

# CASE STUDY: UTILITY BUILDS INSTANT CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Vectren transforms its image and reduces costs

## Overview

Energy holding company Vectren Corporation wanted to offer its customers a responsive, fresh-looking website and bill-pay portal while reducing the costs and call burden on its customer service division.

Redesigning the overall website experience improved customer satisfaction to the degree that positive feedback was instantaneous and ongoing. Customers were astonished and delighted to discover that the monthly bill-paying experience and interactions with the utility were no longer painful, but actually pleasant.

Additionally, by delivering a best-in-class self-service customer experience, Vectren's Manage My Account portal reduced calls to customer service. The online requests for starting, stopping and moving service doubled yearly, which helped the organization gain capacity and reduce operating costs.

## Market Reality

After remaining relatively unchanged for the last 100 years, utility companies now face a host of new challenges that are evolving their business models, changing consumer expectations and causing regulatory models to adapt. In short, the utilities industry is evolving into a service industry.

In almost every other service in our lives, there's some degree of personalization and self-service available on whatever device we choose, whenever we choose. Companies must develop an actionable strategy and adapt. Vectren realized it needed to update its digital presence to meet new service industry expectations so that it could continue to build customer satisfaction and loyalty.

## Business Opportunity

Vectren recognized that change was imperative and that carrying on with old business models and dated

## Objectives

- Implement on-trend design, content and process best practices
- Develop effective self-service processes, reducing costly call center interaction
- Deliver mobile-first design and content

## Approach

- Focus first on the Manage My Account portal, primary digital touchpoint
- Second, design [Vectren.com](http://Vectren.com) to provide an omnichannel experience
- Implement customer-centric design and process improvements
- Use Agile methodology to create a more successful development environment

## Business Impact

- Overwhelmingly positive customer engagement
- Decreased calls to call center
- Reduced burden/costs, gained capacity within customer service division
- Produced data-driven knowledge of customer needs and preferences

## Keys to Success

- Close collaboration on everything from findings analysis to implementation
- Mentoring and adoption of Agile project management methodology

technologies was alienating to customers and expensive to the business. Customers were frustrated having to dig for information and

struggle through an onerous bill-paying process. When they were frustrated, their only recourse was to call customer service. But call centers are expensive to operate, and most customers prefer to solve their own problems online.

Vectren was ready to deliver a win-win solution, giving customers the self-service options they desired, while reducing costs of the customer service division and freeing up agents to handle emergencies or more complex customer issues.

### Vectren's Solution

Fusion's assessment of Vectren's existing website content and portal processes revealed that overall the company's internal business processes were showing.

The website was delivering content the company thought customers needed to know, and the Manage My Account processes weren't customer-centric at all. Both were internally focused and business-task driven, dishing up irrelevant content and forcing customers to perform tasks that could be handled on the back-end. This resulted in high volumes of calls to customer service to resolve basic purchasing and bill-paying issues.

Fusion worked with Vectren to clearly identify primary customers and their needs by analyzing demographic and business data. Fusion then focused website content to address those stated needs, with clear paths for additional help outside the primary transactions. Similarly, Fusion streamlined all existing Manage My Account processes so customers could do just what they came to do and quickly return to their lives.

The existing Vectren.com and Manage My Account did not provide

a clear customer journey for Vectren customers. A lack of findable, relevant content and overly complicated processes without clear start and finish direction were impeding task execution and decision-making. Additionally, the assessment revealed that the website and portal needed to be more visually and verbally engaging. A lack of imagery and story gave off a strictly utilitarian impression that didn't encourage customer relationship building.

Fusion suggested a more expansive design and content direction to tell the company's story, and especially to surface what the company was doing for customers, as well as what customers could do for themselves.

Fusion then offered a solid, sustainable strategy for improvement that incorporated three major themes:

1. Establish operational excellence first by doing the basics and doing them well.
2. Design the best low-touch, self-service user experience in the industry.
3. Define the Vectren.com customer journey with a plan to redefine it as it evolves.

A small Fusion team collaborated with a larger Vectren team on the project from start to finish, offering expert guidance and manpower. The final result was a stunning [website](#) and sleek portal functionality that received rave reviews.

### Relevant Takeaways

- In today's market, shifting the focus away from the business to the customer is absolutely vital.
- A well-defined customer journey is the essential foundation upon which a customer-centered business model must be built. Customer personas and needs must be defined by analyzing data.

- Web design/redesign, relevant content, streamlined processes and self-service options for users are not disparate strategies. They are a continuum of strategies that will help an organization increase customer engagement at a lower cost to the business.



### About Vectren

*Vectren Corporation is an energy holding company headquartered in Evansville, IN. Vectren Corporation serves as the intermediate holding company for three operating utilities: Vectren Energy Delivery of Indiana North, Vectren Energy Delivery of Indiana South, and Vectren Energy Delivery of Ohio.*



### Fusion Alliance

### About Fusion

*Fusion Alliance delivers actionable insights, customer experiences and human-driven technologies that transform the way our clients envision and shape their businesses.*

*That's why businesses across multiple industries have relied on Fusion's expertise and partnership for over 25 years. Fusion Alliance is the catalyst that moves your ideas to execution.*

### For more information

*April Harvey  
Business Development Manager  
[aharvey@fusionalliance.com](mailto:aharvey@fusionalliance.com)*

*Kristin Raikes  
Solutions Director, Digital Strategy  
[kraikes@fusionalliance.com](mailto:kraikes@fusionalliance.com)*

