

ROCKY MOUNTAIN POWER NEXT-GEN HERs PROGRAM

Case Study

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Rocky Mountain Power's non-smart-meter (NSM) deployment of Bidgely UtilityAI™ and Next-Gen HERs has delivered important customer relationship and cost savings outcomes for the utility, including:



228+ GWh IN SAVINGS as of December 2022
(the equivalent of 34,815 gasoline-powered passenger vehicles driven for one year)



COST SAVINGS OF 25% relative to conventional HERs



DIGITALIZATION with more than 92% of the 747,000 customers who receive Next-Gen HERs receiving them digitally as of December 2022



24/7 ONLINE ACCESS to Next-Gen HERs for 1 million residential customers



CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT including 40% open rate, 3.6% click-through rate, 26% increase in website traffic, and 80% 'likes' rate for digital communications received



SCALABILITY through non-smart meter disaggregation, allowing analog meter customers to receive the gold standard in customer experience and savings opportunities

BACKGROUND

Based in Salt Lake City, Utah, Rocky Mountain Power, a Berkshire Hathaway Energy Company, provides electric service to nearly 1.2 million customers in Idaho, Utah and Wyoming.

With roots tracing back to 1881, the utility has been committed to providing exceptional customer service and encouraging energy-saving practices for more than a century. As part of that service-oriented philosophy, they began offering Home Energy Reports (HERs) in 2012 designed to help their customers save energy and money. These first-generation, paper HER reports were mailed to approximately 215,000 residential customers on a monthly basis to motivate them to conserve energy by comparing their total, whole-home electricity usage for a given month with that of both efficient neighbors and an all-neighbor average.

By 2018, Rocky Mountain Power was eager to build on its program foundation and take it to the next level.

“We were searching for the next wave of customer engagement and a way to drive customers toward a digital, two-way dialogue with us,” explained Clay Monroe, director of Rocky Mountain Power customer relations.



CHALLENGE

The evolution of Rocky Mountain Power's legacy HER program was limited by several key factors:

①

The high cost of printed HER production and postage limited the number of customers the utility could serve with the program to only those with higher-than-average monthly electricity use.

②

Non-smart meter technology had previously prevented the utility from delivering actionable disaggregated insights and from providing reporting more frequently than once-a-month.

③

Because the legacy HERs included only whole-home electricity use data, customers were not able to clearly identify which of their behaviors or appliances were using the most energy, making it more difficult for them to identify and take corrective actions.

④

Monthly hard copy mailing provided limited opportunities for customer feedback and did not allow for the sort of ongoing and continuously improving customer engagement that the utility prioritizes.

For its Next-Gen HER program, the utility sought a solution that delivered:



INCLUSION

Democratizing and expanding its HER program to a greater number and broader cross-section of customers—including those most often underserved—by reducing program costs, serving non-smart meter customers and leveraging digital channels.



ITEMIZATION

Simplifying and facilitating customers' efforts to reduce electricity consumption and maximize savings by moving beyond conventional methods of general peer comparison reporting to reporting that delivers a wider variety of more personalized appliance-level energy use information and specific conservation recommendations.



INTERACTIVITY

Improving and modernizing the customer experience with digital tools designed to facilitate more frequent two-way communication, invite immediate feedback, provide 24/7 access to information and allow customers to personalize and prioritize the information they want to receive on the timeline that works best for them.



INTELLIGENCE

Harnessing the power of artificial intelligence to more efficiently and accurately detect, anticipate, personalize and enrich a customer's energy use experience to improve both customer savings and satisfaction.

Rocky Mountain Power also sought a partner capable of rapidly deploying its new HER program to provide a seamless customer experience as they wound down their relationship with their first-generation HER vendor.

SOLUTION

Rocky Mountain Power selected Bidgely's AI-powered UtilityAI™ to replace its legacy HER program with an advanced Next-Gen HER solution.



INCLUSIVE



INTERACTIVE



ITEMIZED



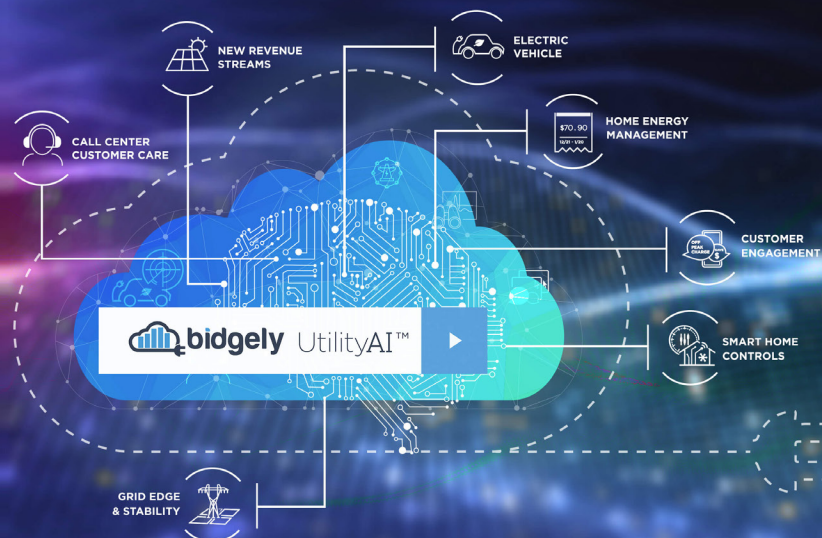
INTELLIGENT



Unlike any other energy monitoring solution on the market, Bidgely's UtilityAI™ enterprise software platform leverages artificial intelligence, local contextual data and a customer's historic energy use, which enabled Rocky Mountain Power to deliver a more targeted, customer-centric and engaging behavioral program.



Of particular importance in this deployment was the ability to provide the same level of insight to non-smart-meter customers as is possible for smart meter customers. Machine learning from more than 50 billion smart meter reads made possible consumption disaggregation of monthly meter reads and allowed and the generation of accurate appliance-level insights for non-smart-meter customers.





No longer a program only for the highest energy users, for the first time, every Rocky Mountain Power customer with an online account was given access to HER data via a customer web portal accessible from the utility's existing website. The portal provided customers with 24/7 access to:

1. ENERGY INSIGHTS

- a. Month-by-month bill cycle visualization
- b. Appliance itemization
- c. Personalized energy saving tips based on their unique energy use
- d. Neighborhood comparisons

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. Personalized energy saving tips based on their unique energy use
- b. Identify by action and appliance exactly where a customer can make changes and how to make those changes

3. SELF-SERVICE ASSESSMENT SURVEY

- a. An opportunity to volunteer more granular detail about home characteristics and energy use behaviors to allow for greater HER personalization and accuracy



In addition to the customer web portal, approximately 330,000 customers across Utah, Idaho and Wyoming received outbound itemized Next-Gen HERs and personalized recommendations from the utility, of which more than 50 percent were delivered by email in place of costly hard copy mailings. This digital dissemination success represented a migration of 50 percent of the inherited legacy HER program participants from printed-and-mailed reports to emailed Next-Gen HER reports, as well as the addition of approximately 100,000 new, digital-only program participants. The new digital communications featured greater and more helpful detail, as well as positive, proactive messaging to better inspire and empower customers to save energy. The program has continued to grow, and as of December 2022, 92% of 747,000 customers are receiving digital HERs.



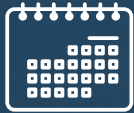
To ensure customers received outbound communications featuring content they find valuable according to the frequency they desired, customers were invited to subscribe and to rate the quality of each communication they received with a simple thumbs-up or thumbs-down-voting button.

“With AI reports we were able to quickly shift from conventional methods of reporting, using general peer comparisons, to true energy empowerment with itemized energy bills and personalized savings tips, while at the same time moving customers to digital reports,” emphasized Monroe.

Beyond improvements to customer-facing reporting and communications, Rocky Mountain Power also bolstered customer engagement via a new utility console used by its Customer Care Center. To provide the most efficient and on-point resolution to every customer inquiry, Care Center team members were able to quickly access historic customer communications, any customer-supplied home-use profile data, and a customer’s complete historic record of appliance-level energy use data. This more accurate and in-depth understanding of each customer’s unique energy use patterns, behaviors and appliance ownership allowed the Care Center to target and personalize recommendations for services and practices to increase energy savings as well as to more effectively and accurately resolve high bill inquiries and other customer issues.

RESULTS

The Rocky Mountain Power migration to Bidgely's UtilityAI™ and Next-Gen HER platform was successfully implemented in less than six months, and provided a seamless transition for legacy HER program participants to the new platform.



IMPLEMENTED IN LESS
THAN 6 MONTHS



80% LIKES



26% INCREASE IN
WEBSITE TRAFFIC



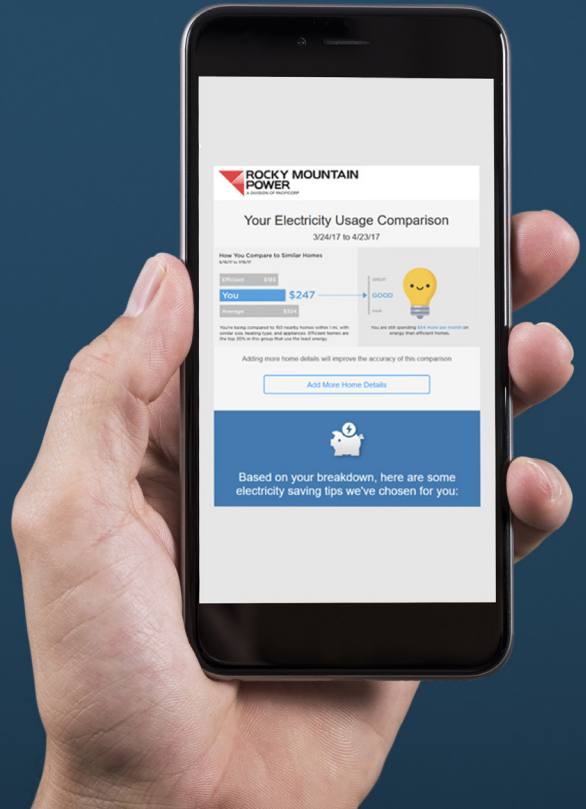
228+ GWhs OF
ENERGY SAVED



25% COST
REDUCTION



40% EMAIL
OPEN RATES



Customer satisfaction and engagement with the Bidgely Next-Gen HER program demonstrated early and consistently positive results. Over the course of millions of emails disseminated to Rocky Mountain Power customers, email open rates have averaged 40%—nearly double the utility industry norm. Email recipients also gave the email communications they received 80% “likes” via thumbs up and thumbs down voting buttons included with every message.

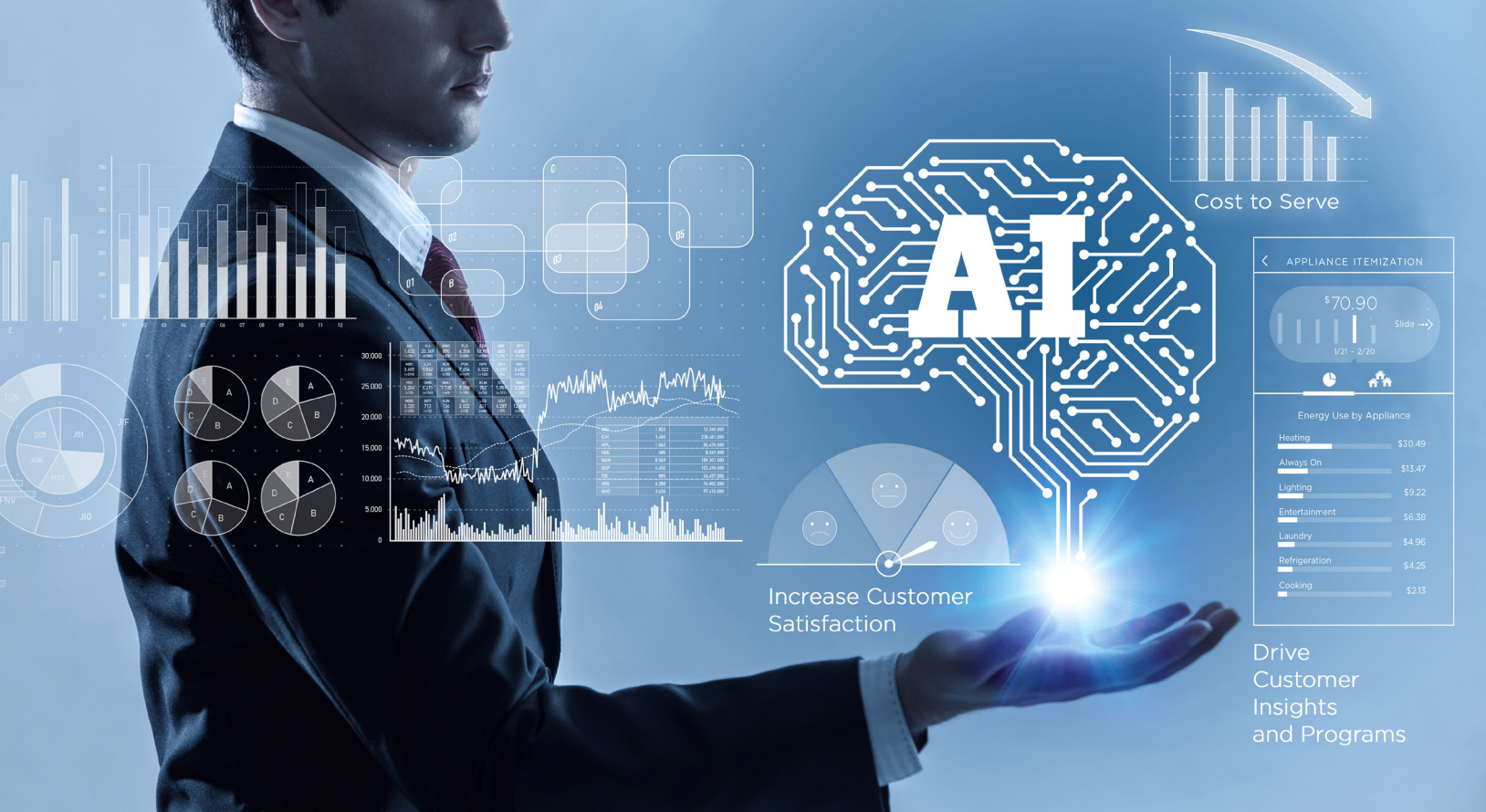
Customers also responded very favorably to the availability of the new web portal, resulting in a 26 percent increase in traffic to the Rocky Mountain Power website.

Regulators applauded the digitally enhanced program, recognizing Rocky Mountain Power for working diligently to extend the reach and benefit of its behavioral program.

Improved customer engagement and expanded participation resulted in significant, measurable savings. In less than one year, customers were empowered to save 41 GWhs of energy—equivalent to eliminating CO2 emissions from more than 31 million pounds of coal burned. This included savings of one percent among average consumption customers and greater savings among high energy consumption customers.

Of course, a key benchmark of behavioral program success is the cost-per-kWh. Bidgely delivered these energy savings at an average of approximately 4 cents per kilowatt hour at that time, which represents an approximately 25 percent cost reduction compared with conventional, first-generation HER programs. These savings accrued from the introduction of the online customer portal and migration to digital Next-Gen HER distribution, which also served to improve customer engagement by providing a more robust, personalized, results-oriented customer experience.

Rocky Mountain Power's Next-Gen HER success illustrates the paradigm shift that is underway in home energy reporting and other behavioral programs. Now, artificial intelligence and digital-first platforms are delivering measurable savings by facilitating more inclusive, interactive, itemized and intelligent services that provide greater numbers of more diverse customers with a superior level of service, insight and personalized support.



CONCLUSION

The Rocky Mountain Power experience demonstrates how Bidgely's artificial intelligence-powered UtilityAI™ and advanced Next-Gen HER solution is transforming the landscape of traditional energy use programs and opening up significant new opportunities.

The advanced HER platform successfully delivers energy savings at a lower cost, while simultaneously enabling meaningful improvements in customer engagement and satisfaction together with new revenue streams from targeted ancillary products and services. The result is a greater overall ROI and multi-faceted operational impact.

As we move into an era of itemized, personalized reporting and digital-first, two-way customer communications, utilities can look to Bidgely's Next-Gen HER solution as a foundation for strategic growth, improving the reach, scale and economics of legacy programs and yielding new far-reaching benefits organization-wide.