



**Enhancing Efficiency & Satisfaction
with Customer Self-Service**

Customer Portal Case Study

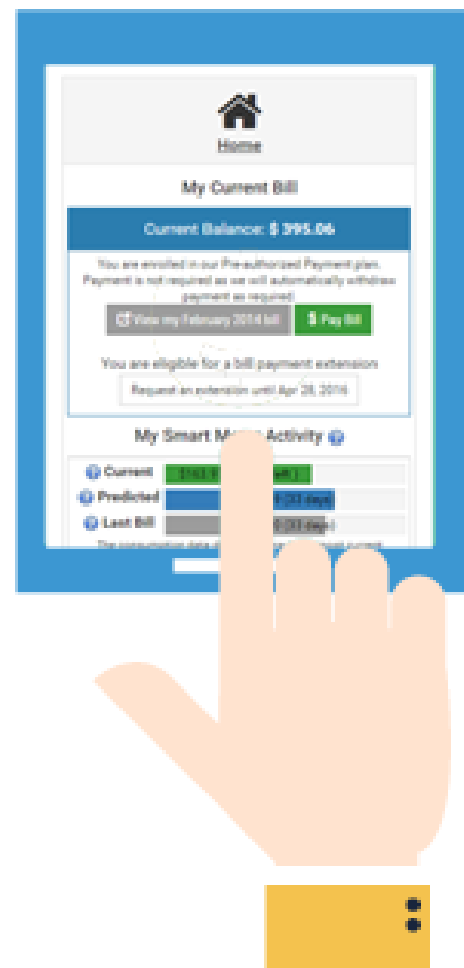
SilverBlaze

PowerStream is a community-based energy company jointly owned by the municipalities of Barrie, Markham and Vaughan in Ontario, Canada. Supplying over 375,000 residential and business customers with electricity, PowerStream is the fourth largest locally-owned electric utility provider in Ontario. PowerStream places a heavy focus on social responsibility, believing that in order to be a good utility provider, they must first be a good neighbour to the communities they service.

The Challenge: Finding the Right Customer-Focused Technology Solution

PowerStream's initial goal was to provide customers with convenient, innovative ways to connect with their utility provider—ultimately enhancing their satisfaction and overall experience. Their longterm plan was to introduce tools to minimize the strain placed on their customer service department by reducing time spent answering incoming customer calls. In addition, they wanted to implement web self-service portals that could reduce the amount of physical mail being sent, received, and processed.

Because PowerStream was among the first utility providers to implement these types of tools, their challenge was finding a solution that is easy-to-navigate, intuitive, and able to positively impact the customer experience across the board. In addition, PowerStream wanted a software partner who could provide expert support and responsiveness during critical situations.



The Solution: Empowering Customers with Self-Service

PowerStream was interested in implementing 24/7 self-service functionality throughout their website—providing customers with a portal to make inquiries, to view current and previous bills, review account history, and visually track consumption history. In researching their options, PowerStream reached out to SilverBlaze. They were particularly impressed by SilverBlaze’s Customer Portal Software—a robust web self-service solution that offered the drop-in-and-go applications PowerStream required.

In 2005, SilverBlaze began implementing self-service functionality on the PowerStream website. This project was a huge success, and in 2006 it won an IBM Beacon Award. Since this initial project, SilverBlaze and PowerStream have continued to work together on a diverse assortment of projects, including:

- Redesigning the PowerStream website on three occasions, most recently in February, 2016. This website was delivered on an aggressive timeline and is highlighted by a fully responsive and adaptive customer portal.
- Implementing Smart Meter (AMI) consumption information and Time-of-Use pricing. This project was completed in 2010, nearly two years before the mandated start date set by the Government of Ontario.
- Implementing of a paperless billing system in 2005. This system includes the option for customers to opt in or out, as well as automated configuration for all required notifications.

- Launching a mobilized version of the My Account feature, which allows customers to access and modify their accounts from any mobile device. Additionally, SilverBlaze was able to integrate PowerStream's Outage Management System (ESRI) into the mobile My Account interface, ensuring customers could access critical information from anywhere.
- Adding customer comparative analytics to the customer portal, allowing customers to compare their power usage with neighbors, as well as with their usage in previous years.
- Adding Green Button—a standardized format for AMI Smart Meter data downloading—to the PowerStream customer portal.
- Developing real-time data integration within the My Account portal for the newly implemented Customer Information System (Oracle CC&B) in 2015.
- Designing a responsive, adaptive website for PowerStream Energy Services Inc.—a subsidiary on PowerStream—in 2015.



The Results:

SilverBlaze has helped PowerStream establish a reputation as a leader in the world of utility providers, while also saving time, money, and effort. Since implementing their paperless billing program, PowerStream has seen a substantial reduction in costs associated with printing, sending, receiving, and processing physical bills.

Perhaps most importantly, PowerStream's partnership with SilverBlaze has positively impacted the customer experience with the advent of several self-help features and online account inquiry tools. In fact, customer feedback on PowerStream's newly redesigned, responsive website with improved customer usability has been extremely positive. PowerStream attributes this to SilverBlaze's understanding of the utility industry and their commitment to developing a forward-looking web environment suited to a wide range of customers.



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The fact that SilverBlaze Solutions has been PowerStream's vendor of choice for its customer portal and website services for more than 11 years is not by coincidence. It is a testament to the excellent customer service they provide that includes innovative approaches to website design and development while providing optimum customer support on a 24/7 basis, 365 days a year. The project SilverBlaze recently completed for us in building a customer-centric, responsive design website and customer portal in less than six months is just one example of their outstanding work.



Eric Fagen
VP Corporate Communications, PowerStream

See the SilverBlaze Customer Portal in Action for Yourself

Hearing how the SilverBlaze Customer Portal has benefited other utility providers is helpful, but discovering for yourself how it can help your utility succeed is something you have to see to believe! That's why we'd like to invite you to experience a live demo of the SilverBlaze Customer Portal. When you schedule your free demo with one of our product experts, you'll learn the answers to a wide assortment of questions, including:

- How will the SilverBlaze Customer Portal work with my utility?
- What do web self-service portals look like?
- How extensive are the available customization features?
- How will my utility benefit from the Customer Portal's features?
- Will the Customer Portal be easy for my employees to manage?
- How easily will the SilverBlaze Customer Portal integrate with the systems I already have in place?
- And more!



Schedule your live SilverBlaze Customer Portal demo today!