

Enhancing Overall Customer Experience Through Outbound Messaging

An outbound communications strategy including personalized video bill explanations, promoted energy efficiency programs, increasing brand perception, and customer satisfaction.

The Challenge: Increasing Customer Satisfaction, Improve Engagement

Serving more than 600,000 electric customers in Pittsburgh, PA, and the surrounding area, Duquesne Light Company (DLC) needed to ramp up their energy efficiency program results for the upcoming Phase IV of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) Act 129. All IOU utilities in the state must reduce energy consumption and peak demand by specific percentages over multi-year phases. As the end of Phase III neared in 2020, DLC needed to meet their Phase IV goals to avoid significant financial penalties from the PUC. The challenge was how to achieve better results and provide a better customer experience without giving away energy efficiency kits as they had done for the previous 12 years.

Solution:

DLC needed a way to engage customers in order to drive their energy efficiency programs. In October 2020 DLC engaged Apogee to run a 12-month pilot program using outbound email communications. Using billing data, the emails targeted customers whose bills increased or decreased from the previous month by \$20 or more. The email contained a personalized video explaining specific reasons why their actual bill changed and provided links to energy efficiency programs and available utility rebates. The videos helped customers understand their bill, where they were using energy, and gave them tools to save energy.

Following completion of the pilot program, DLC launched full scale in October 2021 as part of their Phase IV energy efficiency program.

Results:

Instead of waiting on hold when phoning the call center, the outbound email video bill explanations vastly improved the customer experience. Dave Defide, Sr. Manager, Customer Programs at DLC noted,

“We can personalize and target emails to customers’ needs and drive whatever program we want such as budget billing, eBilling, or EE programs. In the end, customer satisfaction and perception improved. Now when we survey customers their responses are more positive. They are more receptive to what we’re saying. We’ve become a trusted energy advisor to them.”

DLC saw impressive engagement during the 13-month pilot - 50% unique open and 13% click through rates, both significantly higher than the industry standard. After 5 months of full-scale implementation, survey results from those who watched the videos are outstanding:

- **Over 95% found the videos very or somewhat easy to understand**
- **87% said the information was useful to them**
- **Over 95% said their perception of DLC was the same or improved**



To schedule a demonstration contact Apogee at 678-684-6801
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