **Manage Profiles** window as each profile is selected. The tabs allow you to focus on specific pieces of information associated with the selected profile:

- **Permissions**: The **Permissions** tab provides you access to the components with which you manage the permissions in the selected work profile:
  - **Transactions**: The **Transactions** tab lists all the transactions you can manage in the work profile. Refer to “Transactions Tab” on page 4-7.
  - **Events**: The **Events** tab lists all the events that you can manage in the work profile. Refer to “Events Tab” on page 4-9.
  - **Reports**: The **Reports** tab lists all the reports that you can manage in the work profile. Refer to “Reports Tab” on page 4-11.
  - **Administration**: The **Administration** tab lists application functions that you can manage in the work profile. Refer to “Administration Tab” on page 4-12.
- **Users**: The **Users** tab allows you access to associate or disassociate users to the selected work profile. Refer to “Users Tab” on page 4-13.

Transactions Tab

Use this option to define permissions associated with transactions within the selected work profile. Select a work profile from the **Profiles** display area, click

the **Permissions** tab, click the **Transactions** tab (default), and specify permissions for as many transactions as appropriate for the work profile.

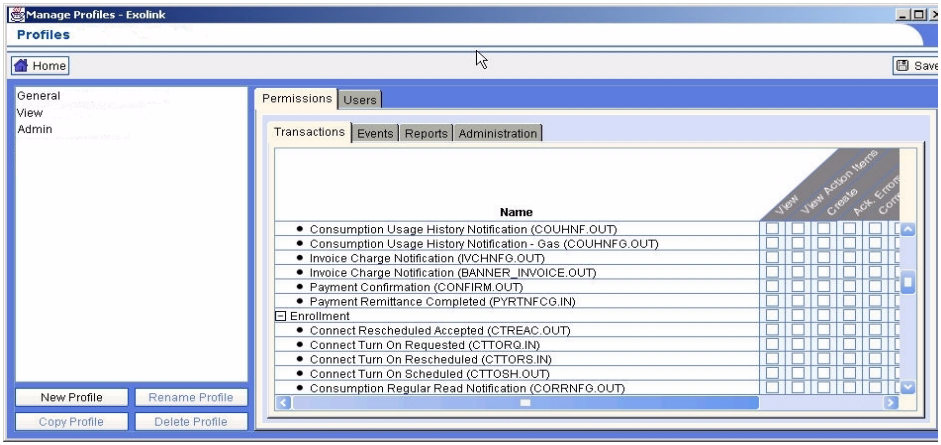


Figure 4.9 Manage Profiles Window - Transactions Tab

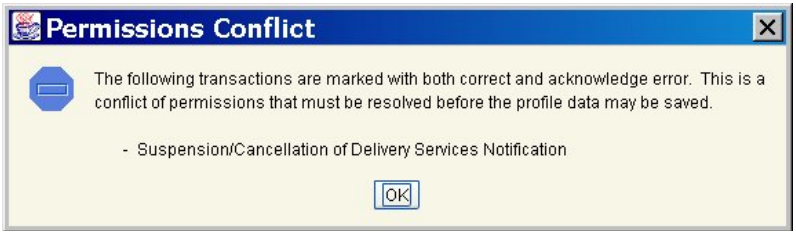
To associate a transaction with a profile, one or more columns must be checked. The columns following the transaction names allow you to identify the level of access to assign in the work profile:

- **View**: Indicates that the user associated with this work profile can only view the selected transactions when searching by ESI-ID, tracking number, name or address.
- **View Action Items**: Indicates that the user can view transactions displayed in the Action Items panel on the main window regardless of their authority to act on them, which is assigned in other columns.
- **Create**: Indicates that the user associated with this profile can create the selected transactions (e.g., create from scratch, manual completions, etc.).
- **Ack. Errors**: A check in the Acknowledge Errors column Indicates that the user can acknowledge errors that appear as Validation Exceptions or Receiver Rejects but cannot correct them. No transaction can have Ack. Errors in one profile and Correct in the same or another profile.
- **Correct**: Indicates that the user associated with this work profile can correct the selected transaction as it appears as a Validation Exceptions or Receiver Rejects. No transaction can have Ack. Errors in one profile and Correct in the same or another profile.

Note

The Acknowledge and Correct permissions are mutually exclusive. You cannot define two separate work profiles with Correct permission in one

and Acknowledge Errors in the other. The following error message identifying the transaction in conflict displays if you attempt to do so.



- **Ack. NF**: A check in the Acknowledge Notifications column indicates that the user associated with this work profile can acknowledge the selected transaction as reviewed when it appears as a Notification within the Action Items panel.
- **All**: Indicates that the user associated with this work profile has full access to the selected transaction regardless of how it appears in the Action Items panel. Selecting a check box in the All row assigns the associated permission to all the transactions.
- **Trading Partners**: Indicates the trading partner associated with the related transaction within the selected work profile. Entering one or more trading partner in this field limits the user to working with transactions for the indicated trading partners. Note that completing this field does not affect the View, View Action Items, Acknowledge Errors, or Ack. NF column permissions. Failure to change from the default allows the associated user to view all associated trading partner transactions.

Note

Transactions identified with a .IN are those which can be created. Transactions identified with a .OUT are those which can be received.

Events Tab

The Events tab affects the user’s ability to view event information for transactions for specific event types. Use this option to define permissions associated with events within the selected work profile. Select a work profile for

the **Profiles** display area, click the **Permissions** tab, click the **Events** tab, and specify permissions for as many event types as appropriate for the work profile.

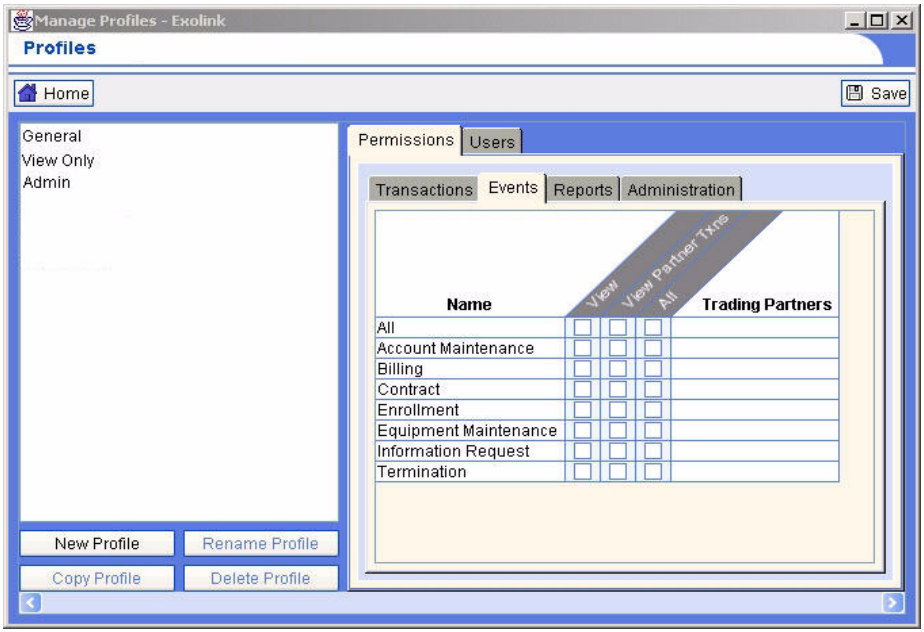


Figure 4.10 Manage Profiles Window - Events Tab

The columns following the event type names allow you to identify the level of access to assign in the work profile:

- **View**: Indicates that the user associated with this work profile can only view the related event summary information displayed on the **Event Summary** window. The user cannot view the transactions associated with the trading partner.
- **View Partner Txns**: Indicates that the user associated with this work profile can view the trading partner transactions related to events of this type.
- **All**: Indicates that the user associated with this work profile has full access to the related event.
- **Trading Partners**: Indicates the trading partner associated with the related event within the selected work profile. Trading partners are established by ExoLink. Selecting one or more trading partners in this field limits the user to viewing only transactions for the indicated trading partners. Note that completing this field does not affect the View column permission. Also note that selecting Not Restricted applies all the selected permission to all trading partners.

Note

If you give a user access to a specific set of transactions (e.g., billing transactions) and fail to provide them access to the associated event (e.g., billing event), the user will not be able to view the **Event Summary** window associated with the transaction.

Reports Tab

Use this option to define permissions associated with reports within the selected work profile. Select a work profile for the **Profiles** display area, click the **Permissions** tab, click the **Reports** tab, and specify permissions for as many reports as appropriate for the work profile.

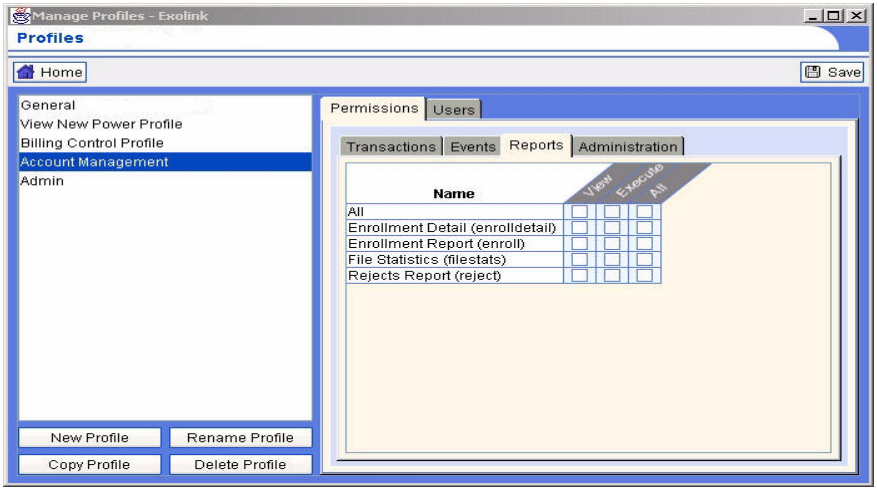


Figure 4.11 Manage Profiles Window - Reports Tab

The columns following the report names allow you to identify the level of access to assign for the work profile:

- **View**: Indicates that the user associated with this work profile can only view results of the related report.
- **Execute**: Indicates that the user associated with this work profile can generate the related report, if it is not a scheduled report.
- **All**: Indicates that the user associated with this work profile can both view and generate the related report.

Administration Tab

Use this option to define permissions associated with a user's administration capabilities within the selected work profile. Select a work profile for the **Profiles** display area, click the **Permissions** tab, click the **Administration** tab, and specify permissions for the various pieces of the application as appropriate for the work profile.

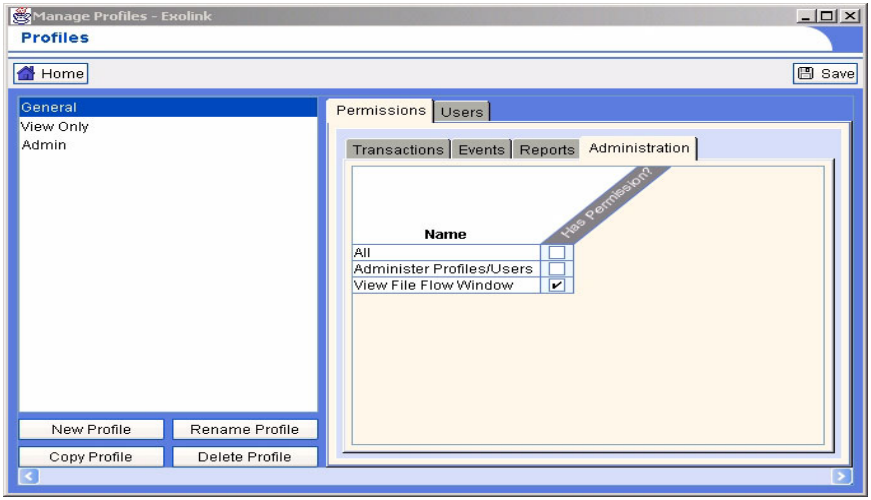


Figure 4.12 Manage Profiles Window - Administration Tab

The columns allow you to identify the level of access to assign for the work profile:

- **Profiles/Users**: Allows a user to access this window to define work profiles and users. ExoLink must first grant access to the Administrator.
- **View File Flow**: Allows a user to access the **File Flow** window from the **Event Summary** window and the **File Statistics Standard Report**.

Note

Accessing the **File Flow** window from the **Event Summary** window displays only those files associated with the event; whereas, accessing the **File Flow** window from the report displays all the files based on a selected initial file.

- **All**: Allows a user to use both the **Profiles/Users** and **File Flow** window.

Users Tab

Use this option to associate or disassociate users with the selected work profile. Select a work profile for the **Profiles** display area and click the **Users** tab. Managing work profile and user associations is performed by selecting an existing user in the Available area and moving them to the Associated area. Moving the user name in the other direction removes the association.

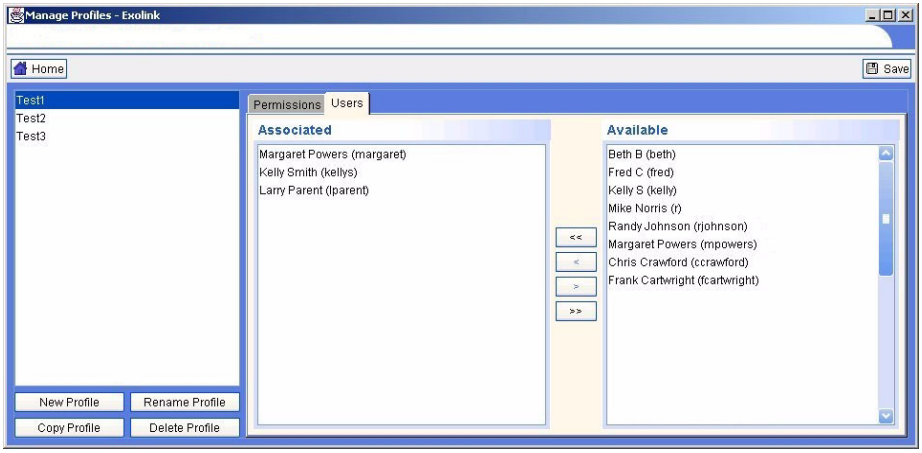


Figure 4.13 Manage Profiles Window - Users Tab

The **Associated** and **Available** areas comprise the major sections of the Profiles - Users panel:

- **Associated**: Display area showing the users currently associated with the selected work profile.
- **Available**: Display area showing the users that are not associated with the selected work profile, but are available to be associated.
- << **(move all left)**: Clicking this button moves all available users to the Associated area, indicating that all users are associated with the selected work profile.
- < **(move selected left)**: Selecting one or more users in the Available area and clicking this button moves the user(s) to the Associated area, indicating that this user(s) is now associated with the selected work profile.
- > **(move selected right)**: Selecting one or more users in the Associated area and clicking this button moves the user(s) to the Available area, indicating that this user(s) is now disassociated from the selected work profile.
- >> **(move all right)**: Selecting this button moves all associated users to the Available area, indicating that all users have been disassociated from the selected work profile.

Users

Clicking **users** on the main window provides clients the ability to manage available users and their access to the various online functions. As the Administrator, you use the **Users** window to add and update users, as well as associate users with specific work profiles, thereby restricting access to only those transactions and functions applicable to their work.

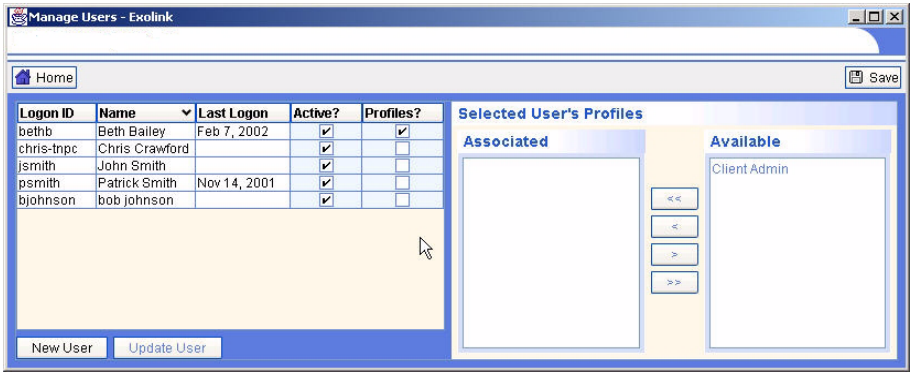


Figure 4.14 Manage Users Window

Specifically, you use the **User** command buttons (**New User** and **Update User**) displayed at the bottom of the **Users** display area to manage the available user list, and the **Associated** and **Available Profiles** lists to associate available users with work profiles. The more work profiles a user is associated with, the greater their access to online functions.

Clicking **Home** returns you to the main window. Clicking **Save** saves the changes you made. If you forget to click **Save** and attempt to close the window, a confirmation dialog box displays, prompting whether you want to save your changes.

Note: The **Associated** and **Available** profiles displayed on the right side of the **Manage Users** window change as each user is selected, indicating the different profiles associated with each user.

User Information

Current user information is displayed on the left side of the **Manage Users** window. The command buttons displayed at the bottom of this list are used to manage these users. Each of the columns are defined as follows:

Note: Each column can be sorted by clicking the column heading. The direction of the arrow next to the column heading indicates the sort order of ascending or descending.

- **Logon ID**: Displays the user's logon ID.
- **Name**: Displays the user's full name.
- **Last Logged In**: Displays the date the user last logged on the application. No value indicates that the user has never accessed the application.
- **Active?**: Indicates whether a user is currently active or not. If they are not active, they do no have access to the application.
- **Profiles?**: Indicates whether a user is associated with a work profile. A check mark indicates that at least one work profile is associated with the user. No check mark indicates that no work profiles are associated with the user.

Note User passwords are not displayed for security purposes; they are stored at ExoLink.

Managing user information is performed through the **User** command buttons:

- **New User**: Displays the **New User** window, which allows the Administrator to enter a new user's name (both fields required), logon ID (required and unique), and contact information (i.e., phone, fax, e-mail). The selection of the **Is user active?** indicates the user is active and has access to the application. No check indicates the user is deactivated and has no access to the application.

Note: All logon IDs must be unique across the ExoLink application; duplicate IDs are not permitted.

Figure 4.15 New User Dialog Box

- **Save and Close**: Clicking **Save and Close** commits the new user information to the database and returns you to the **Manage Users** window. The new user name appears within the **Manage Users** window.
- **Cancel**: Clicking **Cancel** returns you to the **Manage Users** window without saving any changes.

- **Update User**: Displays the **Update User** window, which allows you to update an existing user's name, logon ID, and contact information (i.e.,

phone, fax, e-mail), as well as reset the user's password. Passwords are reset to the first letter of the first name and the full last name without any spaces.

Figure 4.16 Update User Dialog Box

Passwords default to the first letter of the first name and the full last name with no spaces. Users are required to create a new password when they log on for the first time (refer to "Maintaining Logon Information" on page 2-6).

Profile Information

Work profile information is managed on the **Manage Profiles** window, which is accessed by selecting **profiles** on the **Administration** panel of the main window. The information displayed on the **Profiles** area of the **Manage Users** window is for association purposes only:

- **Associated**: Display area showing the work profiles associated with the selected user.
- **Available**: Display area showing the work profiles that are not associated with the selected user.

Managing user and work profile associations is performed by selecting a user, selecting one or more existing work profile(s) in the **Available** area, and moving it(them) to the **Associated** area. Note that the **Profiles?** check box becomes selected when a work profile is associated with a user. Moving the profile names in the other direction removes the association.

- **<< (move all left)**: Clicking this button moves all available profiles to the Associated area, indicating that all profiles are associated with the selected user.
- **< (move selected left)**: Selecting one or more profiles in the Available area and clicking this button moves the profile to the Associated area, indicating that this profile(s) is now associated with the selected user.
- **> (move selected right)**: Selecting one or more profiles in the Associated area and clicking this button moves the profile(s) to the Available area, indicating that this profile(s) is now disassociated from the selected user.
- **>> (move all right)**: Selecting this button moves all associated profiles to the Available area, indicating that all profiles have been disassociated from the selected user.

CHAPTER

5

GLOSSARY

The following terms may be used throughout the document.

Term	Definition
adjusted profile	Profile resulting from data aggregation.
advanced metering	Device for recording or communicating actual electric use during minutes, hours, days, or weeks; useful for time-of-day, on-peak/off peak, or other billing rates.
aggregator	A person joining two or more customers, other than municipalities and political subdivision corporations, into a single purchasing unit to negotiate the purchase of electricity from retail electric providers (REPs). Aggregators may not sell or take title to electricity. REPs are not considered aggregators.
archive	Process of moving data from a production system to long-term storage.
AS1 and AS2	Types of electronic data interchange (EDI) encryption protocol used over the Internet.
available switch date	Synonymous with an on-cycle read date.
billing back-office	Billing and revenue cycle support.
billing expert	Considered to be a billing system for complex bills. Also known as a Customer Service Management Application (CSMA).
billing interval data recorder	billing IDR—An IDR is sometimes placed on a large customer and is used in the data aggregation process. A billing IDR is the recorder specific to billing information.
browser	A computer program used to read a file or navigate through a hypermedia document. For example, Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE) or Netscape Communicator are browsers.

C&I	commercial and industrial customers
Campaign Management System	CMS—Tool used by marketing and sales departments to manage campaigns, as well as used by some companies to manage their customer accounts and customer contracts for service.
case sensitive	A condition in which entries for an entry field must conform to a specific lowercase, uppercase, or mixed-case format to be valid. A good example is a user ID or password field as these require entry exactly as defined.
CCS	Customer Care and Service System
certification	The process designed to ensure that communications between various market participants are functioning as designed.
CIC	Customer Interaction Center
CIC back-office	Customer Interaction Center (CIC) support personnel that never deal directly with customers; these personnel handle customer dispute resolutions and are considered the point of contact for market participants.
CIS	Customer Information System
CMS	Contract Management System
commercial and industrial customers	C&I— Two of three commonly used designations for classes of customers. The others is residential. Commercial customers are not involved in manufacturing. Examples of commercial customers are retail stores, restaurants and educational institutions. Industrial customers are involved in manufacturing. Examples of industrial customers are automotive manufacturers, steel mills, and construction companies.
competitive retailer	CR— An entity that provides electric or gas energy services to a retail or end-use customer. Equivalent to energy service provider (ESP) and retail energy provider (REP).
consumption meter	A non-interval data recorder (IDR) reading device that measures energy on a continuous basis and is read on a cycle basis (e.g., 30-day cycle); records total consumption.
Continuous Service Agreement	CSA— Generally applies to an agreement with a landlord for various rental units.
Contract Management System	CMS— A computer system used by some organizations to manage contracts.
CR	competitive retailer
CSA	Continuous Service Agreement
CSMA	Customer Service Management Application
current meter	Information pertaining to current meter information, meter reads, and meter provider information.

customer	Information specific to the customer of record, including customer name, addresses, class and service type, medical information, phone numbers, and account information.
Customer Care and Service System	CCS—System used by some companies to manage their customer accounts and customer calls.
Customer Information System	CIS—System used by some companies to manage their customer accounts and customer calls.
Customer Interaction Center	CIC—A call center for mass market customers.
Customer Service Management Application	CSMA—Considered to be a billing system for complex bills.
data aggregation	Process of grouping weather-adjusted and non-weather-adjusted profiles into aggregate groups.
deregulation	The elimination of regulation from a previously regulated industry or sector of an industry.
direct access	The ability of a retail customer to purchase electricity or gas directly from the wholesale market rather than through a local distribution utility.
disaggregation	The functional separation of the vertically integrated utility into smaller, individually owned business unites (i.e., generation, dispatch, control, transmission, and distribution).
discretionary charges	Tariffs that dictate the allowed charges for various miscellaneous services (e.g., special meter reading, off-cycle switch, out-of-cycle billing, etc.).
distribution	The delivery of electricity or gas to the retail customer's home or business through distribution lines.
drop	Information exchange between the current retail electric provider (REP) and the registration agent (RA) indicating that a customer will no longer receive service from the current REP. The "drop" also refers to the transaction sent by the RA to the old REP.
EDE	electronic data exchange
EDI	electronic data interchange
EDI Transaction Set - 650 ASC X12	This transaction set provides a uniform, singular medium for the exchange of maintenance related information among organizations involved in the reporting, requesting, scheduling, planning, estimating, coordinating and performing of maintenance actions.
EDI Transaction Set - 810 Invoice - ASC X12	The transaction set can be used to provide for customary and established business and industry practice relative to the billing for goods and services provided.
EDI Transaction Set - 814 General Request, Response or Confirmation - ASC X12	This standard can be used to request actions to be performed, to respond to a request for actions to be performed or to confirm information related to actions performed.

EDI Transaction Set - 820 Payment Order/ Remittance Advice	This transaction set can be an order to a financial institution to make a payment to a payee. It can also be a remittance advice identifying the detail needed to perform cash application to the payee's accounts receivable system. The remittance advice can go directly from payer to payee, through a financial institution, or through a third party agent.
EDI Transaction Set - 824 Application Advice - ASC X12	This transaction set can be used to provide the ability to report the results of an application system's data content edits of transaction sets. The results of editing transaction sets can be reported at the functional group and transactions set level, in either coded or free form format. It is designed to accommodate the business need of reporting the acceptance, rejection or acceptance with change of any transaction set. The application advice should not be used in place of a transaction set designed as a specific response to another transaction set (e.g., purchase order acknowledgement sent in response to a purchase order.
EDI Transaction Set - 867 Product Transfer and Resale Report - ASC X12	This transaction set can be used to: (1) report information about product that has been transferred from one location to another, (2) report sales of product from one or more locations to an end customer, or (3) report sales of a product from one or more locations to an end customer, and demand beyond actual sales (lost orders). Either buyer or seller may issue report.
EDI Transaction Set - 997 Functional Acknowledgement	This functional acknowledgement provides for verification of receipt of data and reports to the extent to which the syntax complies with the standards. This, in addition to the archiving of all EDI transmissions, provides the audit trail necessary to verify receipt of all EDI transmissions by the Energy Service Provider and Electric Utility. This information may be utilized to resolve customer, Electric Utility, or Energy Service Provider inquiries or disputes.
Electric Service Identification	ESI-ID—A service point identification number specific to Texas and Arkansas.
electronic data exchange	EDE— Electronic data exchange are those systems that assist people in communicating data across multiple platforms and multiple interfaces.
electronic data interchange	EDI—The electronic interchange of structured data according to agreed message standards between computer systems. Structured data equates to an unambiguous method of presenting the data content of a document, be it an invoice, order, or any other document type. The method of ensuring the correct interpretation of the information by the computer system is defined by the standard. Electronic exchange of information in the context of pure EDI effectively means without human intervention.
electronic reliability region	It is a region that is responsible for overseeing the activities related to maintaining the reliable and safe transmission of electricity within that area of North America. There are ten reliability regions within North America and they all follow the operating standards prescribed by the North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC).

encryption	A process used to allow the safe transmission of data by making the data unreadable as it is sent across the Internet or a network [refer to Pretty Good Protection (PGP)].
energy service provider	ESP—A company offering specialized or customized energy services by providing advice and products to reduce customer consumption bills. Also known as competitive retailer (CR) and retail electric provider (REP).
enrollment	The process that a retail electric provider (REP) follows to notify the registration agent (RA) of the customer's selection of service provider.
enrollment request	Customer enrollment request from the retail electric provider (REP) to the registration agent (RA).
enrollment response	Response by the registration agent (RA) to the retail electric provider (REP) regarding the enrollment request.
ERCOT	Electric Reliability Council of Texas
ESI-ID	electric service identification
ESP	energy service provider
ExoLink	Organization that provides the solution for the energy industries' data communication needs.
ExoLink Online Solution	ExoLink's online graphical user interface (GUI) application (developed in JAVA).
Extensible Markup Language	XML—A subset of the Standard Generalized Markup Language (e.g., HTML) that is computer platform independent and extremely flexible which can be used to specify presentations of a document (font size, indentation, etc.) or to specify structure of the document (paragraph, section, chapter, etc.).
FERC	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission — The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is an independent regulatory agency within the Department of Energy that regulates the transmission of natural gas and oil for resale in interstate, as well as perform a number of other functions. <http://www.ferc.fed.us/about/about.htm>
file transfer protocol	ftp—Allows the transmission of files from a server to a client computer.
firewall	A device that isolates one network from another as a measure of security.
flat file	A file that contains one or more than one record or transaction of energy data and is transmitted in a batch process not limited to email or FTP retrieval.
ftp	file transfer protocol

Gas Industry Standards Board	GISB—One of several accepted encryption protocols for transmitting electronic data interchange (EDI) files over the Internet. GISB has been selected as the communication protocol for point-to-point EDI communications between energy service providers (ESPs) and utility distribution companies (UDCs).
GISB	Gas Industry Standards Board
graphical user interface	GUI—The pictorial point of interaction between you and the computer and its special applications, usually with a mouse or other selection device.
GUI	graphical user interface
IDR	interval data recorder
implementation guideline	A description of how to use an electronic data interchange (EDI) transaction. These guidelines lay out the EDI transaction in terms of information segments and the data elements within them and provides specifications relating to data codes, field length, etc.
Independent System Operator	ISO— ISOs are FERC regulated, independent, unbiased third-party entity that oversees the activities related to the reliable and safe transmission of electricity within a specified geographic area.
informational message	The message displayed at the top of the **Transaction Editor - Update** window indicating missing or invalid data. Clicking the message links take you to the fields that require input or correction.
interval data recorder	IDR—A device that measures energy on a continuous basis and records usage information at specified intervals (e.g., 1 hour, 30 minutes, 15 minutes, etc.).
ISO	Independent System Operator
local distribution company (LDC)	LDC—An entity that provides regulated services for the distribution of gas or electricity to customers and serves customers that do not choose direct access. Regardless of where a consumer chooses to purchase energy, the customer's current utility, also known as the utility distribution company (UDC) will deliver the energy to a consumer's home, business, or farm. Also known as a distribution company (DisCo), electric distribution company (EDC), and transmission and/or distribution service provider (TDSP).
managed account	An account that is managed by an account manager.
market aggregator	Entity that initiates energy service agreements with a large number of energy customers with homogenous requirements for the purpose of procuring energy at a reduced rate.
market participants	Those entities with whom utility transactions are interchanged, including utility distribution company (UDC), registration agents (RAs), and energy service providers (ESPs).

marketer	An agent for generation projects who markets energy on behalf of the generator. Any entity that buys gas or electric energy, transmission, and other services from traditional utilities and other suppliers, and then resells those services at wholesale or to an end-use customer.
mass market	Refers to residential and small business customers.
memoed meter	A meter on which usage supply is tracked but not billed separately. This meter usage is rolled in with a base meter and billed together. As an example, for a single residence, a meter can be placed separately for a swimming pool while the base meter is placed for the home. Usage is collected on each meter separately, but billed together.
meter read cycle	Time between two consecutive on-cycle meter reads.
meter service provider	MSP—An organization that provides meter reading services for utility organizations.
middle market	Customer segment between small business and commercial & industrial (C&I) customers.
mock market	Trial market application prior to the start of a pilot.
MSP	meter service provider
NAICS	North American Industry Classification System
North American Industry Classification System	NAICS—Provides a consistent framework for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of industry statistics used by government policy analysts, academics and researchers, the business community, and the public. Previously known as Standard Industrial Classification (SIC).
Notifications	Transactions that are received and require a user to acknowledge receipt of the transaction. These transactions typically indicate that the user needs to perform some internal processing outside of the application.
object oriented	Object-oriented programming basically uses communication code to send and receive messages, speeding the development of programs and improving the maintenance, reusability, and modifiability of software.
off-cycle read date	Synonymous with a special read date; an off-cycle read date is a read date that is not considered as an on-cycle read date or an early read date.
open market	Full competition within an area.
PGP	Pretty Good Protection
pilot	A utility program offering a limited group of customers a choice of REPs on a trial basis.
point-to-point	Direct electronic communications (via EDI) between an energy service provider (ESP) and any utility distribution company (UDC), without going through a registration agent (RA).

POLR	provider of last resort
portal	An online web interface allowing market participants to enter requests and view information through the Internet. Requests for information retrieve and display the information. Requests for processing are stored and run through the transaction clearinghouse on the next trigger of the clearinghouse for that transaction type.
power authorities	Quasi-governmental agencies that perform all or some of the functions of a public utility.
pre-enrollment	The process in a retail open access environment that precedes customer enrollment and switching whereby customers may elect to have their names and information provided to retail electric providers on a mass or individual basis to help start the market. Generally, the electric utility requests the customer's permission to place their name and pertinent account information in a database. Retail electric providers licensed in the state are granted access to the approved information list for marketing purposes.
pre-pilot	Period of time (November 1, 2000 through May 31, 2001) to meet preparation requirements for the Texas Pilot.
Pretty Good Protection	PGP—Type of file encryption. Standard adopted by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) and ExoLink.
profile	Load shape created from the profile model using weather, season, day-type, etc.
profile model	Equation used to estimate each profile class' load shape.
profile script	Methodology used to create a profile model.
protocol	The formal set of rules that govern data transmission, allowing computers to exchange information.
provider of last resort	POLR—A legal obligation (traditionally given to utilities) to provide service to a customer where competitors have decided they do not want that customer's business.
Public Utility Commission of Texas	PUCT—The state regulatory body responsible for regulating the electric utility industry in Texas. The mission of the Public Utility Commission of Texas is to protect customers, foster competition, and promote high quality infrastructure.
PUCT	Public Utility Commission of Texas
QSE	qualified scheduling entity
qualification	The process of ensuring that each energy service provider (ESP) desiring to do business with an individual utility distribution company (UDC) meets pre-defined financial and technical criteria.
qualified scheduling entity	QSE—Also known as a scheduling coordinator (SC). A market participant that is qualified by one or more marketing entities that manage balanced schedules and ancillary services bids and settle payments providers.
RA	registration agent

RBC	Retail Business Center
Receiver Rejects	Transactions rejected by the receiving participant requiring the user to create and submit a new transaction or correct the transaction online.
Regional Transmission Organization	RTO—Southwest Power Pool (SPP) is the RTO for Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) and non-ERCOT members. RTO is a voluntary organization of transmission owners and users who act as a forum to report to the FERC on the implementation of open access to transmission systems.
registration agent	RA—Administrator of enrollment for Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) Statewide Database (Texas statewide market participants). The RA handles the registration of customers for providers. ERCOT is serving as the RA for the Texas market.
REP	retail electric provider
Retail Business Center	RBC—Sales and post-sales support call centers for commercial and industrial (C&I) customers.
retail electric provider	REP—A company offering specialized or customized energy services by providing advice and products to reduce customer consumption bills. Also known as competitive retailer (CR) and energy service provider (ESP).
Retail Supply Acquisition Group	RSA—This group provides back-office support functions for registration activities (e.g., submitting switch transactions, resolving switching exceptions, etc.).
RSA	Retail Supply Acquisition Group
RTO	Regional Transmission Organization
SC	scheduling coordinator
scheduling coordinator	SC—Also known as Qualified Scheduling Entity (QSE). A market participant that is qualified by one or more marketing entities that manage balanced schedules and ancillary services bids and settle payments providers.
self-aggregator	Single end-use customer with multiple locations that aggregates their energy service requirements as a single entity, such as a large industrial or national customer (e.g., Wal-Mart, etc.).
service order	Request that requires a person to go into the field and take action; point-to-point request for service offered by the utility distribution company (UDC); originates with the energy service provider (ESP).
service request	A request that does not require a person to go into the field. Internally generated or customer generated (e.g., fulfillment of requests for contracts, information, welcome packets); the result may be the creation of a service order.
SET	standard electronic transaction
settlement agent	Administrator of settlement for ERCOT Statewide Database (ERCOT participants).

SIC	Standard Industrial Classification
special read	A request for a read to be made off-cycle, incurring the required charges from the utility distribution company (UDC) for the special read action.
standard electronic transaction	SET— Typically protocols that are established for the standardization of electronic transaction transmission.
Standard Industrial Classification	SIC—Provides a consistent framework for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of industry statistics used by government policy analysts, academics and researchers, the business community, and the public. Now known as North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).
static load profile	Graphic representation of the load shape adjusted for normalized weather.
summary billing	An option provided to large customers with multiple locations where the customer is billed with one summary bill.
T&Cs	terms and conditions
T&D IDR	transmission and distribution data recorder
TDSP	transmission and/or distribution service provider
Terms and Conditions	T&Cs—Tariff for Retail Delivery Service. The Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT)-approved T&Cs for operating in the Texas open market.
Texas SET	Group within Texas that is responsible for defining the standard Texas open market access EDI Transactions between market participants.
Texas Statewide Database	Centralized system used in Texas to process and validate customer information for Customer Choice.
transaction	A transaction is any transference of business information from one business entity to another, even if it is a transaction going from one business entity back to itself.
transaction aggregation	ExoLink term combining data items or multiple transactions to create a single transaction.
transaction disaggregation	Functional separation of the vertically integrated data.
transaction set	A grouping of related transactions, usually by event. Also an EDI term for a business document, such as an invoice.
transmission and distribution data recorder	T&D IDR—Device that measures system level interval data.
transmission and/or distribution service provider	TDSP—An entity for the Texas market that will continue to provide regulated services for the distribution of gas or electricity to customers and serve customers who do not choose direct access. Equivalent to a utility distribution company (UDC).
UDC	utility distribution company

UFE	unaccounted for energy
UIG	Utility Industry Group
unaccounted for energy	UFE— Energy that is not recorded through the use of a meter or some other metering type object.
UNI	universal node identifier
uniform resource locator	URL—A standard addressing scheme used to locate or reference files on the Internet. Used in World Wide Web (WWW) documents to locate other files. A URL gives the type of resource (scheme) being accessed (e.g., gopher, ftp, etc.) and the path to the file. The syntax used is: scheme://host.domain[:port]/path/filename. The URL for ExoLink is http://www.exolink.com.
universal node identifier	UNI—Referred to as electric service identification (ESI-ID) in the Texas and Arkansas markets.
universal node identifier	UNI—A unique identifier for an individual service delivery point.
URL	uniform resource locator
usage history	Data pertaining to the historical amount of energy usage for a specified premise.
utility distribution company	UDC—An entity that provides regulated services for the distribution of gas or electricity to customers and serves customers that do not choose direct access. Regardless of where a consumer chooses to purchase energy, the customer's current utility, also known as the utility distribution company (UDC) will deliver the energy to a consumer's home, business, or farm. Also known as a distribution company (DisCo), electric distribution company (EDC), local distribution company (LDC), and transmission and/or distribution service provider (TDSP).
Utility Industry Group	UIG—An industry action group, working in the interest of the Electric and Combination Utility Industry to improve the methods of transferring business information through Electronic Data Interchange.
Validation Exceptions	Transactions that have been processed and have failed the sending participant's data validation rules.
web portal	A web site maintained by each utility distribution company (UDC) comprised of specific information related to the Texas Pilot and open market. Some content is mandated by ERCOT.
XML	Extensible Markup Language

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