

CX Best Practice Success Story – Web Self-Service



Company Description

FortisBC delivers electricity, natural gas, or propane to approximately 1.1 million customers in 135 communities in British Columbia. Together, our gas and electricity utilities deliver over 21 percent of total energy consumed in British Columbia. We are owned by Fortis Inc., a leader in the North American electric and gas utility business.

Locations

Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Website Contact Types

- Move service
- View bill
- Billing summary
- View consumption history
- Bill delivery preference
- Edit contact information
- Pre-authorized Payment Plan enrolment
- Pay by credit card
- Change banking details
- Stop service
- Report a payment
- Refund requests
- Enter meter read
- Sign-up for Renewable Natural Gas
- Link gas and electric accounts

Contact Volume

Approximately 1.4 million self-serve transactions

CX Best Practices Used

A project team was formed in 2014 to begin upgrading our secure customer service portal called Account Online. Participants from Communications, Customer Contact Centres, Customer Service Systems, and Market Research worked together to help focus improvements and deliver a better online experience for customers accessing their natural gas and/or electricity accounts.

Customers benefit from the many features available when logged into Account Online, including:

- viewing their current bill and account information
- starting, stopping or moving services
- managing billing and payment options
- updating their contact information, and
- linking gas and electricity accounts (if applicable)

While the improved interface was launched in late 2014, the group continues to evaluate the site's performance and takes regular steps to deliver better quality service and lower operating costs. As part of the project team, the Customer Contact Centres provide input based on their knowledge of business processes and customer insights; Communications for their digital and writing expertise; Customer Service Systems for system development overview; and Market Research interprets SQM results and customer verbatim, as well as coordinates one-on-one customer testing to find existing pitfalls and evaluate possible solutions. FortisBC designs prototype user interfaces to inform the actual development cycle of improvements. *"With so many users, we receive diverse customer feedback. And, what we are really great at is listening to the feedback and using it to continuously improve Account Online,"* said Scott Webb, Manager, Customer Programs and Research.

"In 2017, we automated our start/stop/move functionality. It facilitates better resolution rates, more often, and saves the company manual processing costs," said Edna Katrichak, Manager, Customer Service Systems. This approach reduces fix requirements and delivers a better quality product at launch, and that ensures the user can get what they need to be done, quickly and effortlessly.

FortisBC works with SQM to monitor Account Online performance using its channel survey. This approach provides the insight needed to maintain and sometimes improve channel containment and FCR rates. We continually review SQM verbatim feedback from our customers, and other

indicators to help identify and prioritize fixes or interface adjustments. While some new functionality has been introduced, many of the wins are likely borne out of the breadth of interface adjustments that focus on making every online transaction as easy for customers to complete as possible. FortisBC has implemented 10 version updates to Account Online. In December, new subscription options become available so that customers can sign-up for things like 'bill is due' alerts. We plan to introduce many more subscription options in 2018. *"Customer expectations are changing rapidly and we need to continually improve Account Online to keep up,"* said Katrichak.

The initial release netted an immediate 2% drop in Action Alert surveys (customers who are dissatisfied with their experience and their inquiry was unresolved) and a 3% jump in contact resolution. 2017 website changes, to date, include:

- Automated moves
- A new site header and footer
- Graph adjustments and the re-introduction of Visa payment options
- Refinements to the summary page

Account Online FCR reached 88% in October, so we can't be happier in the process and results. Webb says, *"The real key is listening and acting on what customers tell us. Keep an open mind and act on the many insights customers are willing to share."*

World Class CX Performance Outcome

This outstanding performance has resulted in SQM awarding FortisBC with Web Self-Service World Class CX Certification. FortisBC has demonstrated excellence in team collaboration (internally and with SQM) to obtain and act upon customer feedback in order to drive the initial redevelopment and ongoing upgrades. These results have also been substantiated by the E Source review of North American Electric and Gas Company Residential Websites. Of over 100 utility websites evaluated, FortisBC's website was ranked as second in Canada and 24th in North America.