Achievements in Customer and Employee Experience: 2024 honorees

By Lisa Schulte, Laurie Day
October 29, 2024

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Utility Ad Award Winners 2024

Winners of the Utility Ad Awards were also recognized at E Source Forum 2024. View the winning campaigns and advertisements in Utility Ad Awards Contest winners 2024.

Learn more

Each year we celebrate the great work utilities do to create excellent experiences for their customers and provide a supportive and engaging workplace for their employees with the E Source Achievements in Customer and Employee Experience. This year, we added a new award to celebrate the work smaller utilities are doing and celebrated our top-scoring utility website in our 2023 Website Benchmark.

We're thrilled to share this year's honorees and look at the campaign details shared this month at E Source Forum 2024.

The Small Utility Excellence Award

We added the Small Utility Excellence Award to honor the achievements of smaller utilities. Smaller teams and budgets can present big challenges for customer and employee experience initiatives and we're thrilled to recognize takeCHARGE NL, a collaboration between Newfoundland Power and Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro.

takeCHARGE NL

Through takeCHARGE NL customers with low- and moderate-income (LMI) can access no-cost energy savings through the Energy Savers Kit Program. The utilities have partnered with the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC) to allow NLHC clients to automatically receive the free Energy Savers Kits at their doorstep, accompanied by a letter explaining its purpose and instructions

for installing the products.

This effort not only reduces barriers for LMI customers but also shows how partnerships can bring efficiency and effectiveness to program delivery. It's a wonderful example of a win for both the customer *and* the utility, not to mention a win for a government body.

Winner of the 2024 Small Utility Excellence Award

Keith Barrett, Manager of Energy Solutions at Newfoundland Power, accepts the award at the E Source Forum.



Since the launch of the program, 88% of the products sent to customers have been successfully installed and used. The collaboration has resulted in successfully reaching over 3,100 customers, intending to reach the remaining 2,400 within the next couple of years.

An E Source judge said:

> Why has no one done this before? Amazing!

The E Source 2024 Utility Awards Winners

Winners of the 2024 Utility Ad Awards, Website Benchmark, and Achievements in Customer and Employee Experience celebrating during the awards ceremony at the E Source Forum earlier this month.



Customer experience achievements

This award celebrates utility excellence in customer experience (CX) management, highlighting tactics and programs that enhance customers' experiences across key journeys such as:

Create life-changing customer and employee experiences in 2025

Fill out this short form to start a conversation about your needs and how we can help.

- Billing
- Payment
- Web or mobile experience
- Start or stop service
- New construction
- Community interaction and services

- Outage management
- Communications

We include two subcategories for CX—Residential Customer Experience and Business Customer Experience—and celebrated Avangrid, Nicor Gas, Con Edison, and ComEd this year.

Residential CX: Avangrid

Our winner of the 2024 Achievement in Residential Customer Experience is Avangrid for the creation of its Digital and Customer Experience Center of Excellence (Digital & CX CoE).

Avangrid combined its Digital Customer Experience team with its IT team to create the Digital & CX CoE, bringing functions like Product, Marketing, IT, Design, Software Engineering, and Strategy under one umbrella to enhance the utility's ability to bridge technology and customer-centricity.

Winner of the 2024 Achievement in Residential Customer Experience

Samantha Subar, Head of Marketing and Customer Journey at Avangrid, accepts the award at the E Source Forum.



By unifying these functions, the team has become more agile and customer-focused, using data and research to drive innovation and decision-making. This has resulted in improvements, such as:

- Over 72 digital products and features launched in 2023.

- The establishment of internal research and journey design teams.
- Over 1 million customers using its mobile app.

All of these changes have shown results, including:

- Decreased average stop-service response from five days to next-day service during the move-in/move-out customer journey.
- Increased the outage customer journey's Net Promoter Score by 38 points.
- Increased enrollment in outage alerts to 74% of all customers (up from 56.4% at the start of the year).
- Increased e-bill enrollment by 40%, representing 360,000 new enrollments.

One of our judges noted:

> This is a great illustration of the importance of thoughtful organizational design that benefits customers.

Residential CX: Nicor Gas

The runner-up for the 2024 Achievement in Residential Customer Experience is Nicor Gas for the creation of the Community Connection Center (C3). The C3 was established in response to increased customer requests for energy assistance in the wake of rising prices for all goods and services strained by global conflict and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The C3 team provides a one-stop shop for information about key services, sharing resources with customers that stretch beyond energy efficiency to encompass bill payment assistance, housing support, food, federal funding, and other essentials.

Since its start in April 2022, the Nicor Gas C3 team has served more than 6,500 customers across its service territory, helping them gain access to nearly $13 million in resources.

The initiative also includes grocery resource fairs, providing 1,400 families with more than 50,000 pounds of free food. During these fairs, C3 also offers free energy-saving kits, home assessments, and thermostats.

An E Source judge noted:

> Traditionally, utilities have been reluctant to be this proactive with customers who need assistance. I especially love that they went beyond energy and connected customers with food, which also connects the dots for customers to how important and valuable the service provided by the utility is.

Business CX: Con Edison

Con Edison earned the 2024 Achievement in Business Customer Experience for its E-Mobility team's EV Make Ready infrastructure incentive program. Known as PowerReady, it was designed to support the

buildout of a widespread network to bring EV charging to all New York City area drivers.

In response to the New York State Public Service Commission's goal for Con Edison to support the installation of around 24,500 light-duty vehicle plugs by the end of 2025, the team developed customized engagement pathways and self-service tools to enhance customer experience and transparency, while also providing advisory services and in-person workshops to support participants.

These efforts have enabled Con Edison to address the unique needs of the EV charging customer base, prepare its grid for future transportation electrification, and advance New York State's clean energy transition.

Winner of the 2024 Achievement in Business Customer Experience

Katie Zellner, E-Mobility Strategy Manager at Con Edison, accepts the award at the E Source Forum.



The continuous engagement efforts have resulted in over 24,000 plugs moving through the program since its inception—over 10,500 have been installed to date with over 13,500 under agreement and in progress.

One judge said:

> Love this program—huge focus on customer needs and specific solutions to anticipate and avoid or resolve issues. Also, strong engagement of internal and external stakeholders.

Business CX: ComEd

The runner-up for the 2024 Achievement in Business Customer Experience is ComEd for launching the Public School Carbon-Free Assessment (PSCFA), a comprehensive study to help public schools build decarbonization roadmaps that create a healthier learning environment and a clean energy future. This offering originated in September 2022 and supports the state of Illinois' goal of being carbon-free in energy usage by 2030.

The PSCFA leverages the customer's data and ComEd unique analysis tools to provide public schools with a free, in-depth assessment of energy efficiency opportunities, on-site solar potential, electrifying space heating, water heating, fleet, and charging infrastructure, and WELL certification requirements.

To date, the PSCFA program has completed 507 assessments across 63 school districts and identified over 900 GWh in energy savings and electrification potential. The program has also identified:

- 21 GWh of transportation electrification.
- Almost $1.5 billion in project funding.
- Connected solar generation capacity of over 85 MW within Environmental Justice Communities.

To date, 150 applications have been submitted for PSCFA energy efficiency projects, with total potential annual savings of almost 9 GWh.

By the end of 2029, ComEd aims for around 3,000 public K–12 schools in its service territory to have completed a PSCFA, laying the groundwork for almost 5,500 GWh in energy and electrification savings and almost 1,500 MW of solar generation capacity.

One of the E Source judges noted:

> Love this focused effort to achieve a win-win-win. It's a great example of how personalizing a tool for a specific audience can help get better rewards.

Moments from the First Annual Utility Awards Ceremony at the E Source Forum

AY Young performs for the crowd at the E Source Utility Awards Ceremony.



Filomena Gogel, E Source President of Research and Advisory, addresses the crowd.



Gogel and Young share a moment on stage.



A round of applause for the teams who work behind the scenes to make the Forum a success!



Employee experience achievements

This award celebrates innovative methods in employee engagement that increase employee satisfaction. It highlights organizations that work hard to encourage, enable, educate, empower, and reward employees. We're thrilled to celebrate PG&E and Tucson Electric Power (TEP) this year.

PG&E

PG&E is the 2023 Achievement in Employee Experience winner for its enterprise-wide Joy at Work program. The Joy at Work program, launched in 2022, includes a "Joy on Wheels" van and Joy at Work councils that organize events and recognize employees with packages consisting of company swag, gift certificates, and more.

Winner of the 2024 Achievement in Employee Experience

Angela Lombardi, Marketing Principal at PG&E, accepts the award at the E Source Forum.



The councils aim to understand what makes coworkers feel valued and are rolling out the Joy at Work toolkit to turn survey results into action. Their efforts have led to a 12% increase in employee favorability scores from 2022 to 2023, intending to reach 90% by 2027.

One of our judges said:

> I'm really impressed with the use of both "joy" and "love" in this program, two concepts that are often seen as antithetical to "work." Very cool!

Tucson Electric Power

The runner-up for the 2024 Achievement in Employee Experience is TEP. The utility knows that engaged employees are vital for organizational success, and TEP's customer care team has taken an innovative approach to measure engagement and performance through surveys from both Gallup and E Source.

Starting in 2018, the utility used Gallup's 12-question survey to benchmark against other organizations and implemented initiatives to increase employee engagement, including a:

- Live and virtual suggestion box.
- Buddy system for learning and development.
- Coaching toolkit.

By 2024, a pulse survey assessed the impact, showing encouraging progress and prompting continued feedback gathering. Each survey provided valuable insights into employee expectations and experiences, emphasizing the importance of survey timing and open discussions to clarify expectations and understand outcomes.

An E Source judge said:

> This was an excellent use of the voice of the employee and industry benchmarking to better understand both the foundational state of TEP's contact center employee experience as well as identify the tools and resources their employees need to succeed going forward.

Website Benchmark Award of Excellence

For the first time at Forum, we presented an award based on our annual Website Benchmark, an independent study that scores utility websites on accessibility, findability, functionality, content, and appearance. The Website Benchmark Award of Excellence was presented to Northern Indiana Public Service Co (NIPSCO).

NIPSCO

NIPSCO was the overall highest-ranked utility website in our study. And its "My Account" page was one of the top in our evaluation for the following reasons:

- It includes many of the important content and functionality features we assess.
- The left-hand navigation bar makes it easy for customers to find what they're looking for.
- The page makes it convenient to update account information and preferences in one place.

Winner of the 2024 Website Benchmark Award of Excellence

Dino Grantsaris, Web Product Owner at NiSource, accepts the award at the E Source Forum.



To view the full list of the 2023 Website Benchmark scores, read E Source study reveals increased focus on utility website accessibility in 2023.

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