



# 3 Quick Tips to Help Utility Customers Weather the Storm

*When severe weather comes rolling in and outages occur, panicked customers expect communication that's as reliable, immediate and effective as their utilities. These three quick tips can help any utility company exceed customer demand before, during and after the storm.*



## 1 Never stop preparing.

With National Climate Assessment predictions for stronger category hurricanes, winter storms, tornadoes, hail, damaging thunderstorm winds and flooding, utility reputations and ROIs are on the line. Avoid trying to implement sophisticated communication strategies at the last minute.

Negative customer experiences in times of crisis exacerbates an already sensitive situation and can decrease customer loyalty — affecting utility marketplace success and negatively impacting future cases. A solid technological infrastructure, supported by thoughtful strategy and the ongoing consultation of an experienced communications partner is key to providing conversations that make a difference.

[Learn more about storm preparedness with West's utility storm kit.](#)

## 2 Communicate in the ways your customers need.

Negative customer perceptions stem from a lack of urgent, accurate information delivered in easily digestible ways. Customers want to be able to interact with their utility providers whenever, wherever and however they choose. A multi-channel approach is the only way to adequately meet the needs of customers with wide-ranging functional and emotional needs.

A smart IVR call-flow strategy, layered with proactive outbound voice and SMS/text messages, can help create the connected customer journey consumers crave. Let customers know where to go for emergency shelter, food and water. Provide phone numbers for crisis hotlines or other emergency services to calm nerves during times of distress.

## 3 Be timely. Be accurate.

Provide pre-storm messages to help manage customer expectations and allow for adequate preparation time. Share realistic estimated times of restoration (ETR) to allow customers to effectively manage time and determine best courses of action. Hitting the emotional quotient of CX is just as important as the functional. Provide humanized communication and highlight the hard work going into restoration to help make customers feel genuinely cared for.

Taking the time to fine-tune your messaging can make a considerable difference in customers' perception of a utility by providing real and relevant ways to surprise and delight— like improving upon a provided ETR.

Looking for more ways to boost your CX throughout a storm's lifecycle?  
Leverage this “**storm kit**” and take your interactions to the next level.

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