



//// CASE STUDY

Measurable Customer Satisfaction Improvements at CPS Energy, Informed by ACSI® Benchmarking

ACSI benchmarking and customer feedback helped CPS Energy build momentum for improving customer perceptions of reliability and value, while strengthening customer trust critical to withstanding the inevitable challenges faced by utilities.

THE CHALLENGE

Balancing rising demand, infrastructure strain, and declining customer sentiment after crisis events

CPS Energy, the largest U.S. municipal utility providing both electric and natural gas, is tasked with far more than keeping the lights on. They're faced with rising demand, increasingly frequent and severe weather events, and an aging infrastructure. Their operating area of San Antonio, CPS Energy must accommodate a growing population of Texans and their increasingly digital economy. Satisfaction with CPS Energy in quantitative scores and qualitative comments suffered in 2021 in the wake of a devastating winter storm. CPS Energy recognized the need for, and took action toward, a customer-centric approach to deliver reliable, trustworthy service and provide value to their customers.

Leveraging trusted, cross-industry benchmarking to understand and improve the customer experience

The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI®) is the only cross-industry measure of customer satisfaction that represents the U.S. economy. Their syndicated studies span hundreds of companies across various sectors and industries – including utilities. CPS Energy uses ACSI Benchmarking to monitor key satisfaction metrics to ensure they’re effectively serving their customers, and their efforts have not gone unnoticed.

The Momentum to Outpace the Industry

Annual ACSI Energy Utility reports show that customer satisfaction with CPS Energy increased 25% over the past five years, reaching an ACSI score of **79 on a 100 point scale** (<https://theacsi.com/news-and-resources/press-releases/2026/03/24/press-release-energy-utilities-study-2026>). This places the utility five points above the municipal utility average, six points above the investor owned utility average, and two points ahead of the cooperative utility average.

CPS Energy is an ACSI success story beyond their published ACSI scores: Their performance across key CX metrics shows widespread improvement during the past five years.

Ratings of service reliability improved by 22%, service restoration by 27%, local community support by 23%, and customer trust by 25%.

These improved scores are particularly notable in the context of ongoing infrastructure challenges, including an aging grid, rapid demand growth, and increasingly severe weather events.

Even as rate increases occurred over time due to increasing costs, regulatory compliance, and major infrastructure investments, customer perceptions of value showed consistent improvement.

CPS Energy built this momentum through customer first, on the ground efforts focused on meeting community needs and the things that matter most to consumers including thoughtful financial stewardship, expanded support through bundled care and Community Response Units, and targeted digital improvements such as severe weather notifications.

Utility Satisfaction 2022-2026 | Source: The American Customer Satisfaction Index

Year	Investor-Owned Average	Cooperative Utility Average	Municipal Average	CPS Energy
2022	71	73	69	62
2023	72	74	72	68
2024	74	78	75	73
2025	74	76	75	74
2026	73	77	74	79

Customer satisfaction with CPS Energy increased 25% over the past five years.



The Compass to Insight-Based Navigation

ACSI benchmarking helps to provide CPS Energy with a strategic compass, guiding confident and data-driven decision-making. By identifying the key drivers of satisfaction unique to the CPS Energy customers and specific areas for improvement relative to peer providers, ACSI data helps CPS Energy navigate the priorities customers identified as reliability, affordability, and sustainability.

The measurable traction in satisfaction year over year is quantitative evidence of a commitment to continued improvement. CPS Energy's disciplined leveraging of qualitative customer feedback, ACSI data and analytics, and their own internal capabilities helped guide initiatives to directly address customer needs. Informed by ACSI benchmarking and its own internally collected customer feedback, CPS Energy adopted a more customer-centered perspective and achieved strong performance across satisfaction, trust, and value metrics.



This framework, combining ACSI benchmarking with infrastructure investment, community support, and effective financial stewardship, demonstrates how external benchmarks, supported by real operational effort, can help utilities invest wisely, meet customer expectations, and strengthen community relationships.

"It's about showing up where our customers expect us and then measuring the results."



DEANNA HARDWICK
CHIEF CUSTOMER STRATEGY OFFICER, CPS ENERGY



ACSI Energy Utilities Benchmarking

Since 1994, the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI®) has set the standard for measuring customer satisfaction in the U.S. utility industry—advancing its broader mission to reflect the health and performance of the U.S. economy through independent, data driven research. As the energy landscape has evolved, so has the ACSI Energy Utilities Study. In addition to industry specific measures of service reliability, billing, customer service quality, outreach, and digital experience, including mobile app, call center, and website performance, the study captures a wide range of customer touchpoints that shape the overall utility relationship. These include energy efficiency program enrollment, digital engagement, customer support interactions, and complaint rates. The study also incorporates open ended customer feedback, revealing what customers value most, the nature of their concerns, and where they see opportunities for improvement. To learn more about ACSI Energy Utilities Benchmarking or logo licensing opportunities, visit theacsi.com/solutions.



About the ACSI

The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI®) is a national economic indicator and a leading provider of customer analytics products that help organizations build lasting customer relationships and prove ROI on experience investments. ACSI's AI-enhanced platform delivers intuitive dashboards and cause-and-effect analytics that pinpoint the quality drivers most predictive of customer allegiance, retention, price tolerance, and financial performance. ACSI data has been shown to correlate strongly with key micro and macroeconomic indicators, including consumer spending, GDP growth, earnings, and stock returns.

Founded in 1994 at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business, the ACSI measures customer satisfaction with more than 400 companies in over 40 industries, including federal government services, based on approximately 200,000 annual interviews.

