

**Category:** *Utilities*

**Methods:** *Customer Satisfaction, Customer Segmentation, Business-to-Business Research, Consumer Research*

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## Summary

A major national utility company was suffering from low customer satisfaction ratings and needed a plan to identify problems and address the issues in a timely manner.

## Strategic Issues

The utility company was ineffective in dealing with issues and inquiries from its customers. Specifically, they needed a systematic approach to evaluate the performance of their customer service representatives and field technicians, in order to identify problems and craft solutions.

## Research Objectives

The primary objective of the research was to gain a better understanding of the customer experience throughout their interaction with the company, in order to identify key areas of intervention.

## Research Design and Methods

Decision Analyst designed a customer satisfaction research program that surveyed both residential and commercial customers. Decision Analyst contacted customers via the telephone within a few days of their interaction with the utility company. Customers were asked a series of questions relating to general performance and satisfaction, as well as questions that were specific to their type of transaction with the company. The objective was to understand the customers' experiences throughout the stages (new service, service call, and account inquiry) of their interaction with the utility company.

## Results

The research revealed several areas for improving customer service. The customer base was segmented using several statistical techniques in order to better understand the different needs of each segment and the level of service required to generate and maintain strong satisfaction ratings.

The client implemented a pilot program of service improvements that targeted the right level of attention and support to the right type of customer. The pilot program was eventually expanded to the entire enterprise.