

# Ameren's Outage Experience

## Consulting Case Study



### Key Highlights

Ameren selected E Source Management Consulting to develop and help implement an improved outage strategy. To date, efforts have improved the customer outage experience and helped to streamline operations, leading to:

- A 30% reduction in calls transferred from the interactive voice response system (IVR) to a customer service representative
- A decrease in social media complaints related to changing restoration times
- Favorable feedback from customers—94% of customers in Illinois and 83% in Missouri who are part of the Potential Power Outage pilot find it valuable or highly valuable



### Challenges

Challenged to increase its J.D. Power ranking, Ameren Illinois, the second largest electric utility in the state, focused on improving the unplanned outage experience as a key component of increasing overall customer satisfaction. Following a series of severe winter storms and widespread outages, the utility received significant negative customer feedback regarding inconsistent outage notifications and changing estimated restoration times. To improve the customer outage experience, Ameren needed to address the following challenges:

- Disparate customer outage communications across channels
- Lack of customer confidence in the utility's restoration times
- No connection between the customer's outage experience and employee actions
- Inconsistent application of outage processes and policies

### Solution

Since the project launched in 2016, E Source has been an active partner in delivering tailored solutions to ensure Ameren meets its goals as established by the utility. Initially, Ameren selected E Source to lead a customer journey-mapping workshop. During the workshop, E Source and Ameren established a customer experience vision for outages and Ameren Illinois implemented interim changes to improve the IVR outage message and to stop sending automated estimated safe restoration times during severe events. The utility experienced a near-immediate improvement, including a decrease in calls transferred from the IVR to the contact center and a reduction in social media complaints.

E Source developed a strategy intended to:

- Align outage alerts
- Enhance the outage map
- Streamline outage field processes
- Improve how customers report outages
- Manage change across departments
- Drive customer awareness of outage notifications

E Source secured executive approval of the strategy and began the initial phases of implementation.

### Results

With E Source's support, Ameren has delivered a variety of solutions, including the Potential Power Outage alert—a proactive notice to customers that Ameren is aware of an outage in their area. Almost 94% of Ameren's customers find it valuable and 68% reported that receiving the notification increased their satisfaction with the utility—two indicators that Ameren is on the right path to increasing its overall J.D. Power customer satisfaction score.

