

# SUCCESS STORY

## The Happy Meter – Humanizing the Utility

Just how did a smiling electric meter become the face of energy efficiency programs for several utilities?



One of the nation's largest investor-owned utilities enlisted the expertise of PowerDirect Energy (PDE) to create marketing collateral promoting several new energy efficiency programs. While developing the programs' marketing campaigns, PDE identified an opportunity to leverage the marketing and budgets of several utility programs while building brand awareness, facilitating customer loyalty, and creating a connection between saving energy and saving money.

### Impact

Customer response to the Happy Meter concept was exceptionally positive and contributed to greatly enhanced awareness for the utility's energy efficiency programs. The Happy Meter is now the face of energy efficiency programs in three states.

### Solution

PDE's creative team developed the concept for a humanistic "Happy Meter," using the slogan, "Make your meter happy." The Happy Meter was successful in "humanizing" the utility and portraying an image for the utility as the customers' partner in helping to reduce energy and consequently save money. The Happy Meter icon was utilized consistently in all marketing materials to create brand awareness while communicating energy efficiency goals in an engaging, light-hearted way.

### Design

The Happy Meter was designed using a realistic-looking energy meter as the base, and manipulating the dials and other parts to form a smile. The end result gave a whimsical personality to a very familiar object.

Props were used to accessorize the Happy Meter for seasonal marketing campaigns, such as a winter scarf and earmuffs for winter and snappy sunglasses for summer. The ability to adjust the basic design of the Happy Meter proved invaluable in providing customers with a continuously fresh, engaging campaign while promoting consistent messaging and awareness.

### Execution

PDE incorporated the utility's corporate colors into the Happy Meter campaign for greater brand awareness and affinity, with a variety of marketing materials created to slowly build upon the campaign over time. Bill inserts were used to introduce the Happy Meter to customers, with later marketing initiatives including direct mail, out-of-home billboards, newspaper advertisements, and emails utilized to reinforce the campaign's messaging and visuals. Animation and audio were then incorporated to bring the Happy Meter to life for network and cable TV spots. Further reinforcing the campaign, the Happy Meter icon was integrated onto the utility's website home pages as well as the landing page for the utility's energy efficiency program for consistency and continuity.