

Utilities Lag Other Industries in Digital Experience, but Standouts are Emerging, J.D. Power Finds

Alabama Power Ranks Highest in Inaugural Study

COSTA MESA, Calif.: 21 March 2018 — Utilities are among the lowest-performing industry groups when it comes to delivering distinct digital customer experiences, but some pioneers have found the secret to digital success, according to the J.D. Power 2018 Utility Digital Experience Study,SM released today.

The inaugural study evaluates customer perceptions of the websites, mobile apps, social, chat, email and text functions of the 67 largest electric, natural gas and water utilities in the United States. It is the first-ever J.D. Power customer satisfaction study to incorporate biometric analyses (which tracks eye movements, facial emotions and voice tone), video verbatim interviews and detailed surveying to extract real-world customer perceptions. The study was conducted in collaboration with Centric Digital, a leader in measuring and navigating digital transformations. Centric Digital is contributing an expert assessment to the study, including industry benchmarking, digital experience analysis and cross-industry insights.

“Consumers have grown accustomed to receiving up-to-the-minute alerts on the status of at-home deliveries and being able to make checking account deposits with the cameras on their phones, but interacting with their utilities—whether to check usage, pay a bill or report an outage—often seems like a step back into the dark ages of technology,” said **Andrew Heath, Senior Director of the Utilities Practice at J.D. Power**. “Utilities know this is a problem, and many have put in place initiatives to address it. But, until now, there hasn’t been a reliable playbook for what works. By probing deeper than ever before into real-world customer interactions with their utility’s digital platform, we’ve been able to spotlight best practices.”

Following are some of the study’s key findings:

- **Utilities among lowest-performing industries in digital:** When benchmarked against other consumer-facing industries, utilities deliver the worst digital experiences. According to the Centric Digital DIMENSIONS™ Score, which evaluates digital proficiency, the utility industry scores 571 on a 1,000-point scale. The retail sector, by contrast, scores 771.
- **Standouts are emerging:** Though overall utility industry performance is weak, there is a wide range of performance, with some providers achieving digital customer satisfaction scores that are in line with top performers in other industries. The highest-ranked utility in the study, Alabama Power, has a J.D. Power customer satisfaction score of 879, which is a significant 40 points higher than industry average.
- **More information in a streamlined format:** Top-performing digital utility platforms, whether delivered via desktop or mobile, all display a great deal of information, including usage, account information and payment information, in a streamlined format. The ability to clearly and easily view usage information is the top driver of a positive website/app experience, associated with a 43-point improvement in overall customer satisfaction when delivered.

- **Cross-channel communication remains a challenge:** One component of the overall digital experience that utility brands struggle with the most is cross-channel communication. Utilities score 345 in the Centric Digital DIMENSIONS™ Score due to major gaps in social media, email, messaging and customer service capabilities.

Study Rankings

Alabama Power ranks highest in overall satisfaction with a score of 879. **SRP** (872) ranks second and **MidAmerican Energy** (870) ranks third. The industry average is 839.

The 2018 Utility Digital Experience Study is based on evaluations from 16,341 customers of the 67 largest electric, natural gas and water utilities. To be included in the study, utilities must serve 540,000 or more customers. The study was fielded in December 2017-January 2018.

For more information about the Utility Digital Experience Study, visit <http://www.jdpower.com/resource/us-utility-website-evaluation-study>.

See the online press release at <http://www.jdpower.com/pr-id/2018032>.

J.D. Power is a global leader in consumer insights, advisory services and data and analytics. These capabilities enable J.D. Power to help its clients drive customer satisfaction, growth and profitability. Established in 1968, J.D. Power is headquartered in Costa Mesa, Calif., and has offices serving North/South America, Asia Pacific and Europe. J.D. Power is a portfolio company of XIO Group, a global alternative investments and private equity firm headquartered in London, and is led by its four founders: Athene Li, Joseph Pacini, Murphy Qiao and Carsten Geyer.

Centric Digital provides industry leading solutions to measure and navigate digital transformation. Powered by proprietary apps Dimensions™, Scenarios™ and Compass™, Centric Digital has benchmarked hundreds of brands, designed multi-year transformation strategies, unlocked and managed \$2+b of investment roadmaps. Centric Digital ranked on Inc 5000 fastest growing companies in America list for the last 4 years. Centric Digital is headquartered in New York City, with offices in San Francisco, Chicago & Mendoza.

Media Relations Contacts

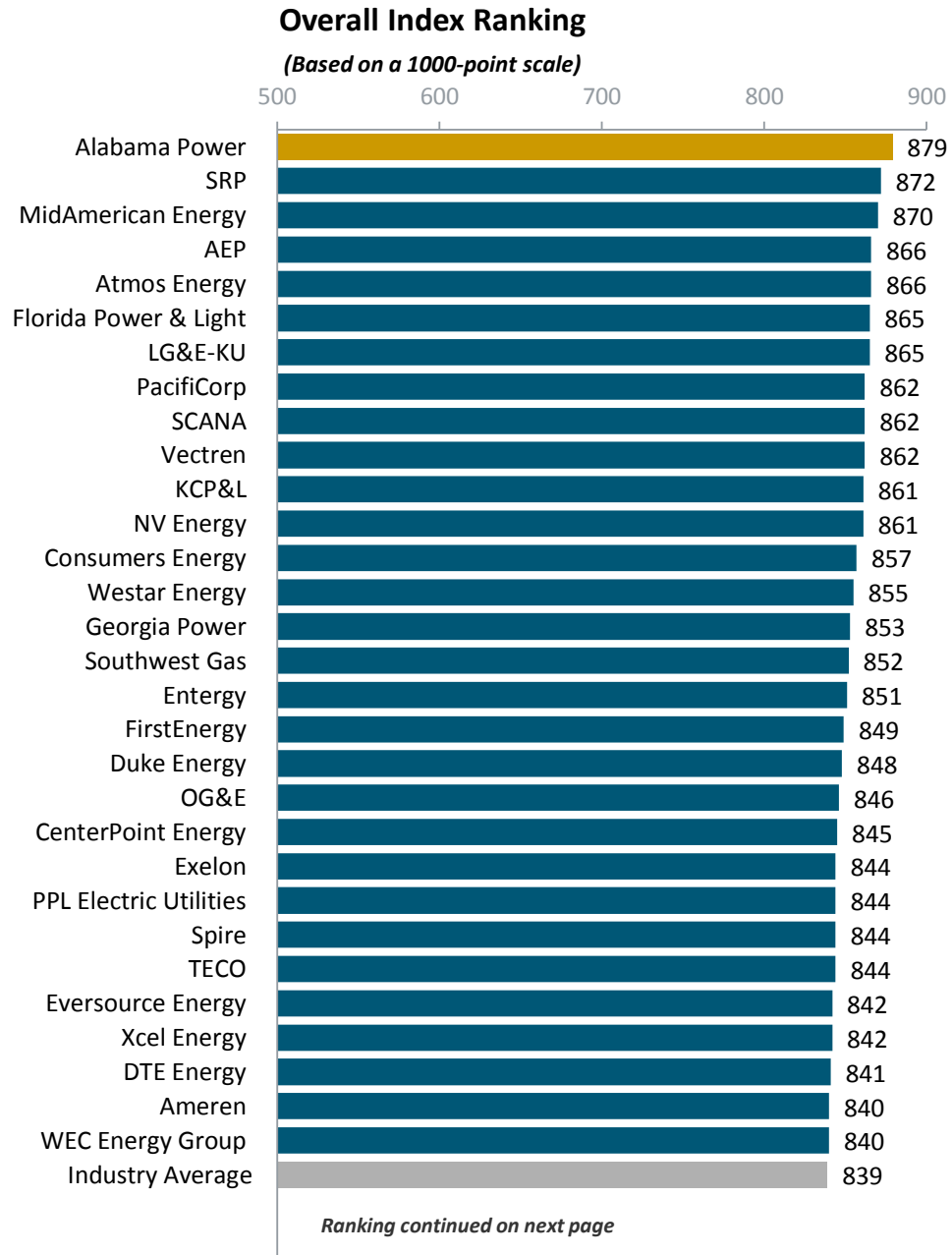
Geno Effler; Costa Mesa, Calif.; 714-621-6224; media.relations@jdpa.com
John Roderick; St. James, N.Y.; 631-584-2200; john@jroderick.com

About J.D. Power and Advertising/Promotional Rules www.jdpower.com/about-us/press-release-info

###

NOTE: Two charts follow.

J.D. Power 2018 Utility Digital Experience StudySM



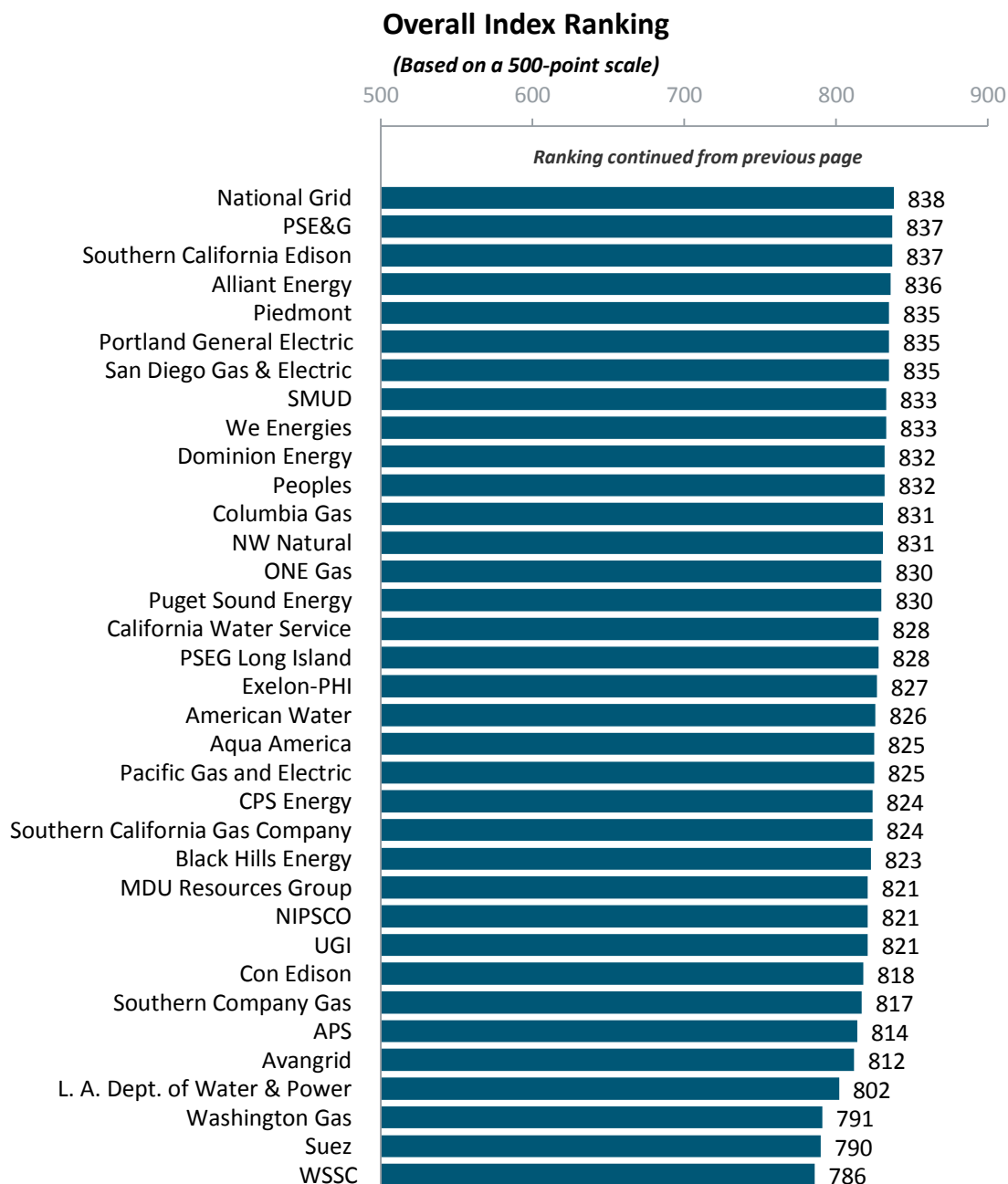
Note: A mobile channel is necessary to be officially ranked

Source: J.D. Power 2018 Utility Digital Experience StudySM

Charts and graphs extracted from this press release for use by the media must be accompanied by a statement identifying J.D. Power as the publisher and the study from which it originated as the source. Rankings are based on numerical scores, and not necessarily on statistical significance. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the information in this release or J.D. Power survey results without the express prior written consent of J.D. Power.

Ranking continued from previous page

J.D. Power 2018 Utility Digital Experience StudySM



Note: A mobile channel is necessary to be officially ranked

Source: J.D. Power 2018 Utility Digital Experience StudySM

Charts and graphs extracted from this press release for use by the media must be accompanied by a statement identifying J.D. Power as the publisher and the study from which it originated as the source. Rankings are based on numerical scores, and not necessarily on statistical significance. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the information in this release or J.D. Power survey results without the express prior written consent of J.D. Power.