5 things customers want from their utility's mobile app

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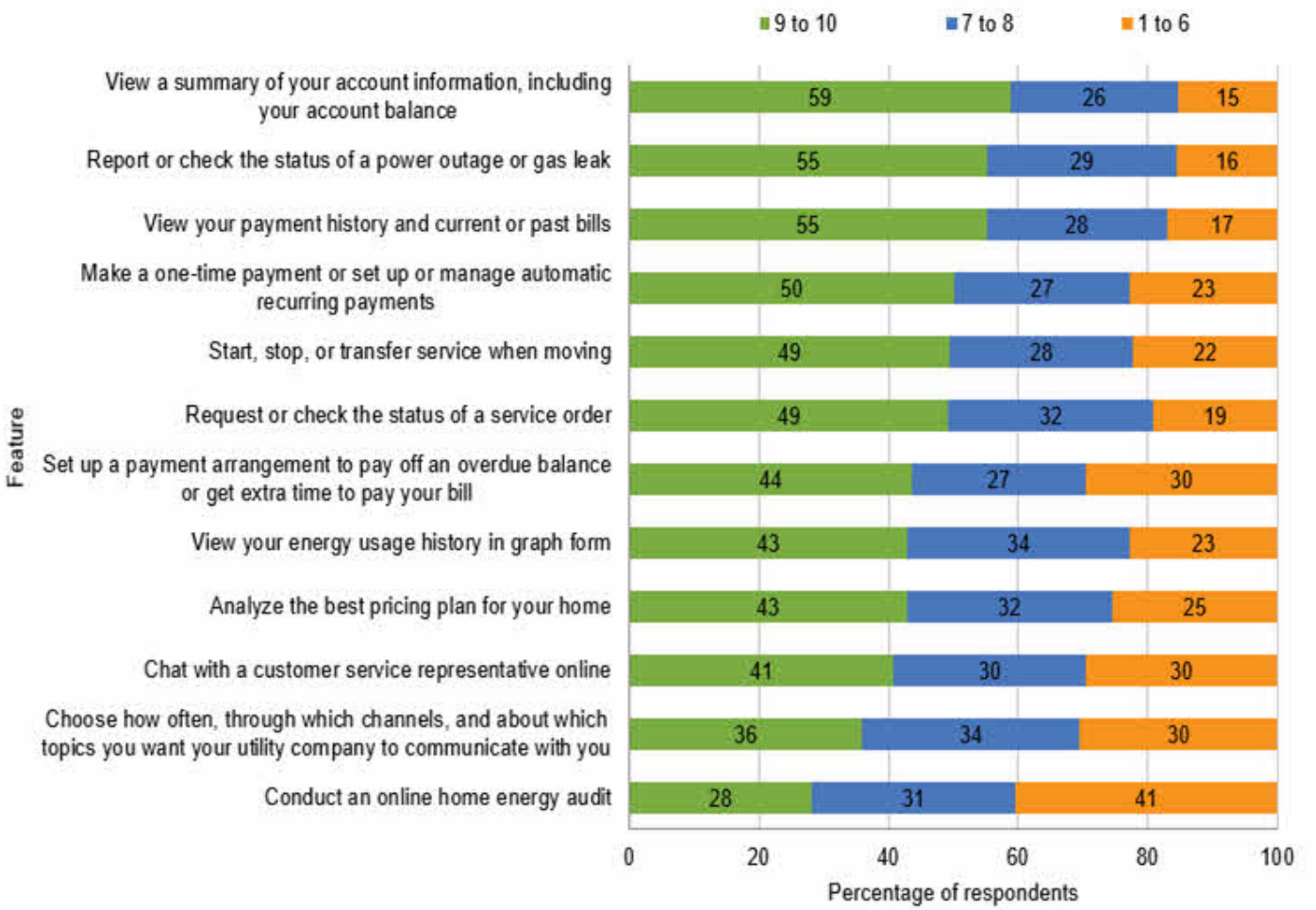
A utility's mobile app should help customers complete tasks, find important information, and get support. According to data from the 2019 E Source Residential Utility Customer Survey, detailed in **figure 1**, the top five things customers want from their utility's website or mobile app are:

- A summary of their account information, including account balance
- An ability to report or check the status of a power outage or gas leak
- Records of payment history, including current and past bills
- Payment options such as one-time payment or automatic/reoccurring payments
- The option to start, stop, or transfer service when moving

Figure 1: Features customers want on their utility's website or mobile app

Customers rate viewing a summary of their account information, reporting or checking the status of a power outage or gas leak, and viewing their payment history as the most important tasks they expect to complete on their utility's website or mobile app when using their phone or a tablet.



Base: Residential utility customers who use a mobile phone or tablet to access the internet (n = 1,668). **Question S3_6:** On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means not at all important and 10 means extremely important, how important is it to you to be able to do the following on your energy provider's website or mobile app when using your mobile phone or tablet device? © E Source (2019 Residential Utility Customer Survey)

Why do utilities need mobile apps?

We live in a digital world with an abundance of information and resources available at our fingertips. According to the Pew Research Center's Mobile Fact Sheet, roughly one in five American adults are smartphone-only internet users, meaning they own a smartphone and prefer using it over a traditional method such as a desktop computer or laptop to access the internet. After all, there's an app for nearly everything these days!

Laura Gousha, vice president of engagement at Mindgrub, the technology consulting firm that created Exelon Corp.'s award-winning suite of mobile apps, authored Why Every Utility Needs a Mobile Application. According to Gousha, mobile apps are the most effective channel for driving satisfaction among utility customers because they:

- Improve the customer experience by allowing for a more-personalized experience
- Boost awareness of self-service offerings
- Make transactions easy by using mobile-pay abilities and making billing information readily available
- Reduce contact center costs by offering on-demand communication and the ability to report or check the status of outages or emergencies

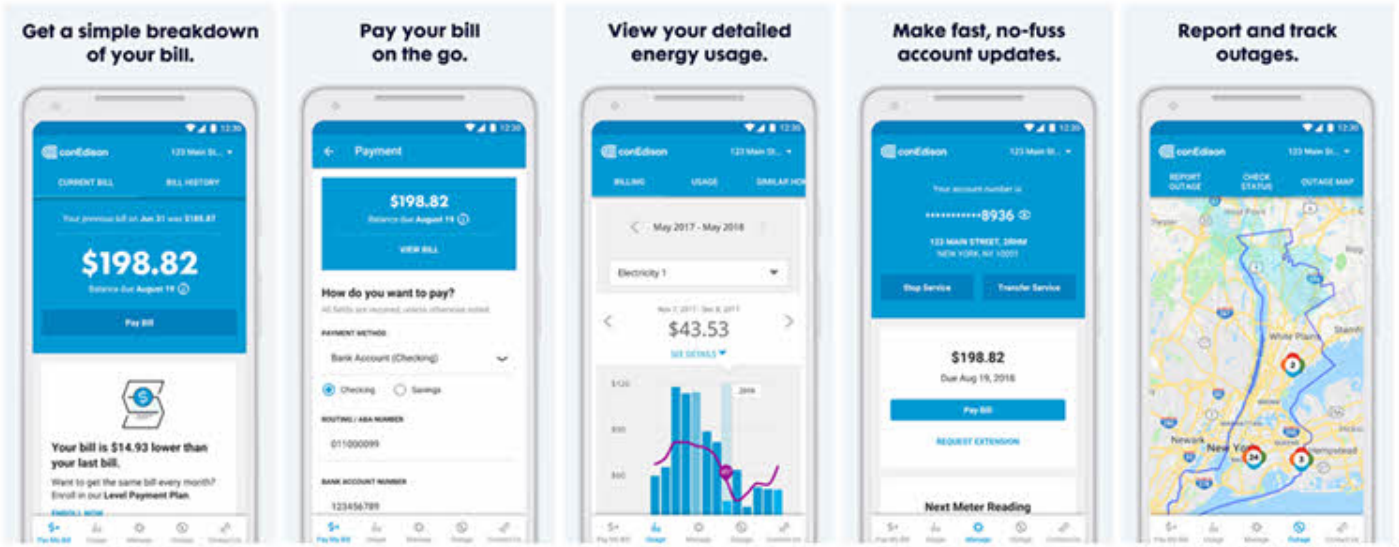
Developing a responsive website is a great step toward setting up a mobile presence, but it isn't enough. Utility mobile apps outperform utility websites in overall customer satisfaction, according to the J.D. Power press release Utilities Struggle to Find Right Digital Self-Service Formula, J.D. Power Finds.

What does a successful app look like?

We provide a list of the best-reviewed utility apps in our report Utility mobile apps: 2019 industry scan, available to members of the E Source Digital Self-Service subscription. In it, we ranked 122 utility apps by average customer reviews found in the Apple App Store (for iOS devices) and Google Play (for Android devices). Con Edison's mobile app received the best average reviews in both stores (**figure 2**). Customers often mention the ease and speed of the bill-pay experience in reviews.

Figure 1: Con Edison's top-ranked mobile app

Con Edison customers can get a breakdown of their bill, view detailed energy usage, update their account, and report and track outages in the mobile app.



Source: Google Play (Con Edison)

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