



High performance. Delivered.

Achieving high performance with
Accenture's customer experience
management solutions for utilities

• Consulting • Technology • Outsourcing

Customer experience drives satisfaction—and profitability

For retail utilities, customer satisfaction represents the sum of many parts—including customer service, billing and payment, communications, company image, power quality and price. Together, those elements create the customer experience (see Figure 1).

In today's environment, the customer experience is more important than ever, and not just to customers. Regulators are increasingly penalizing utilities that have poor customer satisfaction ratings. Competitors are driving perpetual churn. Creditors are using customer satisfaction when determining bond ratings. Meanwhile, based on their experiences with other industries, individual consumers are clamoring for better service. In short, customer satisfaction is a critical driver of financial performance.

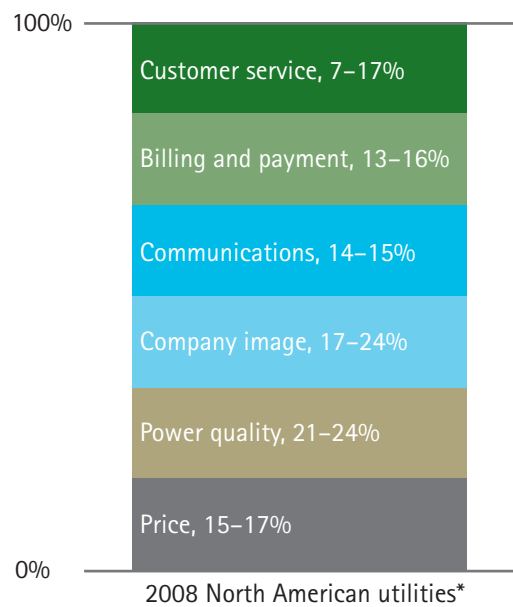
Satisfied customers cost up to 25 percent less to serve and also generate up to 30 percent more new revenue.¹ Yet, in the utility industry, customer interactions are infrequent—so utilities must make the most of every opportunity.

High-performance businesses, including utilities, recognize the strategic value in understanding, evaluating and continually improving the customer experience. They take a holistic approach to identifying strengths and addressing weaknesses in every element. In doing so, they achieve higher customer satisfaction and, ultimately, reduce cost to serve, generate more revenue, and enjoy higher bond ratings and better regulatory relations that help utilities achieve high performance.

Figure 1. Satisfaction is the outcome of experience.

Customer satisfaction is achieved through improving relationships and interactions, a significant opportunity area for utilities.

Elements of customer satisfaction



* J.D. Power and Associates, 2008 North American utilities, Electric SMB/Res

Accenture guides you in transforming the customer experience to improve satisfaction, reduce cost of capital and bad debt, decrease call volume and identify new revenue growth opportunities.

Accenture's approach to optimizing the customer experience

With industry-leading expertise in customer relationship management (CRM), Accenture recognizes the direct link between customer satisfaction and financial performance. We also understand that when it comes to customer satisfaction, most utilities are lagging behind other home service providers. Accenture customer experience management solutions help utilities improve customer satisfaction and drive bottom-line results ultimately leading to high performance.

With these solutions, we examine and make recommendations for improving every element that comprises the customer experience and contributes to satisfaction. In doing so, we balance marketplace demands and customer pressures against your internal capabilities and resources (see Figure 2).

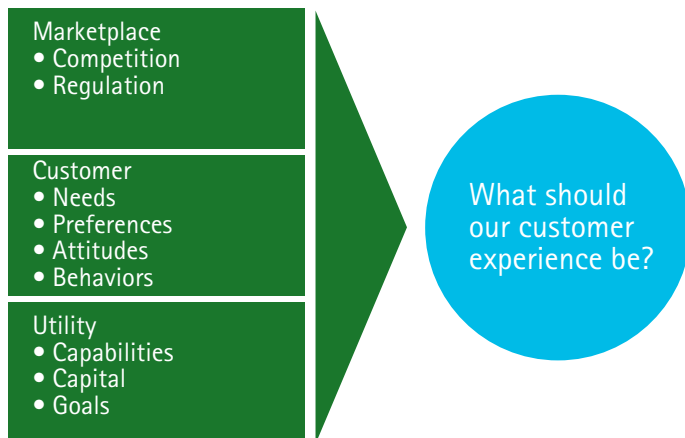
Our process typically begins with a high-level assessment of current performance against customers' expectations for a consistent and satisfying experience. This assessment often identifies improvements that can be made quickly and cost effectively. It also provides important insights for the next phase—development of an actionable strategy for improving the customer experience. Addressing customer insights, comparative analysis and internal operational effectiveness, the strategy outlines a detailed blueprint for optimizing the customer experience. Finally, we guide you in executing that blueprint—transforming the customer experience to improve satisfaction, reduce cost of capital and bad debt, decrease call volume, and identify new revenue growth opportunities.

Accenture Customer Satisfaction Survey

In surveying more than 4,000 consumers in nine countries, we gained deep insight into the critical importance of delivering a customer-centric service experience. How well companies understand and meet the distinct preferences and expectations of the customers they serve—from how long they are willing to wait for service to the way they are treated by customer service representatives—continues to exert a powerful influence over customers' willingness to remain customers versus their propensity to leave.

Figure 2. Accenture's customer experience approach.

To deliver the appropriate customer experience, utilities must balance marketplace pressures, customer demands and their internal capabilities.



Customer relationship management

A large utility with revenues of \$11 billion was grappling with poor customer satisfaction—compounded by municipalization and a poor image coming out of bankruptcy. Working with Accenture, the utility initiated business transformation projects to reduce operating costs, fund strategic priorities and enhance the customer experience by understanding and then delivering what customers need.

We know what it takes to optimize the customer experience.

What can you expect when you team with Accenture?

You work with professionals who understand the unique challenges of the utilities industry. We see the world as you do and can help your company differentiate itself to achieve high performance. Our understanding of key business issues and trends, and applicable technologies and business solutions enables us to deliver innovative yet practical solutions tailored to each client. We bring a breadth of skills, capabilities and assets to help utilities address our clients' business challenges, including:

Utilities industry experience

Accenture's utilities industry group has more than 30 years experience working with electric, gas and water utilities worldwide. Our group includes 7,500 utility industry people working with approximately 275 clients in 40 countries. We serve 74 percent of the utilities on the 2009 Global *Fortune* 500 list using our deep, global industry knowledge, people and assets to help clients develop the strategies and adopt solutions to improve performance in the dynamic utility market.

Client-ready utilities assets

Accenture has developed many utilities assets, including the High Performance Utility Model, based upon our extensive consulting, systems integration and outsourcing experience. This model helps utilities assess their performance against industry leaders, jump-start business improvement projects and accelerate program delivery.

Customer Relationship Management

Accenture's Customer Relationship Management service line helps organizations achieve high performance by transforming their marketing, sales and customer service functions to support accelerated growth, increased profitability and greater operating efficiency. Our research, insight and innovation, global reach and delivery experience have made us a worldwide leader, serving thousands of clients every year, including most Fortune 100 companies, across virtually all industries.

Accenture Utilities BPO Services

Accenture not only has leading consulting capabilities, but we also have a deep operational understanding based on our business process outsourcing (BPO) services for utilities. Accenture Utilities BPO Services provides solutions to 14 clients and 15 million customers in North America, Europe and Asia Pacific.

Contact us

Accenture's approach to optimizing the customer experience is holistic and designed to help retail utilities navigate through today's challenging environment. We work with companies to chart a successful course to improve the way they interact with customers—and to build the high-performance businesses that can compete and win in a changing environment. We would like to hear about your needs and discuss how we can work together to help your organization advance toward high performance.

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Endnotes

1. Accenture analysis of North American utility market.

About Accenture

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company.

Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world's most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. With more than 176,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, the company generated net revenues of US\$21.58 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2009. Its home page is www.accenture.com.

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