

10 recommendations for utility website design

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Web design CHECKLIST

We looked at the 20 highest-rated utility websites in the E Source 2021 [Website Benchmark](#) to create our checklist of the top 10 website design recommendations. Focusing on these elements will improve your customers' overall experience with your website and your website's findability, functionality, and content.



Overall experience

- ✓ **Perfect the basics.** Focus on essential content and functionality before adding extra features.
- ✓ **Think about appearance.** Keep customers engaged with a visually appealing website.



Findability

- ✓ **Make navigation intuitive.** Direct customers to the most relevant and essential information using the Home Page and top-level navigation bar.
- ✓ **Consider findability.** Reduce the number of pages customers have to go through to find the information they need.



Functionality

- ✓ **Make login easy.** Make it easy for customers to log in to their account from the Home Page.
- ✓ **Focus on self-service.** Empower customers to self-serve by offering various self-service options and a customizable preference center.
- ✓ **Give customers financial flexibility.** Let customers choose from multiple rate options, financial programs, and payment structures.
- ✓ **Build a responsive website.** Give customers a consistent experience across multiple devices.



Content

- ✓ **Customize the My Account feature.** Personalize customers' My Account with the most relevant information and resources.
- ✓ **Give personalized recommendations.** Help customers manage their energy use by sharing usage data, energy efficiency tips, and ways to set energy alerts and goals.



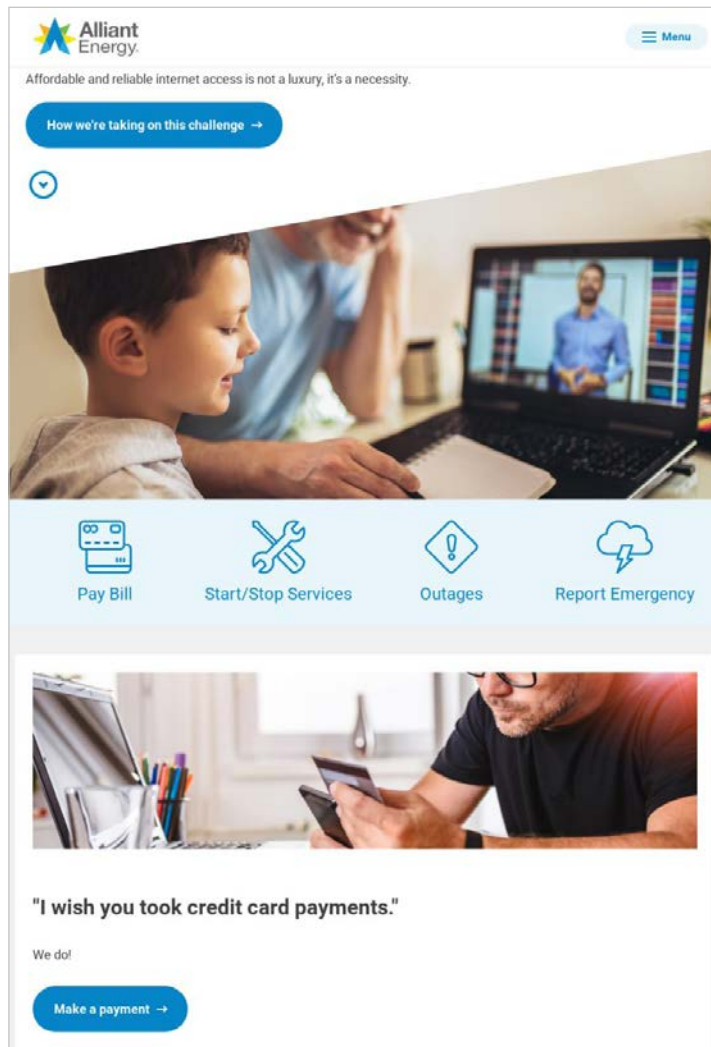
Members of the E Source [E-Channel Service](#) can access even more design advice through the E Source [Utility Website Design Center](#).



Improve the overall experience of your website

Top utility websites focus on essential functionality and content before extra features. They offer the most important things customers want to see and do on a utility website such as update account information like their email or check the status of an outage.

Top utility websites are also more likely to receive high appearance scores. How your website looks affects how long customers stay on your website and what their opinion of your utility is.



► **Alliant Energy's** website received the highest overall appearance score. It uses engaging images, icons, and colors that grab attention and highlight key features.







Improve findability across your website

Top utility websites are easier to navigate and give customers relevant information that's easy to understand. You want customers to quickly find the features they're looking for and to have the right information on those pages.

- Put all contact options on the Contact Us page
- Explain energy efficiency information using customer-friendly language
- Have usage graphs with adjustable ways to view data
- Include relevant outage information on outage maps

 <p>ENERGY STAR Certified Natural Gas Dryer</p> <p>\$70 rebate on an ENERGY STAR certified natural gas dryer. [1]</p> <p>Only one rebate per household. Must be min. 3.48 CEF. Check to see if your model qualifies at ENERGY STAR [2]</p> <p>Apply Now</p>	 <p>ENERGY STAR Certified Natural Gas Tankless Water Heater</p> <p>\$600 to \$1,000 rebate on various high efficiency or ENERGY STAR certified natural gas tankless water heaters. [1]</p> <p>Only storage water heater to tankless water heater replacement qualifies for a rebate. Min 0.82 UEF to qualify. Check for your model's UEF at AHRI [2]</p> <p>Apply Now</p>
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► **SoCalGas** makes rebates easy to find by using detailed icons, customer-friendly language, and boldface on its Appliance and Natural Gas Rebates page.





Improve the functionality of your website

Top utility websites make it easy for customers to log in to their accounts by including a login box on the Home Page. They also give customers more self-service options, including:

- Signing up for alerts
- Customizing utility communication channels and frequency
- Updating personal information
- Viewing payment options
- Reporting and checking the status of an outage
- Enrolling in energy efficiency programs

Top-rated utility websites let customers choose from multiple rate options such as budget billing. They're also more likely to let customers choose their own payment date.

The screenshot shows three billing options with icons and descriptions:

- Paperless Billing**: Less paper. Same great information.
- Pick A Due Date**: Pick A Due Date lets you pick the day of the month that is most convenient for you to pay your Ameren energy bill.
- Budget Billing**: Even out your monthly payments.

Via its Billing Options page, **Ameren Illinois** lets customers choose their rate plan, their bill delivery method, and their billing date.



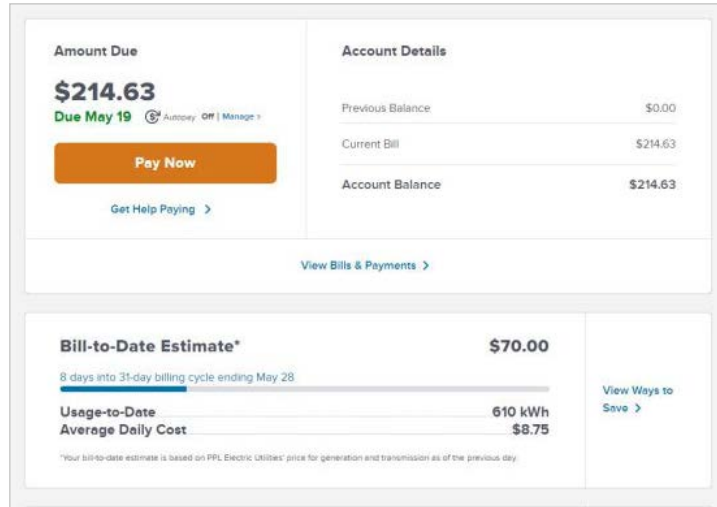
Don't forget about responsive or mobile-friendly design!

All the top 20 utility websites used responsive or mobile-friendly design. They're also more likely to offer customers a mobile-friendly and accessible HTML version of their bill.



Improve the content on your website

Top utility websites personalize customers' My Account pages.



▶ Customers of **PPL Electric Utilities** see their Account Summary page immediately after logging in. It gives them relevant information such as account details, the amount due, a bill-to-bill estimate, monthly energy use, and rates.

Guide customers to relevant information and common functions via My Account. Help them manage their energy use by sharing insights into their usage data. Include:

- Information on how much energy they've used so far in the month
- Recommendations on how to lower bills and energy usage
- Comparisons of how their energy use compares to similar households in the area
- Alerts for high-energy usage
- The ability to set energy-savings or usage goals





More information on the E Source Website Benchmark

Since 2002, the E Source [Website Benchmark](#) has helped utilities benchmark their company websites and identify improvements they can make to deliver the best customer experience. In 2021 we assessed 85 US and Canadian electric and gas utility websites, focusing on four usability components:

- Findability
- Functionality
- Content
- Appearance

For a complete list of the utility rankings, read our press release [E Source study reveals increased focus on responsive websites in 2021](#).

To access the full results from the study and individual website reviews, subscribe to the E Source [E-Channel Service](#).

To purchase a personalized website review, [contact us](#).



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