What do businesses really think of energy reports?

Laura Cornish, Product Manager
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Energy Reports

Energy performance timeline
Are you using more or less energy than the average of hotels with similar characteristics?

Total to date $1,686

Programmable thermostats
You don’t need to heat your building the same when it is unoccupied. At night, lower the thermostat 7-10°F from its normal setting.

Mainsen heating system
Regular maintenance of the heating system will increase its energy efficiency and your comfort.

Variable speed drives
Ventilation systems do not normally require that fans operate at full speed at all times. Consider adding variable speed drives (VSDs) to fan motors. VSDs match fan speed to the actual requirements at different times of the day. They can reduce your ventilation electricity use by $172 per hp of fan size.

Next step:
Contact your equipment supplier.

Designed with your small business in mind
The Utilico Business Solutions Program makes it simple and affordable to reduce energy use and save money. Eligible businesses will receive:

- A free facility assessment by an approved contractor
- A report outlining energy saving opportunities and costs
- Installation of energy efficient equipment
- Up to $10,000 in incentives

To learn more, call 1-866-555-4322 and ask for the Business Solutions Program.

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EnerNOC approach

1. User testing
2. Online & phone surveys
3. Focus groups
4. Interviews
What do businesses see?
I would show a plain report so people can compare and see where the heat map indicates people are looking.

Angela Sanguinetti,
What do businesses think?

“Only useful thing so far from your reports is that we figured out that we’re paying too much.”
“I wouldn’t know how accurate it would be. …you’re essentially guessing at numbers – the credibility is just shot there.”
“I just scan this and then throw it out. Sorry.”
“It gives me a little bit of something to compare from other churches but this is like comparing apples and oranges. I don't know who they are comparing me with but it does say other churches in our area of our size but I don't know how they know.”
“Well, it told us how much energy we were using in comparison to other churches and as we checked it with each one of the reports that came in we were able to see if we were using more energy, which allowed us to encourage people to shut off switches and other things.”
“It’s been an **eye opener** for me to start thinking about how I can fix what I’ve got”
“I thought it was insightful and I thought it had good ideas and it made me go to the [utility] site”
“I love the cost savings components ....that really helps me.”
What do businesses want?

1. Biggest bang for buck
2. Specific, personalized recommendations
3. The ability to track progress over time
Implications

1. Every business is a snowflake

2. You only get a second

3. Reports+
Methods

1. User testing
   - eye tracking: 4
   - Remote user testing: 20

2. Online surveys
   - 271
   - 150
   - 50
   - 87

3. Focus groups
   - Sample size 10

4. Interviews
   - Semi-structured
   - Sample size: 19
Tear-off survey

Your business uses $2,452 more energy than similar restaurants.
Your electricity and natural gas use over the last 12 months is compared to the average of restaurants with similar characteristics.

Annual energy cost comparison

- MIMO SUSHI: $22,738
- Similar restaurants: $21,395

This comparison is based on your utility rate, climate, and the following details:
- You operate a restaurant
- You are open 72 hours per week
- You occupy 2,000 square feet
- You are located in a warm summer, cool winter climate.

This information is used to personalize your report. To update your details, please visit www'utilico.com or call 1-888-555-4322.

Want to save money for your business?
- A free, no-obligation energy assessment.
- Up to 70% of the total project cost paid by Utilico.
- Interest-free financing

To get started, please call 1-888-555-4322 or visit www'utilico.com to schedule an energy assessment.

We want to hear from you
Please answer these four questions and mail back your responses in the prepaid envelope.

1. Please confirm or correct your business details:
   - Type: Restaurant
   - Size: 2,000 ft²
   - Open: 72 hours/week

2. Do you rent or own?
   - You own and occupy the space
   - You own the space and lease it out
   - You rent the space
Boost engagement with targeted communications:
120 vertical-specific reports

**ACTION**
Title and packaging means 92% of reports reach the decision maker

**MOTIVATION**
Relevant benchmarking comparisons paired with actionable insights

**IMPROVED DATA**
Multiple ways to update site details – phone, tear-off survey, web
Engage SME customers to drive energy savings

- 80% of SME participants reduced their energy use

Across programs, an average 80% of SME customers saved energy compared to other SME users in the same verticals not participating in the program.
Approximately 1% savings for customers who reduced energy use

SME customers who consumed less energy than control group had approximately 1% lower use

- SME customers had an average of 0.5% energy savings across verticals driven by software

- Savings for users in the top 80% averaged double the average savings for the entire SME population
Achieve up to 3% energy savings in select verticals

- 25% of participants reduced energy use 1% or more, some verticals saw savings up to 3%
- 25% of participants reduced energy use by more than 1%
- Select verticals showed impressive average savings of around 3%

Some verticals with around 3% savings:

- Medical offices
- Professional services offices (i.e., law offices and realty)
Leverage engagement for 14% increase in satisfaction with electricity service cost

Customer Engagement

Utility customer survey scores were 14%* higher for program participants when compared to non-participants.

*result is statistically significant
Optimize marketing spend by increasing awareness of other utility programs

Operational Effectiveness

Utility EIS SME users are **9%* more likely** than non-participants to be aware of their utility’s energy efficiency program offerings—reducing marketing costs.

*result is statistically significant at 90% conf. level
Increase utility program effectiveness with 45% higher participation

Operational Effectiveness

Utility EIS SME users are *45% more likely* than non-participants to participate in their utility’s energy efficiency program offerings—reducing the cost to enroll them in existing programs.

*result is statistically significant at 90% conf. level
There is a large body of research focused on energy feedback in the residential sector, but significantly less in the commercial sector. Studies in both sectors have focused on the effectiveness of feedback in terms of savings outcomes, while relatively little is known about how customers experience the interface itself. This presentation reports results from usability tests with small business-owners (and/or bill-payers), revealing where report recipients look on the report itself, what they read, which information is important to them, and whether and how they take action. The findings highlight distinct areas for improvement in BERs with implications for other commercial feedback applications. These areas include ways to reduce barriers to action and the need for benchmarking against similar businesses to match a high standard for what qualifies as a meaningful comparison group.