

Contact Center FCR Best Practice Award Winner

Award for Web Self-Service: Fortis BC

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Best Practice Success Story



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 per cent of total energy consumed in British Columbia. We are owned by Fortis Inc., a leader in the North American electric and gas utility business.

FortisBC Contact Center Description

Locations

Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

Prince George, British Columbia, Canada

Trail, British Columbia, Canada

Contact Types

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

Contact Channels

Contact center, responsive website, IVR, email, social media

Operating Hours

Monday to Friday, 7:00 am to 8:00 pm

(Trail contact center for electricity customers is only open until 7:00 pm daily)

Contact Volume

About 260,000 self-serve transactions were completed in the last twelve months

FortisBC's Account Online Recognized as One of the

Best Utility Service Portals in Canada

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

account. Our customers benefit from the many features available when logged in to Account Online, including:

- Viewing current bill and account information
- Starting, stopping or moving services
- Managing bill and payment options
- Updating their contact information
- Linking gas and electricity accounts (if applicable)

Work began in early 2014 to upgrade our Account Online service. As part of the project team, the Customer Contact Centres provided 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 coordinated additional one-on-one customer testing to find existing pitfalls and evaluate possible solutions. Solutions were created based on the input and mockups were provided to the customers eliciting various refinements prior to development.

This approach delivered a better product for customers and resulted in a marked improvement in terms of overall ranking. “This was the first time we gathered customer feedback about Account Online. And that’s where my research team has been focused,” said Scott Webb, Manager, Customer Programs and Research. “We listened to what real users said about Account Online and that provided clarity for everyone on the team. Customers are happy to tell us what’s broken when asked; all we needed to do was find efficient ways to make it easier for them to get what they want.”

The new Account Online site was launched in late November 2014. FortisBC worked with SQM to establish an appropriate survey to monitor channel containment and FCR, which commenced prior to the launch of the portal. While new functionality was enabled, this effort was really focused on making better use of customer feedback. And that effort continues today. We continually review SQM verbatim 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. Since the system launched in 2014, we’ve completed eight releases to address various enhancements.

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. The initial release of the new site included such changes as:

- The integration of customers with gas and electric accounts to a single log in, a redesigned summary page, multiple changes to incorporate gas and electric into single billing information etc.
- Responsive Web Design to better serve customers using smartphones or tablets
- Navigation changes (menu redesign)
- New, more contemporary look
- Screen confirmations and success messages
- Addition of help area

Subsequent changes included:

- Service alerts on the login page
- Further refinements to the summary page
- Creating the contact pages within Account Online (customers remain inside the application)
- Additional functionality for commercial customers

Most recently, an infrastructure change and additional menu refinements have resulted in the highest FCR and contact resolution score in the 17 months SQM has been conducting customer feedback surveying for FortisBC. Webb believes, “the real successes highlight the need for departmental collaboration and listening and acting on what customers are saying.”

This outstanding performance has resulted in SQM awarding FortisBC with World Class FCR Certification (Web Self-Service) and the Highest Web Self-Service Customer Service award for 2015. 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 E Source review of North America 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.