

Smarter experiences for Utilities

Lead communities toward a sustainable future with a total experience





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J.D. Power, “Top 6 Areas Utilities Need to Get Right in 2022,” 2022

Industry backdrop

The world is in a race for energy, striving to meet growing demand and overcome supply challenges. Prices of electricity, natural gas, and water are at record highs on an annual average basis—or are fast approaching such figures. Utilities around the world are under pressure to lead their communities toward a more sustainable future while also trying to improve customer satisfaction despite rising costs.

Initiatives such as smart grids, smart water utilities, and other smart utility strategies, continue to make a measurable impact on operations and the reliability of services. Unfortunately, with one in six US households behind on energy bills,¹ and electricity bills expected to rise 27 percent by 2025 in other parts of the world,² costs for utility services are simply unsustainable for many.

J.D. Power, a leader in customer insights and perhaps best known for customer satisfaction surveys, points out that, “unless utilities bring their customers along, utilities will struggle to achieve their clean energy goals they have put in place for the coming decades.”³ The key word in this statement is “along,” which signals that the sustainability journey is built on a relationship between the utility, its employees, and customers.

What is excellent customer satisfaction in the Utilities sector today will be considered average at best one decade from now. Utilities must evolve and modernize processes to deliver smarter, digital, and total experiences for customers and employees.

While fluctuations in the economy are inevitable, utilities can capture opportunities to increase customer satisfaction. This paper explores what’s needed to connect with customers on a personal level, leveraging information to build and sustain trust while leading communities toward a sustainable future.

¹ Bloomberg, A ‘Tsunami of Shutoffs’: 20 Million US Homes Are Behind on Energy Bills. 2022

² Asian Development Bank, Why are Energy Prices High and How Can They be Reduced? 2022

³ J.D. Power, Top 6 Areas Utilities Need to Get Right in 2022

The OpenText vision for Utilities

There is no exceptional customer experience without an exceptional employee experience.

Likewise, there can also be no sustainability without social relationships with their customers, communities, and their employees. It’s no longer enough to focus only on customer experience. To lead communities toward a sustainable future, utilities must bring together employee experience, customer experience, and operational experience to create superior, smarter experiences underpinned by information management technology.

One major obstacle facing utilities is inefficient management of unstructured information, such as customer communications, voice, websites, and contracts, across the entire customer lifecycle. A seamless, orchestrated flow of unstructured and structured information is needed.

You have opportunities to create smarter, total experiences if any of the following examples ring true:

- Customer communications are not personalized and don’t lead toward sustainable choices.
- Customer contracts, field service tickets, identification, and other documents are not organized, accessible, or easily auditable.
- Web pages and marketing collateral do not leverage generative AI to guide energy consuming habits.
- Call center and customer behaviors are not automatically measured to support customer satisfaction or a sustainable journey.
- Pricing models aren’t supported by advanced analytics, don’t reflect energy demand, and lead to outages.



Gas utility companies are not seizing the opportunity to increase satisfaction amid a declining economy. As prices continue to increase, this is an opportunity for companies to provide better.

Ramah Vaughn, Director of Utilities Intelligence, J.D. Power

Smart grids and other smart utility assets have room to get smarter by incorporating information management technologies and best practices across the asset and customer lifecycles. As a result, employees will spend less effort searching for information and more productive time providing exceptional customer service.

Using information management for a total experience strategy

Eighty percent of the world's information is unstructured, and that holds true for utilities. A common mistake is to use structured data applications to force fit the management of unstructured information. Adopting modern information management software technologies and best practices will drive customer satisfaction and lead customers toward a sustainable future.

Deliver exceptional customer experiences

Customer experience improvement programs cultivate customer satisfaction and should also drive sustainability by delivering personalized experiences at scale. With recent declines in overall utility satisfaction, there are straightforward recommendations on how to quickly improve ratings. "Increasing communications regarding assistance programs that may be available, along with energy efficiency programs, can increase overall satisfaction by as much as 72 points."⁴ This would be, on average, a ten percent improvement on overall satisfaction. As an example of where customer information gaps exist, just 19 percent of electric utility customers are aware of their utility climate initiatives.⁵

By leveraging a comprehensive customer experience platform, utilities can manage experiences across the entire customer journey through all channels: websites, customer portals, transactional communications, self-service solutions, and call centers. An integrated platform with best-of-breed capabilities for web content management, customer communications and customer service management, voice of the customer analysis, communication orchestration, and customer audience and profile management, enables utilities to continuously improve customer satisfaction and lead customers toward a sustainable future.

Enable frictionless operational and employee experiences

Forty-seven percent of information workers routinely struggle to find the information needed to perform their jobs.⁶ Often this is due to siloed systems, information sprawl, and unorganized content. Improving operational experience focuses on eliminating the digital friction in business processes across all departments including

⁴ J.D. Power, 2022 Electric Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction Study. (2022)

⁵ J.D. Power, Electric Utility Sustainability Targets Called into Question by Customers. (2023)

⁶ Gartner, Gartner Survey Reveals 47% of Digital Workers Struggle to Find the Information Needed. (2023)

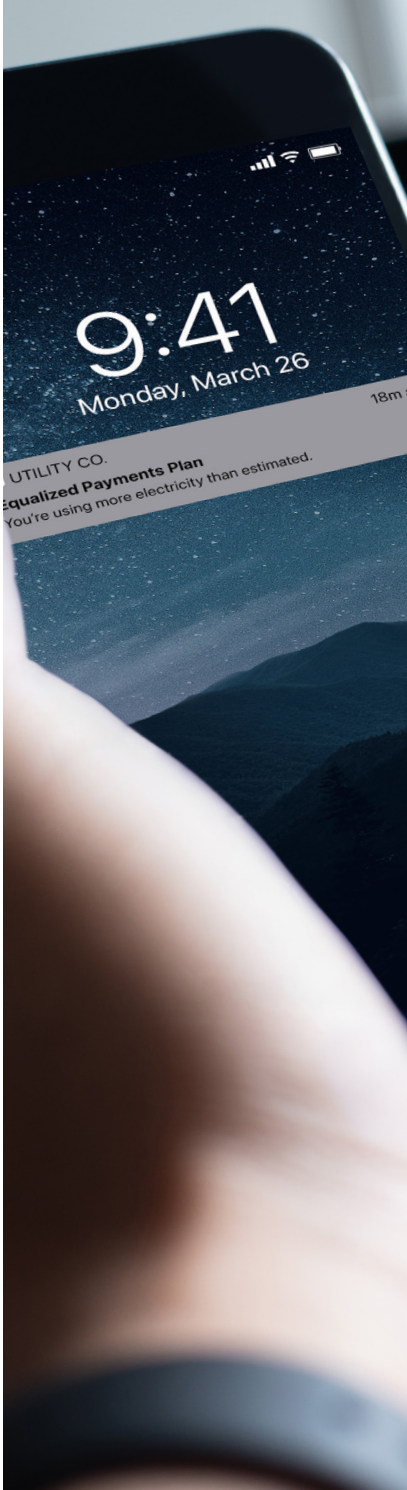
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When customers experience an outage, about 50% of customer satisfaction is derived from factors within the direct control of the utility's customer service organization, including information on timelines, clarity and ease of access.

McKinsey & Company, Transforming customer experience in utilities. (2021)



that of customer service, marketing, field service, and more. By leveraging an agile enterprise content management system, utilities can embed content into ERP, CRM, HR, and ITSM-based processes. Providing key relevant files, such as agreements, customer specific documents, and service records, in the context of workflows delivers information when and where needed to improve operational experience.

Employee experience programs aim to build engagement and increase motivation by improving interactions with the people, systems, and policies that make up the physical and virtual workplace. Integrating content management with a leading productivity suite like Google or Microsoft creates seamless digital employee experiences that empower workers to best serve customers and lead them toward a sustainable future.

Predict and act on opportunities

The Utilities sector will never move this slowly again. Despite the substantial productivity gains the industry has seen in the past decade, the tempo is only going to increase.

AI, analytics, and the Internet of Things (IoT) are key technologies to accelerate operational efficiencies, improve customer satisfaction, and personalize customer communications. By applying AI to information management, utilities can gain the full strategic value of data faster and across diverse sources. The benefits and use cases are broad and far reaching, enabling organizations to:

- Transform customer communications that enable personalized content creation.
- Leverage auto-generated webpages and assets to guide energy consuming habits.
- Redefine level 1 customer service support with interactive virtual agents based on large language models (LLM).
- Use generative AI to have a virtual subject matter expert available for technicians, providing immediate answers to keep utility services up and running.

Why OpenText

OpenText is the world's leader in information management and offers the most complete and integrated platform to deliver total experiences. We serve hundreds of utilities across the world, including 24 of the top 25 by market cap, in their information management journey to organize, integrate, protect, and automate data. No information management platform is more secure or scalable to manage high volumes of information at various customer lifecycle stages.

The world is in a race for energy, and that race is just as much about information management as it is about energy itself. It is imperative that utilities are not only smart but evolve to be smarter, transforming experiences as energy consumption habits evolve.

We welcome the opportunity to be your strategic partner in your total experience journey and support you in making your smart utilities go from smart to smarter with OpenText.



By leveraging OpenText solutions integrated with SAP and Microsoft, we can ensure a single source of truth, reduce manual handling of all content, and move forward with our mobility strategy to better enable individuals in the field to access the information they need.

Nilesh Kevat, Enterprise Architect, Jemena



Proposed next steps

Together, we can outline a vision and identify opportunities to quickly improve your total experience KPIs. Below are suggested next steps to ensure your total experience journey is in lock step with your information management journey:

- **Introductory meeting**

Bring together the OpenText Global Account Director or Senior Account Representative with your organization's Chief Customer Officer, Chief Technology Officer, VP of Customer Communications and Marketing, VP of Sustainability, VP of Customer Service, VP of Emergency Response, VP of Field Service, or other decision maker on total experience and/or sustainability investments.

- **Joint roadmap exchange**

Hold a day-long information exchange with key staff in customer service, marketing, communications, field service, sustainability, and IT. OpenText will gather insight about total experience initiatives, current approaches, and obstacles. We'll provide an overview of information management technologies and best practices that support those initiatives.

- **Business Value Consulting workshops**

The OpenText Business Value Consulting team will engage with customer service, marketing, field service, and supporting lines of business to assess their current state and quantify the business impact of potential OpenText solutions along your total experience journey.



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