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New Report Explores Changing Customer Expectations and the Impact on Energy Providers

Smart Grid Consumer Collaborative's new research compares customer experience across industries

ATLANTA – Jan. 9, 2016 – The Smart Grid Consumer Collaborative (SGCC) today released its latest report, “Customer Experience and Expectations”, which seeks to understand how grid modernization and experiences with a broad range of service providers have impacted consumers’ attitudes toward their energy provider.

The research was conducted as an online survey of 2,000 respondents across the U.S., and findings were analyzed in total and across five key consumer segments, three energy user profiles and four categories of technology use.

The study probed customers on six key touchpoints with their energy provider, like starting a new service or remediating a problem, and uncovered customer preferences and expectations on each of these interactions. Customer perceptions of best-in-class service providers for these interactions were also explored.

The findings from this research are framed through five stages of the customer lifecycle – investigate, initiate, remediate, innovate and cultivate, and the report provides valuable insights for each stage to provide stakeholders with ideas to improve customer engagement.

By comparing the performance of utilities with that of organizations in other industries (banks, online retailers, etc.), the research highlights where utilities do well and where they can improve.

Key findings of the report include:

- While the type of contact consumers favor differs across services, consumers still prefer some sort of personal engagement.
- Before adopting a product or service, consumers evaluate the benefits of the offering and determine whether the gain is worth any required trade-off.
- Over half of consumers believe that no organization excels at providing them with personalized offers and suggestions.
- Nearly one-third believe that no organization performs well in problem resolution and innovation.

To further explore the findings of “Customer Experience and Expectations”, download the free Executive Summary at www.smartgridcc.org. SGCC research leaders will provide an in-depth look into the report during a free webinar on Thursday, Jan. 19 at 1 p.m. (ET). Registration is currently available here.