

Case Study: Energy & Utilities

Digital Tools Enhance Utility Provider's Customer Experience

A regional power provider updates its digital channels and deploys new applications to improve the customer experience.

Customer service is a tricky issue for electricity companies. Customers generally aren't interested in speaking to their energy supplier. But when they do get in touch – for instance to sign up for a service, notify a change or inquire about an outage – they want a smooth, rapid response.

To help deliver this, we worked with the New Mexico regional electricity provider to upgrade its digital channels, moving 90% of customer transactions online and thus reducing call center waiting times. With digital platforms in place, the utility then wanted to fully exploit them for the benefit of its 500,000 customers.

For example, even though many customers were happy with digital channels, the process for changing an address or signing up on the phone was still slow, because customer service representatives had to input data via an unwieldy user interface. At the same time, call volumes remained higher than they needed to be because customers sometimes failed to locate the information they needed on their online channels.

At a glance

A regional power provider wanted to improve its customer service via web and mobile channels, while reducing pressure on its customer service team and creating cost savings. We built an advanced technology platform providing customers a consistent experience across web and mobile channels. As a result, many customers migrated online, promoting considerable savings and greater customer satisfaction.

Outcomes

- Encouraged 34,000 customers to sign up for automatic payments, reducing payment default rates and saving \$35,000 per month in bill printing and distribution costs
- Reduced average customer call handling time by 25%, from eight minutes to six, representing a savings of around 330 hours of customer service time per month

In our initial engagement, we had already achieved a significant level of digital transformation. For example, we had improved customer satisfaction, thanks to faster response times and more immediate availability of information, with customers being able to complete 90% of service tasks online. We had also reduced call center costs and delays by moving customer inquiries online, with the number of online users increasing by 84%.

Building on these digital developments, we:

- **Improved online platforms** to make it easier for customers to carry out simple tasks such as creating a user profile and signing up for automatic bill payments
- **Gave customer service representatives a simple and sleek web-based interface** for dealing with inquiries, making it easier to process calls quickly
- **Strengthened the security of online systems** by reducing access to personally identifiable information

Customer service representatives can now input customer data more easily and deal with fewer calls throughout the day, making their lives less stressful.

Customers have better access to essential online information and, behind the scenes, security has been enhanced. Customers can also now choose to get mobile alerts in the event of a blackout. Losing power is a distressing situation, but for thousands of customers it is made easier by having regular updates about when the supply will be restored.

- Diverted call center traffic by making it easier for customers to find information online, with an 84% increase in website traffic
- Helped 95,000 customers sign up for outage alerts, improving customer service and reducing complaints during power cuts
- Transitioned 3,300 calls a month to digital channels, saving around 450 hours of customer service time monthly
- Made it easier for customers to go digital, with 200,000 creating online profiles
- Moved 200,000 accounts to paperless billing, saving costs

About Cognizant

Cognizant (Nasdaq-100: CTSH) is one of the world's leading professional services companies, transforming clients' business, operating and technology models for the digital era. Our unique industry-based, consultative approach helps clients envision, build and run more innovative and efficient businesses. Headquartered in the U.S., Cognizant is ranked 194 on the Fortune 500 and is consistently listed among the most admired companies in the world. Learn how Cognizant helps clients lead with digital at www.cognizant.com or follow us [@Cognizant](https://twitter.com/Cognizant).

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