

## Case Study

# Proactive DPA Deployment in Record Time

*"Normally, a project like this would take 2-3 months. In an emergency? 6-7 weeks. Message Broadcast accomplished it in just over three."*

- Manager of Digital Channel Strategies

## Summary Highlights

- Message Broadcast deployed proactive, no-contact payment arrangements digitally to 500,000 customers in response to COVID-19.
- Activated in record time -- just 3.5 weeks.
- Reduced effort for the utility's internal I.T. department.
- Enabled customer self-resolution, significantly reducing call center interactions.
- Generated extraordinary levels of positive sentiment and customer satisfaction.
- 21% of customers behind on their payments opted in.
- Proud to Receive Chartwell 2020 EMACS Conference Billing and Payments Gold Award.



## Background

With the onset of COVID-19 and unprecedented job losses across the nation, one of the country's largest utility companies, with more than 8 million customers in seven states, wanted to ensure its customers weren't further burdened by the stress of falling hopelessly behind on their payments.

To provide relief and, at the same time, keep customers as current as possible, its leadership enlisted Message Broadcast to proactively promote a Deferred Payment Assistance (DPA) program using an omnichannel approach.

## Problem

While the U.S. government grappled with how to handle a pandemic of epic proportions, unemployment rates skyrocketed. Nationwide, utility customers who had never missed a payment found themselves facing an uncertain future. A moratorium on disconnects offered a temporary solution, but there loomed the question, "What would happen when the moratorium ended?"

This utility's leadership recognized the need for enacting something quickly--and proactively--to reassure their customers they were doing everything they could to respond empathetically.

## Solution

The utility turned to Message Broadcast to deploy its multi-state DPA program under an exceptionally tight timeline.

Message Broadcast handled the technical aspects of creating the solution, fully integrating with the utility's legacy systems, and minimizing strain on its internal I.T. Department.

More than 500,000 customers across six states received either an IVR call on their landlines or an SMS link on their mobile phones. Message Broadcast's program validated and processed each customer's unique situation through a series of questions, resulting in a DPA offer. If the customer accepted the offer, they would receive a confirmation and subsequent email.

Thank you. This is incredible. I definitely appreciate this.

Thanks so much for helping families during these trying times. We appreciate your kindness.

Thank you for helping me with a payment plan. This will help me get back on track soon. God bless you.

Thank you for the help. It is a great relief.

## Results

With unprecedented swiftness, the utility and Message Broadcast deployed a program that offered real-time assistance to those most in need. **More than 21% of customers participated, with the digital engagements serving as an empathetic reminder for a large number of customers, who immediately paid their bill.**

Using social listening and surveys, the utility received overwhelmingly positive sentiment, and its leadership was encouraged by the heartfelt gratitude expressed by its customers.

Their customers' words speak for themselves.

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