

CASE STUDY

Electric Utility Leader Leverages Smart Outreach for Customer Engagement

How a leading utility provider helped customers power through summer using Retain for automated digital communications

The Challenge

With more than 6 million customers across several states, one of the nation's leaders in electric utility systems prides itself on the distribution, transmission, and generation of electricity, as well as energy management and other related services. Facing summer temperatures, the end of utility disconnection moratoriums, and high utility bill delinquency during the COVID-19 pandemic, the utility wanted to offer financial assistance programs to at-risk customers. But how to communicate with those customers about the time-sensitive programs effectively at scale was the question.

Historically, this electric system provider had relied on direct mail and an in-house call center to contact customers. But during COVID, with changing consumer behavior and extended moratoriums, it had seen customer engagement rates decline. Focused on finding a cost-effective and customer-friendly way to engage with customers at scale, the utility opted to try automated digital communications.

The Solution

The electric utility provider had observed firsthand that its customers were becoming more digital, from engaging with its distribution companies' mobile apps to using online outage maps and bill pay tools—and the trend was increasing during the pandemic.

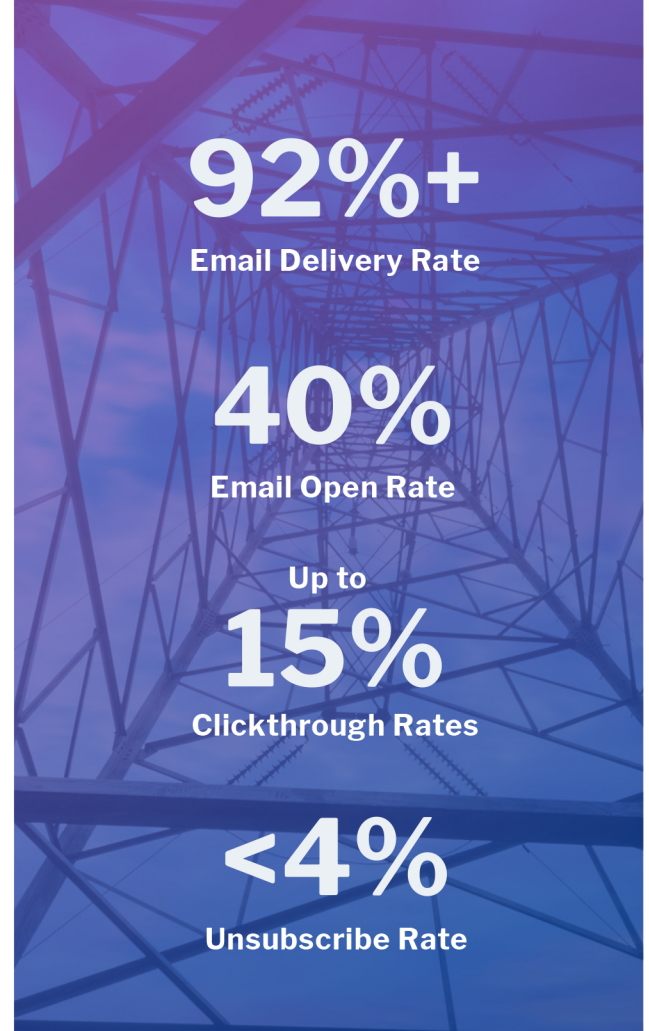
But the company's leaders knew that they didn't have the in-house expertise or resources to successfully automate and deliver its digital communications. After evaluating a number of solutions, this utility provider decided to implement Retain to power its digital outreach.

Using Retain, the company seamlessly deployed their desired outreach driving customer awareness, engagement, and participation in its energy assistance programs. Every email went out under the provider's recognized and trusted brand name. But under the hood, this digital outreach benefitted from the platform's exceptional email deliverability rates powered by Retain's optimization engine.

The Results

After a few weeks of going live with Retain, the utility company saw a high volume of program applications and enrollments.

Immediately, they observed high levels of engagement with Retain-powered digital outreach across multiple outreach campaigns: deliverability rates greater than 92%, email open rates of 40%, clickthrough rates up to 15%, and unsubscribes dropping under 4%. Even more importantly, these engagement numbers continued to improve as Retain optimized outreach based on real-time signals of customer engagement on the individual level.



Implementing Retain for a one-month communications initiative, the electric systems company was able to **enroll more than 300 at-risk customers in energy assistance programs, granting more than \$100,000 in financial assistance.**

Having a self-optimizing digital “engine” drove effective engagement with the utility provider’s customers at scale while enabling increased efficiency of their customer service team—now rather than trying to reach customers on the phone, agents could work as productive inbound solutions specialists.

Ready to improve your customer communications and engagement using Retain’s proven digital-first, optimized approach? **Schedule a consultation today!**

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