



3 ways utilities companies can use voice to stay **RESILIENT**



Introduction

Utilities today is not just a highly competitive industry. It's chaotic. **Policy changes, rising energy costs** and the **roll-out of smart meters** in homes mean there's an awful lot happening at once – and companies are working hard to keep pace. To add fuel to the fire, energy suppliers must handle continued and sudden influxes of customer queries while delivering excellent service.

Quality customer support is no longer a nice-to-offer. It's very much an expectation for companies that want to stay competitive in a market with new and smaller companies entering at speed. In fact, going the extra mile for providing excellent service can be a key competitive differentiator. Modern customers are tuned-in and switched-on to rising standards and the **impact their feedback can have** on satisfaction scores. They expect fast responses, personalised support, and timely resolutions to their queries.

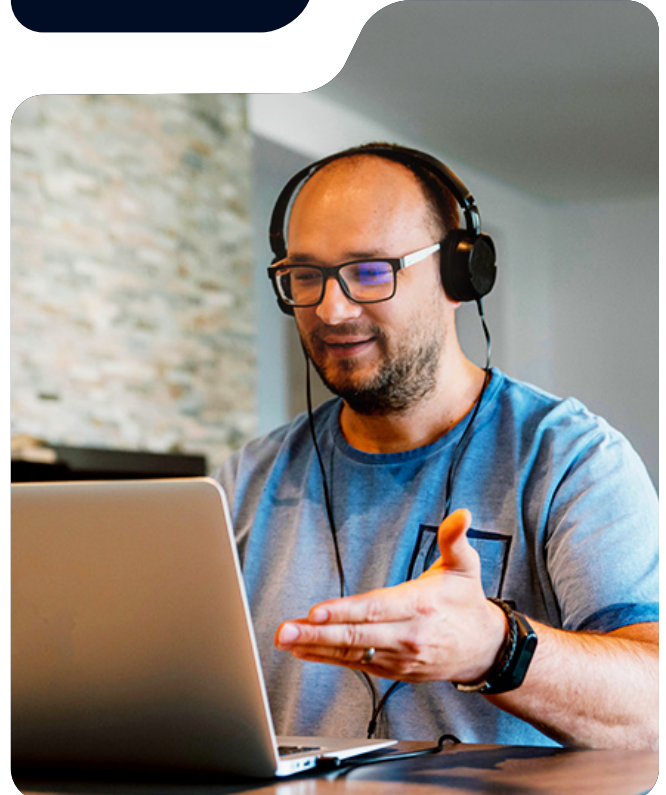
Calls are a daily component of customer service. And there's insight to be unearthed within each one. When used as an intelligent tool, voice helps customers feel understood, cared about, and ultimately happy with the service they receive. Companies can use it to bolster their service, while smart solutions go one step further with AI-powered tools and automation.

Despite dealing with high volumes of calls week to week, days such as **Meter Reading Day** mean energy companies like Octopus Energy face sudden peaks of

20X

the normal number of calls.

Sudden influxes like this can overwhelm legacy systems, affecting the quality of a company's customer service.



Boosting resilience with voice

Certain measures can boost business resilience and help a company stand out in a crowded market – from finding innovative ways to meet demand to upgrading systems for more efficient query responses. Here are three ways voice can transform customer service to boost business resilience.



Manage emergency response

No matter how robust your business is, unforeseen emergencies are a natural part of the world we live in. Having an effective response strategy in place is fast becoming an imperative, particularly as satisfaction levels have **slipped from 66% to 62%** since 2022. Relying on outdated customer service methods can make for a frustrating customer experience.

A smart voice solution can mitigate this issue by handling significantly greater call volumes than legacy systems. It can also automate outage updates to reduce the number of inbound calls while coordinating in real-time.

Modernise legacy systems

The adage “if it’s not broken, don’t fix it” doesn’t quite hold up today with legacy systems. In fact, frequent crashes, slow processing speeds, and compatibility issues can all delay how fast customers get a response.

As **34% of customers cite slow response times as a key dissatisfaction factor**, companies must ensure they’re using solutions that enable speed and efficiency. By modernising legacy systems with smart voice and AI automated solutions, companies can mitigate downtime, and foster consistency.



Step up to increased demand

As demand rises, so does the need to use modern systems and solutions that are capable of tempering influxes in demand. Take the **impending Radio Teleswitch deadline**: when the blanket call-to-action for all UK households is to ‘make a call’, suddenly tens of thousands of customers are overwhelming the system at once. It’s time to step up.

Offering all customers a satisfactory and equitable experience, even as call volumes skyrocket, is critical. As a full-service solution, voice can intelligently route calls and identify common requests to automate the calling process. And when a customer isn’t happy talking with a system, the right solution can provide seamless escalation to human agents.



Voice trends: Augmenting the human with AI

In a world where personalisation matters, energy companies now have the voice of every customer at their fingertips. Different trends in voice technology are influencing how companies understand individual customers, while offering the tools to automate self-service.

Enabling virtual agents frees human agents up to tackle more complex issues, helping optimise operational workflows in utilities and ensuring balanced, effective customer service experiences.



Personalisation

AI agents are facilitating human-like conversations while managing customer interactions with solutions like **ConversationRelay**. Simultaneously, AI-powered voice intelligence is extracting signals from conversations to enhance call routing and enable both agent escalation and emergency notifications.



Predictions

Voice intelligence solutions are turning voice call data into actionable content for better predictivity. Machine learning algorithms are helping voice assistants leverage historical customer interactions to improve experiences, predict preferences, and anticipate needs.



Accuracy

Voice assistants are getting a better understanding of queries and commands, with speech recognition models continuously improving. This is enhanced by natural language processing (NLP) which identifies nuance within human speech to enrich voice assistants' interactions.



Win trust with voice

Finding stability in the throes of an otherwise turbulent landscape is a challenge, but it is possible with the power of voice.

With new technologies promising significant efficiency and productivity benefits, energy companies can leverage the same benefits in voice calls. As customer demands rise in a continuously disrupted industry, voice interactions with customers are among the greatest sources of untapped ROI for today's businesses.

Next generation AI solutions from Twilio help energy suppliers pick up the pace and fill the gaps. By making every conversation an opportunity for action, companies can put their best foot forward and find ways to stay competitive.

Octopus Energy successfully integrated Twilio voice solutions to seamlessly handle sudden surges of calls, including alerts and notifications, to send customers automated communications about service, billing and other issues that might impact them.



Discover how Twilio Voice helps Octopus Energy deliver greater experiences for customers looking to reduce their energy consumption.

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