experian. ™

Build greater data insight and drive value

How the utilities sector can overcome their customer challenges with good data

Build your Universal Customer View with Experian's data and tools

Why a universal customer view?

The utilities sector has experienced its fair share of change in recent times and faces the challenge of coping with the sheer volume of data that is available to it whilst making sense of it in a meaningful way. Through regulatory expectations, the increased focus on customer service and experience, and the challenge of collections and billings, it is crucial you have an accurate and holistic view of your customers to drive efficiencies and value for your organisation.

> ## Organisations on average believe that 30% of their data is inaccurate.
> **- Experian 2018 Global Data Management Research**

Few would disagree with the correlation between good data and business outcomes and our research* shows organisations believe the top three competitive advantages that good data deliver are:

1. **Better insight for decision making**
2. **More efficient business practices**
3. **Better relationships with customers**

This provides an opportunity for those who want to stand out to innovate, find better ways to deliver their services or even disrupt the sector; through their use of customer data.

Benefit from your Universal Customer View (UCV)

At Experian, we talk about a UCV. This is one that moves beyond that traditional notion of a more technical 'Single Customer View' and combines analytics with database technology and data enrichment to develop a deeper, more meaningful understanding of people, their needs and motivations.

Rules & Regulations
Increased rules and regulations governing the sector, including those of Ofgem and Ofwat, mean that data quality and having a Universal Customer View is more of a focus than ever. Similarly, customer service is key to utilities companies, whether it be through regulatory incentives or customer retention and referrals. Our research showed that 69% believe that inaccurate data will undermine their ability to deliver an excellent customer experience*.

Customer Experience
As customer expectation has evolved in the digital era, having accurate and up-to-date customer data across all channels – including address, email and mobile - creates a solid foundation to being responsive to your customers, providing a frictionless

experience and building trust. Through improving your customers digital journey, and understanding if they've been a customer before, you can tailor their experience accordingly. This can help improve perception and service in a competitive market and, for water providers, support your C-MeX efforts.

On top of this, using additional datasets and database technology lets you learn more about who your customers are, their unique circumstances and what motivates them. This includes your social responsibility of understanding if a customer is able to pay and offering payment plans to those most in need.

Collections and Billings
Collections and billings are another major area that will benefit from efficient data management and the maintenance of that Universal Customer View over time. People move and their utility provider may not be top of their list in terms of who to tell. Having this Universal View of your data can reduce errors in billings by better understanding the individuals at an address including keeping track of those who have moved or passed away. This helps improve both the outcomes, in terms of revenue, and efficiencies of your collections and billings processes and helps identify possible energy thefts.

In addition, having customer data beyond just basic contact details can further improve the efficiency of the collections process and remove the need to use costly third parties. By combining customer data, demographics, open data, actual energy / water usage with the skills of analysts and the power of analytics platforms can help you to turn data into insight. This lets you:

- personalise the entire billings and collections process supporting revenue protection for your organisation

- cross-sell and up-sell services or products appropriately

- enhance relationships with both long-term and new customers

> ## 75% of organisations surveyed said they had seen a return on investment from data quality solutions.
> **- Experian 2018 Global Data Management Research**

*Experian 2018 Global Data Management Research

Build greater data insight and drive value

How can Experian help?

The challenge of trying to instigate order and structure, often across data silos, and then maintain this over time can seem like a Herculean task. However, we believe that it doesn't require costly IT undertakings to truly benefit from a Universal View of your customer base. It's simply a case of having the capability to build a consistent, actionable data-set that is accurate and can be maintained over time.

We have developed a 4-step approach to addressing the data management needs of utilities using Experian's data management platform, Aperture Data Studio, combined with Experian's contact data validation tools, extensive datasets and analytical platforms.

Our approach focuses on the data and provides a methodology that will consolidate, clean, fix and link your customer data, and enrich with additional information to provide enhanced insight.

To get you started, our team will be happy to conduct an audit of your data to show you what state it's currently in and what you can achieve. From here, we can tell you what you need to do in order to bring your data quality up to the standard it needs to be if it's going to feed into a successful Universal Customer View.
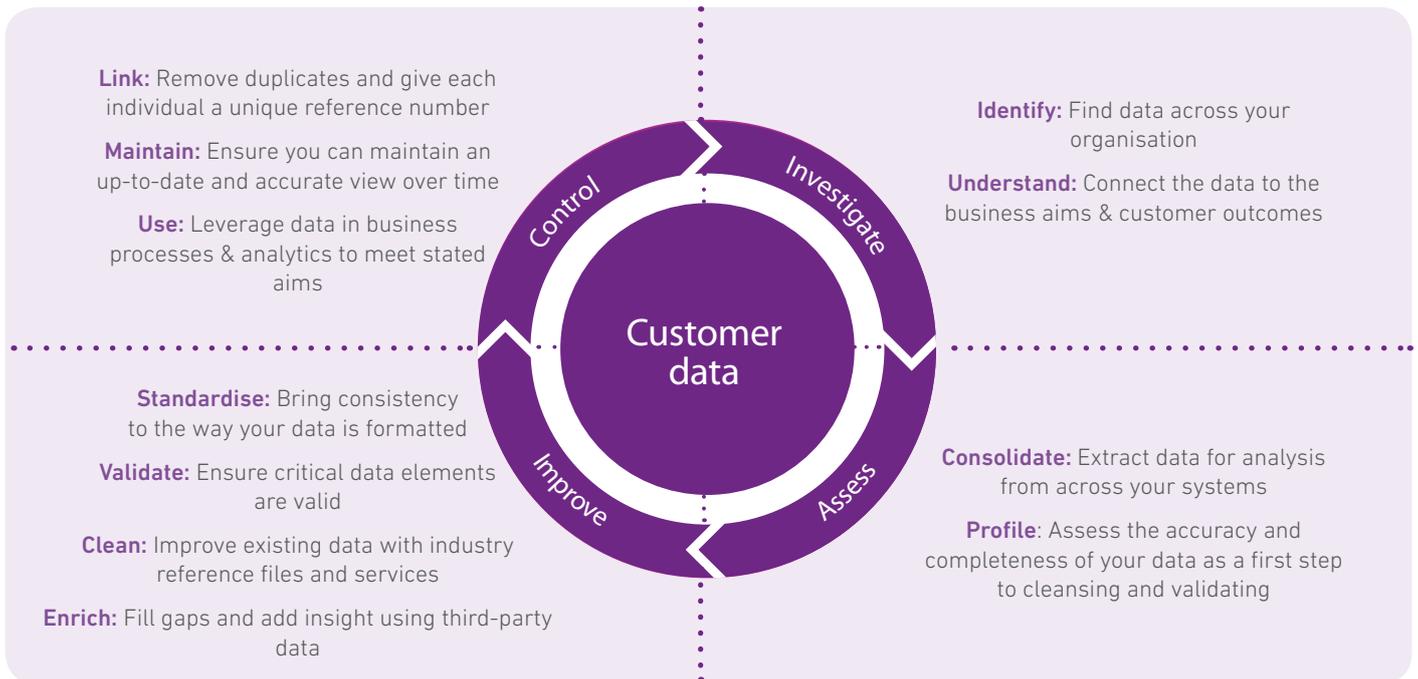
Wessex Water — YTL GROUP

Experian is working with Wessex Water to build greater data insight. Wessex Water is using Experian's Aperture Data Studio and contact validation tools to lay the foundations for a comprehensive Single Customer View. A key enabler to the organisation's C-MeX preparations, it will help to power an ambitious programme of Customer Service excellence.

Experian's 4 step approach using Aperture Data Studio.

Control

Link: Remove duplicates and give each individual a unique reference number

Maintain: Ensure you can maintain an up-to-date and accurate view over time

Use: Leverage data in business processes & analytics to meet stated aims

Investigate

Identify: Find data across your organisation

Understand: Connect the data to the business aims & customer outcomes

Customer data

Improve

Standardise: Bring consistency to the way your data is formatted

Validate: Ensure critical data elements are valid

Clean: Improve existing data with industry reference files and services

Enrich: Fill gaps and add insight using third-party data

Assess

Consolidate: Extract data for analysis from across your systems

Profile: Assess the accuracy and completeness of your data as a first step to cleansing and validating

Contact dataquality@experian.com or call 0800 197 7920 today to arrange an audit of your data.