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Making Service Click

How Mobility Can Drive
Shorter Estimated Time
For Restorations (ETRs)

It's hard to outsmart Mother Nature.

That's why utilities must be prepared to deal with storms, floods, and other catastrophic events. This includes putting measures in place that can speed up restoration efforts. Mobility is a mainstream measure that can help everyone—the service provider, rescue crews, first responders, and customers. **With mobility you can dramatically change how utilities operate during outage situations—and set your restoration efforts apart from other utilities.**

GETTING EVERYONE ON BOARD

During the last decade, storms have been getting bigger and stronger—and today they are affecting a larger number of customers across a wider geographical area. With this in mind,

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any one utility may be limited in resources when it comes time for restoration. A good mobility solution will allow you to identify the availability for all utilities, mutual aid, and contractor crews, regardless of location and schedules.

Mobility offers a way to provide seamless collaborations and timely communications with regional and national response crews. It also gives you virtually instant access to critical data, including detailed information from first responders assessing the damage. This allows service personnel to respond to a catastrophe in ways that were unforeseen just a few short years ago.

PROVIDING TRANSPARENCY IMPROVES THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Social media, online video, and mobility are the components of an emerging trend that is fast becoming the norm. As a result, customers now expect their utility company to provide updates on critical situations at the same lightning pace. Total transparency with customers can also serve to separate your company from the competition. By using all means of modern communication, you can offer customers a real-time glimpse into the situation. In turn, customers may become advocates for your utility by spreading updates through their networks. This takes the pressure off call centers, and allows your employees to pay attention to more pressing work-related issues.

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USING GEO-LOCATION TO FIND THE RIGHT TECHNICIAN

The storm has wreaked havoc, and now you need to react fast. But who is on the ground, and where? By using geo-locators for each field employee with a mobile phone, you will be able to see their location on a map. Once you locate a particular field employee, you can activate the street-level routing directions to know that person's exact time of arrival.

The street-level routing will include up-to-the-minute traffic information, so you can choose the right technician according to the best ETA. In other words, the closest technician might not be the best choice. Making the decision based on the actual road conditions—and not the distance between two points—will get your people on site faster and keep them safer every time.

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VIEWING SKILL LEVELS AND ASSETS TO SEND THE RIGHT TECHNICIAN

Once you locate the field employee, you need to decide if that person is the right technician for the job. Each field worker not only has a set of skills that is entered into the computer, but also keeps a list of assets—equipment, tools, and gear—that are in the vehicle. These two parameters can easily be viewed in a drop-down menu and matched to the needs of the job. Making a decision on who to send is now much more intelligent, saving your utility precious time in restoration efforts.

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GIVING MORE ACCURATE ETRs

During a power outage, everyone is looking for the answer to one question: When will my power be restored? Because a mobility solution gives you broader visibility, you can communicate back to your customers on a more accurate ETR. By sending this message to mobile devices, customers won't be flooding the contact center for answers—and you will be able to spend more time on fixing the problem and less time on calming customers.

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COMPLYING WITH SLAs TO MINIMIZE FINES

Service Level Agreements (SLAs) are in place to govern your risk management and ensure that your utility truly responds to the needs of your customers. In a catastrophe, being able to comply with the SLAs means getting there on time and getting the work done in the allotted time. On a regular day, this may work most of the time. But in emergency situations, many more obstacles get in the way of meeting your SLAs. Road conditions, for example, can be a big factor in responding in a swift manner. By having the right mobility solution in place, you will be able to see the location, road conditions, skill level of the employee, and what resources are available to help. All this information is called up in seconds so that you can make more timely decisions. And these critical decisions will have a big impact on whether or not you can overcome the disastrous situation and meet your SLAs.
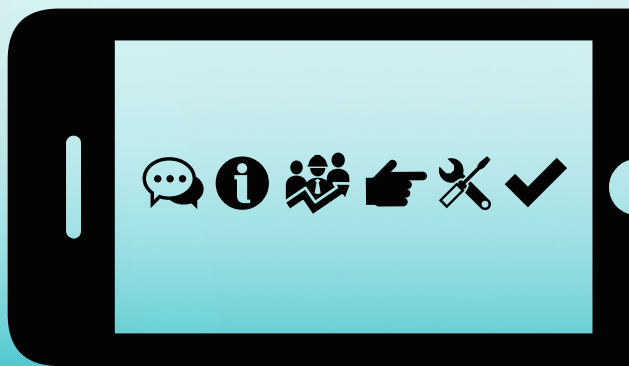
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USING MOBILE APPS FOR SAFETY

When field employees respond to catastrophes, anything can happen. Mobility allows you to take extra safety precautions in a dangerous situation. A panic timer app, for instance, allows a field employee to press a button on the screen and send an instant distress signal to managers and team members when a dangerous situation arises. It can also be set before the technician goes into the dangerous situation— if that person does not return, alerts can be sent to coworkers and dispatchers signaling them for help. Creating checklists and safety procedures forms, which can be filled in before the day begins, is another way to ensure that your utility is prepared for dangerous situations—and that your field employees will be ready for whatever catastrophe arises.

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ClickSoftware has been helping energy and water utilities to respond faster, increase regulatory compliance, and reduce the cost of maintaining asset networks for more than 15 years.

See how our Mobile Apps can help your company improve its restoration efforts and customer retention.

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