

## Utilities Continue to Lag in Offering Superior Digital Services, J.D. Power Finds

### Less Efficiency, Higher Costs Await Utilities That Fail to Act

**COSTA MESA, Calif.: 27 Feb. 2019** — Utilities continue to struggle to get digital right. According to the J.D. Power 2019 Utility Digital Experience Study,<sup>SM</sup> released today, there is an improvement in overall satisfaction from last year, but although utilities still lag behind other industries when it comes to delivering a satisfying digital customer experience, there remains a path forward for them to further improve.

Now in its second year, the study assesses how customers interact with their utility based on their perceptions of the available websites and mobile apps as well as the social, email, chat and text functions of the 67 largest electric, natural gas and water utilities in the United States. A mobile channel is necessary to be ranked in this study. Centric Digital, a leader measuring digital intelligence, collaborated on this study by contributing a Digital Intelligence Benchmark powered by its DIMENSIONS™ platform, that includes digital experience analysis and cross-industry insights.

“Utilities that remain digital laggards are passing up a prime opportunity to make their operations more efficient and to reduce costs,” said **Jon Sundberg, Senior Digital Manager at J.D. Power**. “Customers will choose the option that resolves their problems quickly, which in many cases will be via an online site or an app. Connecting with a utility representative via phone shouldn’t be a default, but it can often become one when digital capabilities aren’t strong. That can raise costs.”

Following are some of the key findings of the 2019 study:

- **Utilities remain among lowest-performing industries in digital:** When benchmarked against other consumer-facing industries, utilities continue to offer one of the worst digital experiences, according to the Centric Digital IQ Score, which is used to benchmark digital intelligence. The utility industry scores 512 on a 1,000-point scale, a near 60-point decline from last year. The retail sector, in comparison, scores 694.
- **Overall customer satisfaction increases:** The industry average for overall satisfaction is 844, a five-point increase from last year (839). Driving this increase is a surge in satisfaction with apps, which increases 33 points to 873 from 840 last year. Mobile web satisfaction increases to 838 from 829, and desktop satisfaction increases to 844 from 843.
- **What apps do well:** Apps have completely changed the way many companies interact with customers. Apps can provide a more tailored user experience with key functionality/design elements that increase the ease of use.
- **Issue resolution of assisted online channels is high—but...:** Usage of assisted online channels is low. However, among those customers who do use such channels, issue resolution on the first attempt averages more than 80%.
- **Digital laggards:** Only 29 of the 67 utilities included in the study currently offer a mobile app, and only 12 utilities redesigned their website in the past year. Utilities should place more emphasis on expanding their digital offerings, then reviewing and refining more frequently to ensure they are meeting customer expectations. Compared with other industries, utilities are updating their digital properties at a slower pace.

## Study Results

**SRP** ranks highest in overall satisfaction with a score of 882. **AEP** (877) ranks second and **SMUD** (876) ranks third. The industry average is 844.

The 2019 Utility Digital Experience Study is based on evaluations from 15,894 customers of the 67 largest electric, natural gas and water utilities. To be included in the study, utilities must serve 540,000 or more customers. The study was fielded in November-December 2018.

For more information about the J.D. Power Utility Digital Experience Study, visit <https://www.jdpower.com/business/resource/utility-digital-experience-study>.

See the online press release at <http://www.jdpower/pr-id/2019029>.

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**Centric Digital**'s intelligence platform, DIMENSIONS™, measures capabilities across an enterprise's core digital footprint—web, mobile, social, etc.—and compares them to industry standards and market leaders. Insights from Centric Digital IQ data powers partner solutions, informs investors and guides C-suite executives through frontline managers to optimize business performance. Over 15,000 brands worldwide and across industries are tracked including the S&P 500. To learn more, please visit [centricdigital.com](http://centricdigital.com).

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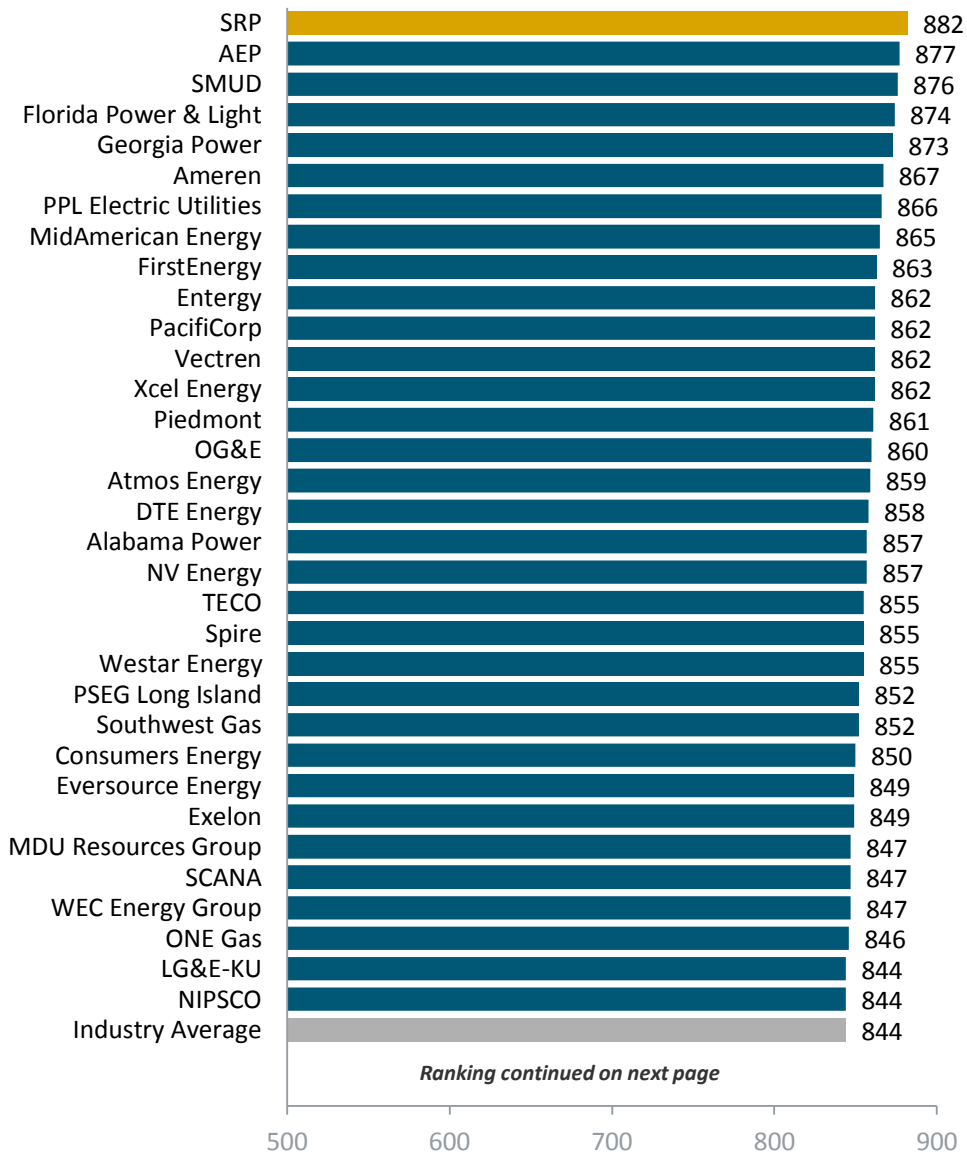
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NOTE: One chart—on two pages—follows.

# J.D. Power 2019 Utility Digital Experience Study<sup>SM</sup>

## Overall Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Note: A mobile channel is necessary to be officially ranked.

Source: J.D. Power 2019 Utility Digital Experience Study<sup>SM</sup>

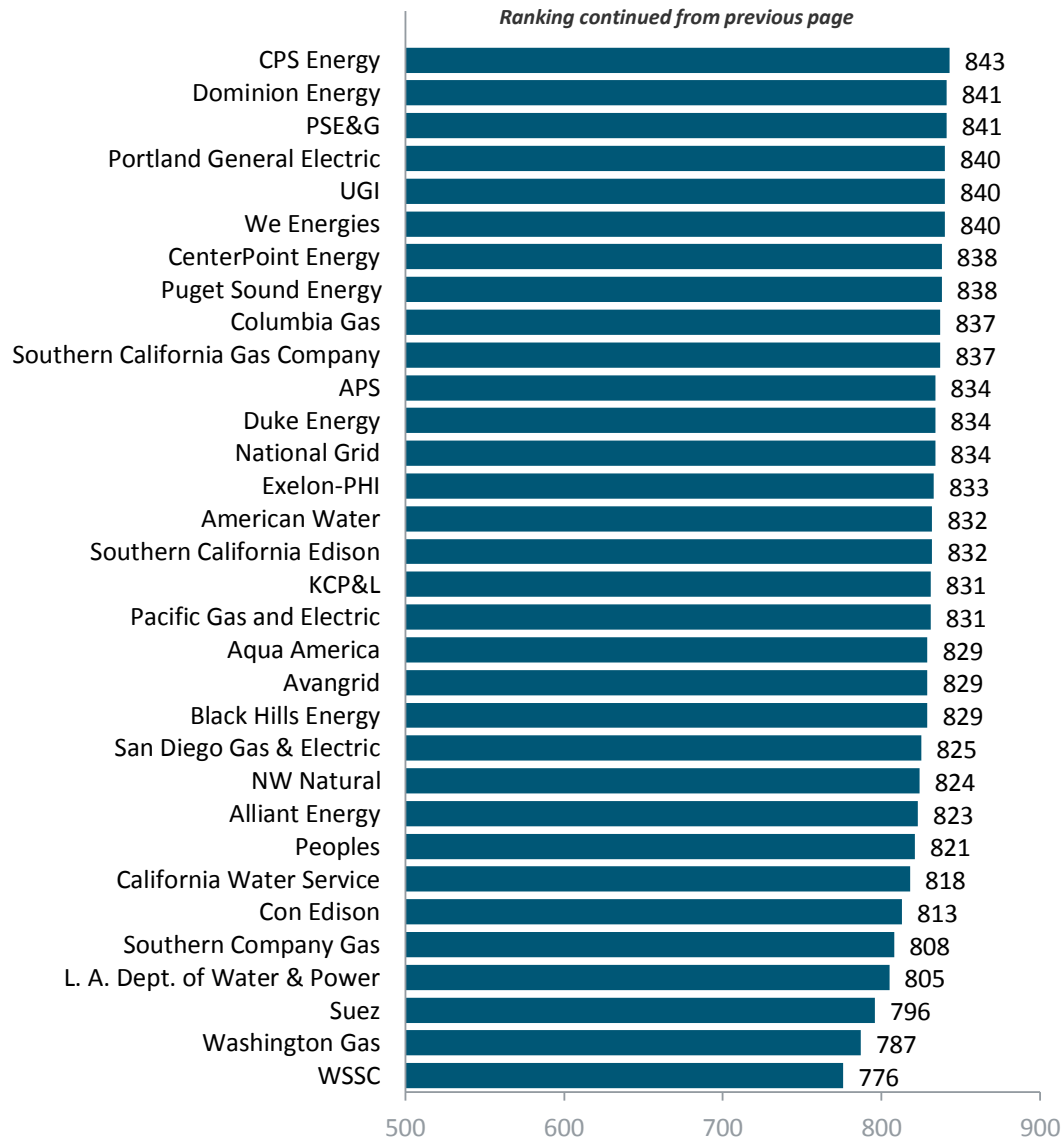
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Ranking continued from previous page

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