Managing existing usage, ensuring up-time, managing outages, and planning for growth are all critical concerns in the global energy markets. Complicating the picture are environmental concerns such as emissions, water contamination, and the use of dangerous materials. The combination of energy's necessity in today's world and the challenges associated make the industry ripe for business process change and opportunities.

The three leading issues facing the industry today are:

- Growing populations, urbanization, and the global middle class;
- Variance in the cost of energy, which depends on government policies, incentives and restrictions, and which can change with economic upswings or downturns; and
- Businesses and consumers are demanding better energy-management tools, and utilities need to consistently do more with less.

Here are three examples of how proactive communications are transforming the customer experience:

**Appointment scheduling and reminders.** If a customer is moving, companies can use outbound tools to schedule appointments for new hook-ups or make changes to existing service. These can be followed up with day-of reminders via text, email, push, or voice notifications.

**Welcome messages, usage tips, and reminders.** After they sign up a new customer, utilities that proactively send relevant and timely information to customers make their onboarding experience better. Communications containing links to FAQs, payment options, and general information will reduce inbound contact center calls, and links to the customer’s profile will allow him to customize his experience—and offer useful personal information—from day one. Furthermore, by sending alerts about a coming cold front or heat wave, utilities can remind users about energy-saving techniques ahead of spikes in demand. Likewise, they can offer suggestions for limiting usage during regular peak times by reminding customers to turn off appliances or turn down heat and A/C when they leave the house.

**Outage notifications.** Utilities have been able to curtail the backlash from outages by proactively alerting and updating customers who are experiencing service interruptions, including cause and estimated restoral time, using their preferred method of communications (text, calls, or email). Including a place for feedback and reporting can help utilities as they restore service, too.

As consumers increasingly make purchasing decisions based on reputation and recommendations, companies must proactively manage their brand and the customer relationship by proactively communicating with customers in order to keep customers informed, increase satisfaction, and build long term customer relationships. A complete outbound engagement solution lets organizations dynamically create, manage, and tune their outbound campaigns using self-service tools and offers a deep well of natively integrated channels, including outbound IVR, predictive dialer, text messaging, email, and push notifications.

Click to learn how Genesys can help deliver exceptional outbound customer engagement by downloading the Frost & Sullivan White Paper — Change the Conversation with Proactive Communications.