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2018 Call for Presentations Is Closed – Thank You, Submitters!

CS Week 42 | April 30 - May 4, 2018
Tampa Convention Center | Tampa, FL
Vroom, Vroom...Soon!

Recently, I can’t pick up a newspaper or scan website headlines without noticing the green car revolution:

• “Compressed natural gas-fuel vehicles on the rise in city fleets” – American City and County

• “Shifting to Electric” – Dallas Morning News

• “Electric Shock” – The Wall Street Journal

• “Britain to ban sale of all diesel and petrol cars and vans from 2040” – The Guardian

• “Volvo vows ‘historic end’ of traditional engines in shift to electric by 2019” – Bloomberg

Things are moving fast. Manufacturers are accelerating to meet customer demands. Breaks that kept drivers in park just five years ago are being released. Lifestyle and cost issues like mileage range, compressed natural gas (CNG) and charging stations’ scarcity and storage limitations are shifting into drive. All puns intended!

Once an expensive, environmental dream, alternate fuel vehicles have morphed into reality for the masses, thanks to the problem-solving skills of designers and engineers. Here are some stats that would make Jean Joseph-Etienne Lenoir and Nikolaus Otto roll over (please, Google them):

• Tesla has an option on its Model 3 to provide 300 miles of stored power.

• Both Daimler AG (Mercedes) and BMW expect battery-powered cars to account for 25% of sales within 10 years.

• Mass transit systems across the country are rolling out bus fleets using CNG fuel.

• Large fleet owners are investing in CNG infrastructure and equipment. UPS in March announced a $100M investment in fueling stations and heavy-duty trucks with a goal to log 1 billion miles using alternative fuel by the end of 2017.

• The province of Ontario announced its five-year plan to build a natural gas fueling network with up to $170 million in incentives for adopting electric and natural gas commercial vehicles.

Attitudes are shifting. More consumers are opting for plug-in, all-electric and hybrid vehicles. In 2016, more than 150,000 left showrooms and joined 540,000 already on the road. Price reductions, affordability, lifestyle solutions and environmental factors are all priming the market.

CS Week has been a passenger in this green car revolution for years. Nearly all its venues have offered workshops, panel discussions and industry presentations on emerging alternative vehicles and their impact on utility operations. For example in 2017, Kansas City Power & Light’s Gail Allen, Sr. Mgr. Customer Intelligence, presented “Strategies for Electric Vehicles,” showcasing the how, when and why of their strategic partnering initiative.

As venue planners review abstracts for CS Week 2018, you can count on them to test drive topics at various maturity stages, including those about electric, CNG and hybrid vehicles’ impact on utility operations, from generation through distribution and customer service.

CS Week continues to be your go-to conference for emerging and traditional educational topics for utility customer service and its information technology needs. It is also a great place to meet and engage with others who share similar interests and challenges.

Start planning now to come along for the ride at Conference 42 in Tampa, FL. We have a seat for you.
Treasure Awaits Attendees in Tampa

“We owe it all to the guava,” says Steve Otto, *Tampa Tribune* columnist, when he coined ‘The Big Guava’ as Tampa’s nickname. So, what’s the backstory? A civil engineer named Gavino Gutierrez was working for a New York tropical fruit packing firm when he heard a rumor in 1884 that wild guava trees were common near Tampa Bay. Finding guava trees turned out to be a bust, but Gutierrez was impressed by the 1000-person village’s economic potential and the railroad lines that were connecting it to the nation’s network. Gutierrez returned to New York, stopping along the way to visit his friend Vicente Martinez-Ybor, a major cigar manufacturer in Key West. Looking to relocate his operations, Ybor agreed with Gutierrez and purchased a large track of land, inviting Gutierrez to become his company’s civil engineer. Gutierrez planned and laid out the streets where thousands of immigrants would live and work in what would transform from a sleepy village into one of Florida’s largest cities and the “Cigar Capital of the World.”

Today with an estimated population of 2.9 million in a four-county area, Tampa was originally inhabited by indigenous Tocobaga and Pohoy peoples. Visited by 16th century Spanish explorers, their interactions were brief, violent and deadly, plus the explorers introduced diseases that collapsed the entire culture decades later. No permanent settlements were made in the Tampa area until the United States acquired Florida from Spain in 1821. The US Army established a frontier outpost called Fort Brooke near the site of today’s Tampa Convention Center.

While attending Conference 42, be sure to make time before or after to visit some local attractions and landmarks:

- **Busch Gardens**
- **Lowry Park Zoo**
- **Tropicana Field, home of the Tampa Bay Rays**
- **Tampa Theatre**
- **El Centro Español de Tampa and Centro Asturiano de Tampa**
- **Tampa Museum of Art**
- **Ybor City**

Tampa Bay area is recognized as the “Lightning Capital of North America.” During April and May, high temps typically average 81 - 87° and low temps 63 - 69°, with afternoon thunderstorms a common occurrence. Packing a light raincoat would be a smart plan.

Finance, retail, healthcare, insurance, shipping by air and sea, national defense, professional sports, tourism, and real estate all play vital roles in Tampa’s economy. Several Fortune 1000 companies are headquartered here including OSI Restaurant Partners, WellCare, TECO Energy and Raymond James Financial.

Treasure awaits Conference 42 attendees. Plan today to make Tampa, FL, your destination for CS Week 2018.
The mission of CS Week
The mission of CS Week is to advance utility customer service through the delivery of unbiased educational opportunities, forums for networking, and sharing of innovative best practices that will advance the customer experience.


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TECO Rolls Out the Welcome Mat as CS Week 42’s Host Utility

A subsidiary of Emera Inc., an energy and services company headquartered in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, TECO Energy and specifically its local company Tampa Electric, is CS Week 2018’s host utility sponsor.

TECO’s mission of ‘Delivering value to energy customers, shareholders, team members and communities’ and its five core values below fit hand-in-glove with CS Week values:

1. Safety First
2. Integrity Always
3. Respect and Concern for Others
4. Achievement with a Sense of Urgency
5. Customer Service

In 2000, Tampa Electric launched a renewable energy program with its first solar panel installation at the Museum of Science & Industry. Today, seven community-sited systems generate 135 kilowatts (kW) of electricity that allow customers to purchase renewable energy in 200-kW blocks for $5 each per month. Construction has also been completed on a two-megawatt (MW) solar installation at Tampa International Airport and a 23-MW installation in Apollo Beach.

Its Polk Power Station Regional Reclaimed Water Partnership Initiative water transmission pipeline project is about to begin. This will allow Tampa Electric to collect reclaimed water from the city of Mulberry and Polk County, treat it and use it for cooling water at the Polk Power Station. Among other benefits, this community cooperative project will reduce reclaimed water discharged into a local river and Tampa Bay.

Tampa Electric has supplied the Tampa Bay area with electricity since 1899.

Its West Central Florida service area covers 2,000 square miles, including all of Hillsborough County and parts of Polk, Pasco and Pinellas counties, with an estimated population of over one million.

4,700 megawatts of generating capacity are produced by four electric plants for over 725,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers.

Tampa Electric is recognized as one of the cleanest electricity companies in the country, thanks in part to these significant investments in its power stations.

Look for TECO to fulfill and exceed expectations at CS Week 42. They will likely be involved as Conference workshop and Synergy Group presenters, Exhibit Hall booth hosts and keynote speakers, just to name a few roles. CS Week is thrilled to partner with and deliver another stellar Conference for our attendees with such a dynamic and progressive utility as TECO. Visit TECO’s website to learn more about their services and the ways they are engaging with the Tampa Bay community as a trusted energy partner.
Fall Meeting Kick-Starts 2018 CS Week Planning

The fall planning meeting marks the official start of each year’s conference planning. Fort Worth’s Omni Hotel was again the site for this three-day immersion into survey results, utility and industry partner feedback, venue orientation, the current and future state of customer service operations, and abstract submissions. Every year’s efforts show how the leaders below successfully identify, develop and exceed the educational needs of utilities. Three key groups attended and participated:

CS Week Executive Advisory Panel

This group is comprised of platinum and gold-level CS Week sponsors. These respected leaders represent large, global, industry partners whose companies offer consulting expertise, integration and specialized services, and product development and support for all phases of the customer experience lifecycle. The EAP helps CS Week predict and respond to the operational and technological challenges faced by today’s utilities. This knowledgeable group constantly identifies gaps and solutions, while keeping a pulse on customer service trends across other industries.

CS Week Board of Directors

Seven experienced and resourceful utility leaders, five actively working in and two retired from diverse companies, plus CS Week’s CEO, lead and guide the nine CS Week venues and shape their content. They manage industry partner relationships and ensure CS Week continues to enhance its reputation as the premier utility customer service/IT conference in North America. Board members serve as venue executives for Executive Summit and Key Account Forum, and they are all Planning Committee members. Their oversight of the “big picture” helps keep CS Week strong, relevant and constantly looking ahead.

CS Week Planning Committee

Twenty-four utility supervisors, managers and directors form the CS Week Planning Committee. They are responsible for reviewing all submitted abstracts and determining, with the Board’s oversight, which will be slated as workshops and which will be identified for Synergy Groups. They solicit and secure speakers for both venues and review presentations in advance, ensuring quality and relevance. They work closely with the CS Week Board and staff to make each Conference content-rich, the key attendance motivator year after year.

Four members are new for the 2018 Conference. Get to know their backgrounds and skill sets on the facing page.
Now Austin Energy’s Director of Revenue Management and Control, **Timothy Davis** has over 30 years of previous utility experience at Southern California Edison, Tucson Electric Power and San Antonio Water System in all aspects of the CX lifecycle and customer operations. Davis is currently responsible for meter reading, transitioning AMR to AMI, field services, dispatch, operations support, energy diversion and meter maintenance. His expansive career focuses him both strategically and operationally, with front-line and managerial perspectives.

“This industry is evolving at a dizzying rate of change,” says Davis, who recognizes the personal need to stay current technologically to be relevant operationally. "Because I’m leading others who have been doing it a while, I need to have credibility to transition the change and be able to say, 'I've done what you do, but here's how the industry is changing and together we can make a smooth transition and bridge the gap.'” Davis is assigned to the Field Services track. He looks forward to being a CS Week ambassador and helping other Austin Energy employees see the value of attending.

**Herb Firsching** is the Director of Customer Operations at Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU). In 2017, GRU was selected as a CS Week Expanding Excellence Award Level II Winner for Innovation in People & Process because of the substantive changes Firsching and his team have made to their operations by:
- Consolidating Back Office with Billing to create Billing & Customer Solutions;
- Creating a collections and reporting department called Revenue Assurance; and
- Merging Cashiers and Customer Service.

Firsching started with GRU as a CSR and then spent a seven-year stretch in various analyst roles and as Billing & Collection Manager before settling into his current position. It was during those years as an analyst that he honed GRU’s approach to water/wastewater accountability and revenue. Herb earned his Bachelor of Arts in Economics from University of Florida and is a proud Gator living in and serving customers in his college town.

A CenterPoint Energy solution manager with over 20 years’ experience in the utility industry supporting and leading teams across finance, regulatory and information technology (IT) organizations, **Kim Rich** is a new PC member assigned to the Analytics track. In 2016, Kim and her team were finalists for CS Week’s Expanding Excellence Award - Innovations in Customer Service for their Customer Vision Program which knitted together natural language IVR, a predictive analytics engine and multiple CRM applications onto one platform. She is currently the program leader for migrating the utility’s remaining customer applications to its CIS platform.

The 2018 Conference will be Rich’s fifth year engaged with CS Week, where she has been a speaker with the Analytics Synergy Group and conference workshop presenter. “I enjoy meeting new people and hearing their stories,” she said. “The challenges and opportunities utilities face today are driving vendors to develop solutions that fit these needs. It’s exciting to see how we are now in the driver’s, not the back, seat.”

“Promoting and sharing the fact that field services IS customer service defines my role,” explained **Eric VanBecelaere**, Manager of Customer Field Service at Westar Energy, where he has worked for the past 25 years. His responsibilities encompass field services, which includes required credit and collections activities, meter reading and the nearly completed AMI implementation. He sees how all the departments under Westar Energy’s customer care umbrella touch and impact each other, and he wants others to see the connection too.

He continued, “Other conferences don’t touch the customer care aspect when it comes to field resources, but CS Week gets it. That’s why I’m excited to be a new PC member.” VanBecelaere attended his first CS Week in 2013 in Tampa, so he will complete the circle when he returns as a PC member to Tampa for Conference 42. Active in Synergy Groups, VanBecelaere presented at the Field Customer Service Synergy Group in 2017.
### Registration Opens in November

#### CS Week 2018 Registration

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<th>CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEES:</th>
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Full Conference attendee registration fee includes admission to breakfasts and keynote speakers’ presentations, Exhibit Hall luncheons, CS Week Conference workshops and all social and networking functions including, but not limited to, Exhibit Hall receptions, Women in Utilities (sorry men, this is a women-only event) and the perennial favorite - the CS Week Special Event.

#### Conference 42 | Tiered Pricing*

- 20% discount: 3-5 attendees
- 30% discount: 6-10 attendees
- 40% discount: 11+ attendees

*To qualify for this discount, utilities must register all attendees on the same date. To learn more, contact Julie Shankles, Registration Manager or call her at 903-893-3214 or directly at 903-821-8631, Monday - Friday. 8:00 am - 5:00 pm CST.

#### SYNERGY GROUPS REGISTRATION FEES:

- $349 BUSINESS PROCESS SYNERGY GROUPS
- Complimentary VENDOR SOLUTION SYNERGY GROUPS

Admittance to Vendor Synergy Groups is subject to presenter approval.

CS Week Synergy Groups are intended for Utility & Governmental attendees only (with the exception of Analytics).

#### COLLEGE REGISTRATION FEES:

- $349 COLLEGE WITH CONFERENCE REGISTRATION*
- $495 COLLEGE ONLY

*Discounted College registration fee is offered to those who register for College and Conference.

CS Week College is intended for Utility company attendees only.

For Booth Registration, please contact Gail Farmer or call her at 903-893-3214 or 903-821-8623 directly.
Conference Hotels Offer R & R

Three luxury hotels, all within walking distance of the Tampa Convention Center, have been designated as 2018 CS Week Conference hotels. Each offers convenience, accessibility and numerous amenities. All three provide that much-needed quiet, getaway place for rest and relaxation after long, busy days attending CS Week venues.

After November 1, 2017, book your stay at any of these hotels via www.csweek.org. Just click the Registration tab and choose Accommodations from the drop-down menu to see the Embassy Suites, Marriott and Westin hotel links.

Shuttle services including Bay Shuttle, SuperShuttle Tampa and Blue One Transportation can whisk attendees from the airport to any of these hotels within 30 minutes. Groups rates are available. Reservations are recommended.

Once situated in the Tampa Convention Center environs, Downtowner offers fast, fun, eco-friendly, on-demand, free lift services around town. Just search Downtowner in your phone’s app store and download the free mobile app. Read more about these and other options at Conference Transportation.

For questions about Registration or Accommodations, contact Julie Shankles at 903-893-3214 or 903-821-8631 directly.

Embassy Suites Tampa
513 S. Florida Avenue
- Sky Bridge to the Tampa Convention Center
- Near Amalie Arena and trolley to Ybor CitY
- Complimentary breakfast, restaurants, fitness facilities, pools and free Wi-Fi

Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel & Marina
700 S. Florida Avenue
- Stay Well rooms with air purifiers and shower infusers
- Rooftop pool, fitness center, fresh seafood restaurant and classic sports bar
- Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel is the site for CS Week’s Executive Summit and Key Account Forum

Westin Tampa Harbour Island
725 S. Harbour Island Boulevard
- Less than ½ mile to Tampa Convention Center on complimentary shuttle
- Outdoor pool, fitness center and restaurant
- Dry cleaning and laundry services
- Westin Tampa Harbour Island is the site for ENGAGE311
Planning efforts for the 2018 CS Week Executive Summit are already underway. Members of the Executive Summit Advisory Panel, led by venue executive Todd Arnold, are carefully reviewing the 2017 Summit evaluation statistics and feedback comments to gauge what these executives enjoyed and valued most, along with advisories for next year’s two-day event. Here are several representative responses:

• “Good recipe this year. Keep it similar.”
• “Sli.do excellent, good variety and creates engagement.”
• “Love the content and peer discussions.”

The 2017 Summit experimented with format variety, offering traditional Deep Dive presentations by respected industry professionals, CS 2020 Trends where moderators teed up topics for table-top discussion and Rapid Fire Solutions featuring panelists who addressed major strategic issues facing utilities. Comments indicate attendees thought the new approach was highly successful and deserving of an encore. Industry breakout sessions following the Summit were likewise popular.

Lastly, the evaluation and survey provides a blank canvas for attendees to paint content ideas for future Summits. Look for these potential 2018 topics offered by this years’ attendees:

• Affordability challenges
• Dealing with smart homes, smart cities and how those emerging concepts impact utilities
• Generational expectations of service
• More topics pertinent to water utilities
• Successful pay arrangement programs for all income levels
• Aligning communications between field and media

For questions about CS Week Executive Summit, contact Lisa Collins at 903-821-8675.
Utilities looking for one-day, curriculum-intensive learning that focuses on change management, best practices for system integrations and implementations, and specific tools for strategic projects were rewarded with the 2017 CS Week College. One hundred thirty-three attendees participated. Though the 2018 courses have not been finalized, suggestions from this year’s attendees will certainly influence course development. Read what attendees said about this year’s courses:

“I was a little apprehensive about signing up. I was worried it would be another customer service class. This was much more valuable. I like the concept of pause to reset... I also really got value out of the learning styles and evaluating the learning styles of the customers.”

“Great information with a great trainer.”

“Speakers were fantastic. Networking was fun. So many great people.”

“Awesome class. Awesome speaker. Really gave me a lot to think about how I can change to be a better team leader and mentor.”

For more information about the CS Week College, contact Danise Mullendore, College Manager at 903-893-3214 or 903-821-8680 directly.

Become a CS Week Research Member and Participate in the Annual Benchmark Study

Looking for a way to compare your utility operations, metrics and KPIs to others? Think: CS Week Research. Currently, 14 utilities have committed as members, but other utilities are invited to learn more about this CS Week venue and join. Members respond to an annual benchmark survey of questions focused on utility customer service front-office, back-office and field operations and they meet to discuss results at CS Week.

According to Mark Wyatt, Key Account Forum and CS Week Research venue executive, “Utilities can compare themselves operationally to others who are both alike and different. Participation gives utilities access to best practice information, common metrics and operational data that help inform and motivate them.”

For more information about becoming a member, contact Shelley Carter at 903-893-3214 or directly at 903-821-8647.
VOC Heard Loud and Clear Throughout Specialty Forum

The perennial favorite session of many CS Week Key Account Forum attendees is the ‘Voice of the Customer.’ In this session, the host utility invites operations and customer service executive leadership from several large accounts it serves to discuss their relationship, particularly focusing on how they create, build and grow it into one of mutual trust, communication and service. The 2017 Voice of the Customer (VOC) session lived up to those expectations with Oncor bringing executives from the City of Arlington, General Motors and Cinemark.

But Key Account Forum extended its emphasis on the voice of the customer to other presentations and networking opportunities offered throughout this two-day event. Starting with Top of Mind Issues lead by 2017 chairperson Michael B. Williams, KAF attendees voiced current operational and strategic challenges. Breakout sessions and the networking dinner gave attendees more chances to visit personally about customer-related concerns. Listening, reflecting and sharing with each other was where and how learning happened. Five blockbuster presentations from utility leaders and industry partners offered important lessons on data analysis, systems and applications, customer experience delivery, best operational practices and value-added products and services, all focused through the lense of the large customer.

Key Account Forum’s Steering Committee, led by venue executive Mark Wyatt, is reviewing survey evaluations and planning content for the 2018 agenda. The tri-fold invitation for the sixth annual Forum will be mailed in early February 2018. For more information about Key Account Forum, contact Shelley Carter at 903-821-8647.

Thank you, 2017 Key Account Forum Sponsors:
Encounter the Customer Experience Lifecycle in Action

2017 Business Process Groups

Analytics
Billing & Payments
Contact Center
Credit and Collections
Digital Customer Engagement
Field Services
Low Income
Outage Communications
Utilities United Against Scams

2017 Vendor Solution Groups

Oracle Utilities
SAP
SEW Smart Energy Water

CS Week Synergy Groups, whether business process or vendor solution-focused, offer more intimate discussion settings. This is the venue where utilities talk openly, share their challenges, successes and setbacks, and actively listen to each other. This is also where vendors discuss recent implementations, system enhancements and strategic roadmaps for applications and systems that provide the backbones of utility customer service operations.

Attendees enjoy the comradery and the chance to show-and-tell with utility peers who share operational similarities. Here’s a couple testimonials:

• “Relevant content well-delivered by presenters; good participation from the audience.”

• “I enjoyed the breakout sessions and open forum discussions to talk about trends and issues impacting our business.”

This fall, CS Week Planning Committee members are actively reviewing submitted abstracts and deciding which are best suited for 2018 Synergy Groups agendas. Look for business process and vendor solution agendas online starting in January.

Welcome, Shawnna Ansley!

CS Week’s new Synergy Groups Manager is Shawnna Ansley.

Shawnna is primed and excited to learn all about CS Week as she switches career directions and shares her customer service skills honed during nearly two decades’ working in the medical billing industry. “I’m ready for a new adventure,” Shawnna explained, “I love communicating and interacting with people, and I think my outgoing personality is going to show others what a team player I am.” Married for 25 years and mother of two daughters, Shawnna is eager for the next chapter in her work life.

Contact Shawnna at sansley@csweek.org or 903-821-8648.
A.K.A. “Ideas Man,” Dave McKendry has conjured up a promising one. He is asking CS Week utility attendees to submit her and his-stories about lessons learned from childhood and adult mentors. McKendry plans to compile them, along with his own, into a book, his first CS Week Publishing authorship foray. Penni McLean-Connor gave McKendry this moniker after featuring him in her 2016 book, Profiles in Excellence: Utility Chief Customer Officers.

Look for CS Week email broadcasts announcing McKendry’s plan and inviting utility attendees to become “authors.” By responding to four simple questions, CS Week attendees can submit stories and anecdotes about mentors who have shaped, influenced, been an example (good or bad), taken a special interest, taught life’s lessons and made a true, lasting difference in their personal and professional lives. He also wants to use this book to allow others to recognize and thank mentors “in the living years.”

Each survey submission will be carefully read and considered. Those “authors” who “make the cut” will be asked to submit several photographs and required to sign a Consent Form. “Authors” will be contacted between March – August 2018 for follow up and to answer any lingering questions. All authors included in the book will receive a draft of their chapter for review and approval. Submission deadline for the Mentoring Book Survey is December 31, 2017.

Winged monkeys, munchkins and poppy fields aside, don’t you agree two of the reasons The Wizard of Oz endures as a cultural icon rests in Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man and the Cowardly Lion’s journey to self-awareness and their efforts to acknowledge those who taught them along the way. These are the nuggets of McKendry’s book: self-awareness and giving credit. It doesn’t take a trip to Oz to make that a reality for mentors of CS Week attendees who deserve applause.

Have questions about the Mentoring Survey or CS Week Publishing? Contact Lisa Collins at 903-821-8675.

Missed Getting Your Copy?

Personalized book endleafs will have to wait until CS Week 2018, but acquiring copies of Penni McLean-Conner’s third book is an easy two-step:

1. Order a hard copy or ebook through Amazon or Barnes and Noble, OR
2. Contact Lisa Collins at 903-821-8675 to order in bulk quantities.

Profiles in Excellence features eight chief customer officers who are superstars in the utility industry. Their stories delight, surprise, motivate and inspire readers.
Learning and Sharing Answers to Those Burning Questions

Surveying attendees to evaluate CS Week and its nine venues is a key step to understanding what works and what attendees think is important to their educational and networking experience. It is also a tool for discovering subjects that drive future conference content, building the agenda and learning attendee and industry partner preferences.

Burning questions in the minds of venue planners as they reviewed attendee evaluations of the first stand-alone CS Week 311 conference at the Hilton Fort Worth Hotel were:

• What aspects of ENGAGE311 did you enjoy the most, find the most satisfying and consider valuable?

• What topics would you like to see discussed in future Conferences?

• How can we improve the Conference for attendees next year and after?

With an overwhelmingly positive conference rating of Extremely Satisfied or Somewhat Satisfied, ENGAGE311 hit the mark in its inaugural year. For more information about CS Week 311, please contact Amber Wiens at 903-821-8721.

Read typical comments shared by ENGAGE311 attendees:

• “The agenda was new and topics were timely. Dynamic speakers presented on a wide variety of issues that appealed to a wide audience. The opportunity to meet new people with the table assignments on different days was great.”

• “Networking and presentations with peers and vendors. Positive, high energy atmosphere. Cooperation and collaboration with those in my industry.”

• Open dialogue for knowledge sharing, providing real-life experiences, good and bad, discussing what works for some and being able to pick the valuable pieces so they can be directly applied to current and future projects.”

• Interacting with the vendors and getting that one-on-one with cities to understand and workout problems that we share.”
LeadNext’s Agenda: Year-Long Commitment to Learning

CS Week’s newest venue, LeadNext, invites commitment to a 13-month agenda that includes conferences, phone calls, webinars and onsite meetings. That commitment began at Conference 41 when ten participants launched the inaugural class and met their executive coaches. According to Vic Hatridge, LeadNext venue executive, “Those who had previously attended CS Week were excited about the opportunities, with the key objective to broaden utility knowledge, particularly in meter-to-cash processes.” LeadNext’s class represented a cross-section of utility types, sizes and maturity levels in terms of processes and supporting technologies. Hatridge continued, “First-timers were pleasantly overwhelmed by all that CS Week offers.”

Beginning October 1, 2017, CS Week is accepting applications for the 2018-19 LeadNext class. This second class launches at Conference 42 in Tampa, FL, and ends with Phoenix, AZ’s Conference 43.

Since meeting in Fort Worth, the 2017-18 LeadNext class has convened three times:

**June Conference Call**

Two weeks after Conference ended, LeadNext participants met via conference call to provide feedback about their experience in Fort Worth.

Each participant was assigned to read about and interview one executive featured in *Profiles in Excellence: Utility Chief Customer Officers*, written by Penni-McLean-Conner and published by CS Week. Key lessons learned included:

- Great leadership has more than one formula.
- Each leader faced diverse challenges in vastly different situations and environments. All responded with professional integrity and remained true to personal values.
- Success is not a solo act; rather, it depends on building relationships.

**July Webinar**

Common to every utility, meter-to-cash processes were the subject of July’s online webinar. Executive coach Dave Tomlinson, with input from other LeadNext coaches, prepared and explained this foundational presentation, showing how one process proceeds to the next and loops forwards and backwards depending upon the customer’s actions and needs. Tomlinson focused on Account Creation, Field Services, Meter Data Management, Billing, Payment Processing, Credit and Collections and Customer Care Ops.

**August Webinar**

Billing processes, presented by Vic Hatridge, was the subject of August’s online webinar. He covered the application and account set-up process through the printing, presentment and distribution of bills. Other moving parts in the “machinery” of billing included generating field requests, establishing billing rules and creating meter reading protocols.

On the Horizon

Consolidated Edison of New York, a.k.a. ConEd, will host LeadNext’s first offsite meeting. The ten participants and their executive coaches will meet in New York City on September 25 with CCO Marilyn Caselli and her team hosting this two-day event which will highlight best practices and effective operational strategies deployed by this industry leader.

Webinars illuminating the customer experience lifecycle and its process interconnectedness are scheduled for this winter and spring, with a second offsite meeting forecast for February.

For more information about LeadNext and to apply for the 2018-2019 class, contact Lisa Collins, Educational Director, at 903-821-8675.
The CS Week Expanding Excellence Awards recognize and salute excellence in utility customer service. Four award categories honor outstanding contributions and innovations in system implementations, projects, business processes and improving the customer experience. Click the titles above to read more. These coveted awards bring recognition and showcase the dedication and customer-centric focus of today’s progressive utilities.

Apply by completing the official Expanding Excellence Awards application form.

As your company considers and submits this application, please remember CS Week will request photos, images, videos and visual documentation of your project or implementation to create winners’ videos that are shown at Thursday’s General Session. Award finalists are also recognized with statuettes. Click VIDEOS to view last year’s and even the last five years of winners’ videos.

Any utility submitting an Awards entry will receive a 50% discount on up to five Conference 42 registrations. Contact Julie Shankles, Registration Manager, or call her at 903-821-8631 for information or with questions.

For more information about the Expanding Excellence awards or the nomination process, contact Shelley Carter at 903-821-8647 or Lisa Collins at 903-821-8675.
Relive Conference 41 Through the Power of Video

Fort Worth, TX, its Convention Center, the Omni Fort Worth Hotel and Hilton Fort Worth Hotel were the sites for Conference 41’s venues. Through the power of video, attendees can revisit and share the educational and networking opportunities as well as the excitement with those who were unable to attend. Additionally, respected executives from utilities across the country and a key industry partner discuss current challenges they are facing. Click on the bold, underlined titles below to view these four video resources:

2017 CS Week Highlights

‘Cowtown’ strutted its stuff during CS Week 2017. Stroll Fort Worth’s Old West attractions and lively street life. Watch the time-lapsed panorama of Conference 41 pass before your eyes. This was one action-packed week.

2017 Attendee Perspectives

Listen to first-timers and repeat attendees talk about the quality of Conference workshops, the magnetic quality of vendor products and services in the Exhibit Hall, the mutual sharing that characterized networking opportunities and the important lessons they packed to take home to their utilities.

2017 Vendor Perspectives

Hear what representative vendors thought about the level of interaction with attendees at various venues like the Executive Summit and the productive buzz of busy-ness in the Exhibit Hall. All agree: exhibiting at CS Week is a solid business investment worth repeating year after year.

2017 Executive Perspectives

Executive Summit venue executive Todd Arnold and give industry thought leaders discuss their background and experience and ways their utilities and its industry partners are addressing trends as well as universal operational topics. Watch all five:

- **Mike Lowe**, Deputy General Manager & Chief Customer Executive, Salt River Project
- **Jared Lawrence**, Vice President, Revenue Services, Duke Energy
- **Katy Cook**, Director, Customer Experience Strategy, Liberty Utilities
- **Jessica Brahaney-Cain**, VP, Customer Operations, Eversource Energy
- **Andrew Jornod**, CEO, VertexOne

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UPGRADE TO HAPPIER.

18  CS Week 2018  |  April 30 - May 4, 2018  |  www.csweek.org
Thank You, CS Week 2017 Sponsors!

Four 2017 Fun Facts:
156 exhibitor booths
41 first-timers
115 returning vendors

83% of survey respondents used the CS Week mobile app that showed vendor booth numbers and Exhibit Hall location. Exhibitors and sponsors were searchable in the app by Utility Industry Products & Services.

58% of survey respondents participated in private consultations/demonstrations.

91% of survey respondents were very or somewhat satisfied with Exhibit Hall hours.

The 2018 Sponsor/Exhibit Prospectus is available online. Click the cover image below to read about the why, when, what and how of being a CS Week sponsor/exhibitor. For questions, please contact Gail Farmer, 903-893-3214 or 903-821-8623 directly. 2018 Conference sponsorship opportunities, which allow for advance, premium booth selection, are headed to in-boxes soon.

CS Week 2018 | Tampa Convention Center | Tampa, FL
Congratulations to Conference 41 Workshop Stars!

Highest Rated Workshops:

The Customer Satisfaction Journey – It Takes a Village (Strategies and Management)
Jorge Jimenez, Director, Cust Exp & Utility Mktg, PSEG Long Island

Linking Annual Appraisals to Everyday Call Center Performance (Contact Center)
Fred Daum, Director, Customer Contact & Billing, PSEG Long Island

Field Service Training Strategies (Field Customer Service)
Sheila Pressley, Director, Customer Revenue Services, JEA; Amber Lineback, Mgr, Technical Training & Qualifications, Piedmont Natural Gas; Chris Silies, Regional Director, Spire

Highest Attended Workshops:

Transforming the Customer Experience from Billing to Payment (191 attendees)
Raymond Joseph, Manager, Bill Delivery, Consolidated Edison of New York; Adam Berke, Senior Director, Sales, Broadridge Financial Solutions

Delivering the Customer Experience in an Omni-Channel World (191 attendees)
Reese Hamilton, Director, Customer Service, Vectren Corporation; Andy Higgins, Mgr, EBusiness & Telecommunications Systems, Vectren Corporation

The Impact of IoT on Future of Utility Customer Systems: What is New for 2017 and Beyond? (152 attendees)
Zarko Sumic, VP, Distinguished Analyst, Gartner, Inc.

Visit CS Week Success Stories to see when several of these 2017 workshops stars will offer encore presentations. Scheduled for second Tuesdays, these webinars are held at 2:00 pm EST. It’s easy to register, watch, listen and learn.

For more information, contact Danise Mullendore, Conference Workshops Manager at 903-893-3214.