E Source study reveals increased focus on responsive websites in 2021

Eighty-five utilities participated in the 2021 Website Benchmark
By Sannie Sieper
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Conducted every other year since 2002, the E Source Website Benchmark measures the user experience of utility websites accessed from mobile devices and desktop computers. The utilities with the most usable and accessible websites in the US and Canada in 2021 are PPL Electric Utilities and Exelon Utilities (based on ComEd's website).

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E Source will recognize these top-performing utility companies on September 30 at E Source Forum 2021. Based on industry trends in user experience and utility feedback, E Source designed custom methodology for each of the study's four usability components: findability, functionality, content, and appearance.

- *Findability:* Percentage of successful attempts to find, average pages visited to find the feature, and average time to find the feature
- *Functionality:* The inclusion of critical functions and functions that improve the experience
- *Content:* The inclusion of critical content and formatting, the reading level of the content, and the steps required to reach the content
- *Appearance:* Average customer rating

"Utilities are prioritizing responsive website design more than ever before. In 2021, 91% of websites tested were responsive, meaning the design of the website changes to best fit the screen size the customer is using," explains E Source analyst Cory Coggins. "In 2019, the number of responsive websites in our study was 73%. As more customers are using mobile devices, utilities have evolved to offer a better mobile customer experience on their websites."

"Accessibility has become a focus for utilities to help customers with disabilities and limitations easily use their website," says Heather Hilgenkamp, PhD, manager for E Source market research. "In 2019,

5.2% of the utility web pages we tested met the highest standard for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. In 2021, 8.9% of the utility web pages tested met the standard. While this is still a small number, we're heartened to see more utilities making accessibility a priority in their website design."

The 2021 study assessed the top 10 features (on both a mobile device and a desktop computer) of 85 US and Canadian utilities' websites between January and May 2021.

Rank	Utility	Score
1	PPL Electric Utilities	653
2	Exelon Utilities (based on ComEd's website)	649
3	Alliant Energy	646
4	Xcel Energy	642
5	Consumers Energy	641
5	WPS (on behalf of WEC Energy Group)	641
7	SRP	639
8	Sacramento Municipal Utility District	637
9	Columbia Gas of Ohio	632
9	PSE&G	632
11	PSEG Long Island	631
12	NIPSCO	628
13	Duke Energy	625
13	Avista Utilities	625
13	Ameren Illinois (on behalf of Ameren Corp.)	625
16	SoCalGas	624
17	AEP Ohio (on behalf of AEP)	623
18	Evergy	621
19	Colorado Springs Utilities	617
20	Eversource	614
21	OUC	611
22	Georgia Power	610
23	MidAmerican Energy	609
24	Pacific Gas and Electric Co.	608
25	SDG&E	605
25	DTE Energy*	605
27	Southern California Edison	602
28	Énergie NB Power	597
29	AES Ohio (formerly Dayton Power & Light)	596
29	Duquesne Light Co.	596
31	Puget Sound Energy*	595

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Rank	Utility	Score
32	Tampa Electric*	594
33	Southern Company Gas	593
34	Alabama Power	591
35	Arizona Public Service*	587
36	Con Edison* (on behalf of Consolidated Edison)	586
37	Hydro One	584
37	SaskPower	584
39	Tacoma Public Utilities	577
40	Madison Gas and Electric	574
41	FPL	573
42	New Mexico Gas Co.*	572
42	Otter Tail Power Co.	572
44	Hydro-Québec	571
45	Portland General Electric*	569
45	Central Hudson Gas & Electric*	569
47	Dominion Energy South Carolina	568
47	Pacific Power (on behalf of PacifiCorp)	568
49	LG&E and KU*	565
50	We Energies*	564
51	CPS Energy*	561
52	NV Energy*	557
52	Southwest Gas Corp.*	557
54	CenterPoint Energy	550
55	Washington Gas	546
56	Central Maine Power* (on behalf of AVANGRID)	545
56	Peoples Natural Gas	545
58	Piedmont Natural Gas	542
59	National Grid*	539
60	Manitoba Hydro*	535
61	Black Hills Energy	533
62	PNM	532
63	Nova Scotia Power*	531
64	BC Hydro*	526
64	Kansas Gas Service* (on behalf of ONE Gas)	526
66	West Penn Power* (on behalf of First Energy)	525
67	FortisBC*	522
67	Silicon Valley Power*	522

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Rank	Utility	Score
69	OG&E*	518
70	PGW*	516
71	Dominion Energy Utah	512
72	NorthWestern Energy	509
73	NW Natural*	508
74	Idaho Power*	507
75	Entergy Corp.*	504
76	Enbridge Gas*	501
77	UGI Utilities*	499
78	Toronto Hydro*	488
78	ENMAX*	488
80	Austin Energy*	482
81	TXU Energy*	476
82	Spire Inc.*	475
83	EPCOR*	470
83	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power*	470
85	Liberty	444

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About E Source

E Source is a leading partner to more than 500 electric, gas, and water utilities and municipalities, and their partners, across the US and Canada. We provide data science, market research, benchmarking, and consulting services. Our 35 years of technology validation, market assessment, program design, and customer experience expertise help clients make informed, data-driven decisions; plan for tomorrow’s infrastructure needs; strengthen customer relationships; and meet critical business objectives while becoming more innovative and responsive in the rapidly evolving market.

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