



**Customer Name:**  
PPL Electric Utilities

**Utility Type:**  
Investor-owned electric utility

**Deployed:**  
Aclara Software® Energy Vision® Operational Efficiency and ENERGYprism® Customer Care Solutions

**Service Territory:**  
10,000-square-mile area covering all or parts of 29 counties in central and eastern Pennsylvania  
Serving 1.4 million Customers

## Aclara Software® Applications, centerpiece of PPL EU's Customer Communication Initiative, improve first call resolution, web site traffic and customer satisfaction

### Problem

Under Pennsylvania law and PUC regulations, PPL Electric Utilities (PPL EU) is required to buy electricity supply from the competitive wholesale market for customers who do not choose a competitive supplier on their own. Prior to 2010, the cost that customers paid for this energy was kept artificially low with rate caps. This all changed in January 2010 when a ten-year rate cap expired and PPL EU customers were exposed to the market cost of electric generation for the first time. Electricity bills for the average residential customer increased about 30 percent, or \$32 per month.

PPL EU's challenge was to find a way to communicate the changes in such a way so as to mitigate the impact and keep customer satisfaction levels high, while also giving customers tools to understand and better manage their energy consumption.

Historically, the company has carefully cultivated a strong relationship with its customers and a long-record of outstanding customer service. It has consistently won major national awards, putting it in the upper echelon of companies in the United States for superior customer service and satisfaction.

"To maintain high levels of customer satisfaction, we needed a way to educate our customers so they could better understand how they were using energy," said Robert M. Geneczko, vice president of PPL EU Customer Services. "We wanted to reinforce our relationship with our customers as trusted energy advisor and to provide customers with new services and options to better manage their energy costs.

"Our approach was to provide them access to their daily and hourly energy information on the web. It was paramount that this information be easy-to-understand and provide meaningful content to help them digest, compare, and manage their electric bills, and better control their energy use," he added.

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## Solution

- Empower customers
- Deliver options
- Promote efficiency
- Strengthen reliability

PPL EU deployed Aclara's customer care and operational efficiency solutions as the centerpiece of its energy efficiency programs, tightly integrating the applications with its existing web portal so customers would be sure to see and use them.

Additionally, PPL EU's comprehensive approach included training and equipping its customer service representatives (CSRs) with an optimized interface that put the information they needed to handle bill and energy inquiries at their fingertips. As a result, customer calls could be handled more quickly and CSRs were more confident to resolve customer concerns on the first call.

The features integrated into both the CSR and customer dashboards include:

- A Load Analysis Module that accesses PPL EU's hourly reads and displays AMI data in relation to weather and customer-specific pricing programs. The application presents customer data during selected periods or intervals, including billing cycle, month, week and day. (Note: All 1.4 million PPL EU customers have AMI meters.)
- A Bill to Date Tracker that allows customers to see projected billing information for their next bill well in advance of the bill being generated.
- An Energy Center that integrates billing and energy analysis, allowing customers concerned about their bills to quickly and easily see how they use energy, pinpoint ways to better manage their usage, and identify options to lower costs.

## Results

Since PPL EU began using these tools in late 2006, the utility has seen impressive results.

- **Increased first call resolution:** Nearly 90 percent of high usage calls are now resolved by CSRs on the first call, as compared to 50 to 60 percent before deployment of the Aclara CSR application.
- **Increased traffic:** Visitors to the online Energy Center, which launched in 2007, have steadily increased. More than 30 percent of all PPL EU customers – about 400,000 – have registered, with 10 percent of these regularly logging on to monitor their energy usage.
- **Customer satisfaction** – PPL EU increased one critical measure of customer satisfaction. Scores for residential customers being very satisfied (top 3 box score) jumped from 32 percent (Q4 2006) to 43 percent (Q2 2010) regarding the statement, "PPL EU's willingness to help you reduce the amount you spend for electricity." This figure far exceeded PPL EU's expectations, with residential bills increasing by an average of 30 percent during this period.

"Although the overall customer satisfaction scores dipped somewhat because of the increase in generation costs," remarked Geneczko, "the Aclara applications most assuredly softened the impact. Without them, the scores would have dipped even further."

"Aclara has helped us enhance our overall customer service mission. We consistently win independent customer satisfaction awards because we are focused on meeting our customer needs and are always looking for ways to enhance the customer experience."

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—Robert M. Geneczko, vice president, PPL EU  
Customer Services

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