

Sycurio.

**Delivering frictionless
customer experience
and support during the
cost-of-living crisis.**



As UK consumers struggle with the cost-of-living crisis, utility firms will need to work smarter to support customers in crisis – and deal with growing operational pressures.

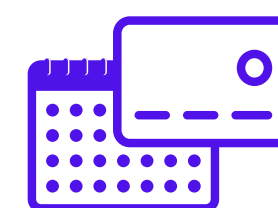
UK utility companies and their customers are facing a unique and unprecedented set of circumstances that are creating significant challenges for everyone.

Still reeling from the impact of a global pandemic that took a massive toll on people's physical, mental and financial health, UK consumers are now **struggling to cope with a spiralling cost-of-living crisis** coupled with the fear of a potential recession on the horizon.



The resulting cost crunch is driving a rapid shift in consumer behaviours.

There will be far reaching operational repercussions for utilities firms



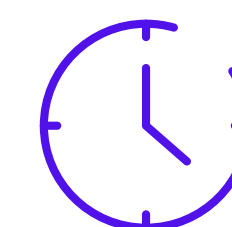
1.7million*

consumers are set to – or already have – **cancelled their direct debit** energy payments



Customer anxiety

is driving up **contact centre call volumes** as customers seek out support and help with spiralling utility bills



Stressed customers

already expect short waiting times and a quick resolution to their queries across all communication channels – and are frustrated if these expectations are dashed



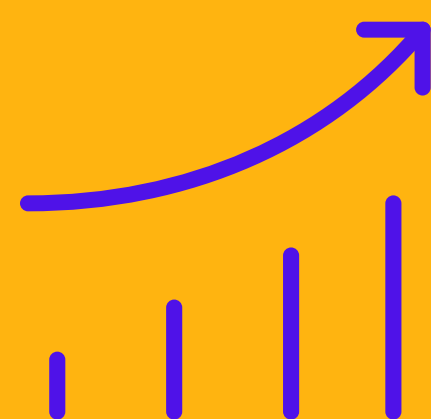
Assisted channels

are becoming even more important as customers feel anxious and reach out to seek certainty

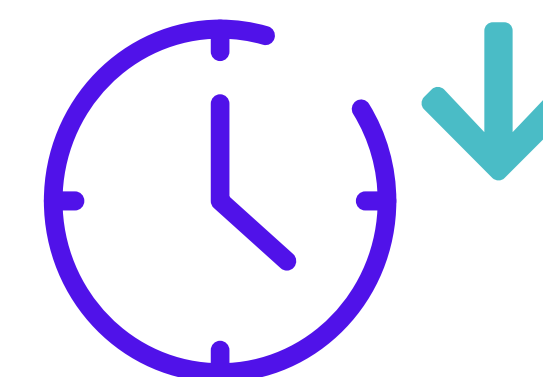
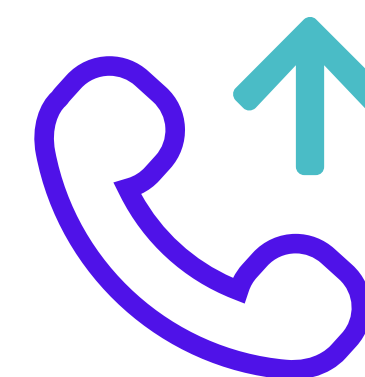
*Source: www.energylivenews.com/2022/08/23/nearly-1-7m-set-to-cancel-their-direct-debit-energy-payments

With calls to contact centres and helplines soaring, utility firms need to start scaling up their customer service functions and focus on **reducing call and engagement wait times** in order to support customers in their time of need – and comply with the service quality performance goals set by Ofgem.

With all eyes fixed on the role the contact centre plays in supporting customers, the utilities sector needs to prepare for a large and prolonged spike in inbound engagement in every channel. Which means delivering empathetic and personalised customer service at scale is now a top strategic priority.



Soaring call volumes **vs.** reducing call and engagement times



Those companies that step up and respond to customers in a timely and relevant manner will ultimately benefit from long term customer loyalty in the future. Those that don't, face not only being 'named and shamed' for poor CX performance. They'll also miss out on engagements that enable them to capture payments that are vital for maintaining revenue streams.



Delivering a great CX.

The cost-of-living crisis has turned the **spotlight on the way utility companies treat their customers.**

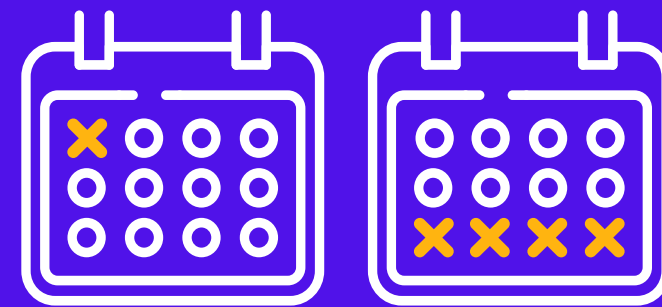
Yet at a time when people need excellent customer service the most, a recent survey by Citizens Advice reveals that customer service standards have already fallen to a new record low.

With consumers saying that call waiting times are rising – and that many can't even get hold of their supplier – utility firms will need to act fast or risk facing action by Ofgem.

With contact centres across the sector braced for an uptick in queries from worried customers, operational pressures and resourcing challenges mean utility providers will need to harness new digital technologies that enable agents to serve customers more efficiently and effectively – and make it easier for customers to undertake simple tasks like making payments.

As more and more people **ditch their direct debit payments**, utility companies will need to trigger proactive and personalised collection journeys that help prevent debt, improve customer satisfaction and increase long-term loyalty and retention.

In other words, making it **easier for customers to pay manually on a monthly or quarterly basis.**



Getting this right is an operational imperative. **As inbound traffic volumes to contact centres continue to soar**, average call handling times are set to grow. With demand on contact centre resources continuing to escalate throughout winter, taking practical steps to improve operations and respond faster to changing customer priorities will prove critical.

Optimising operational agility is a must have. Because contact centre agents are already at break point **dealing with a tsunami of customer support calls right now.**

Failing to respond fast and efficiently to customer demand will only generate a further surge of calls into the contact centre as frustrated and stressed customers find they are unable to undertake basic tasks – like making a payment – in other channels.



How Sycurio can help.

Sycurio's industry-leading PCI DSS compliant and secure payment solutions enable you to build experience-driven seamless customer journeys in every channel.



Sycurio.Voice

Powering the delivery of exceptional customer transaction experiences faster; making it easier and quicker to take payments over the phone in a more streamlined and secure manner.



Sycurio.Digital

Unleash seamless and secure payment flows to customers over a variety of digital channels including SMS, agent chat, chatbots & voicebots, e&m-commerce, QR codes, native apps, social media and more!



Let's take a look at four ways Sycurio can help optimise the performance of the contact centre. Enabling utility firms to automate processes, manage customers proactively and positively in the most agile way possible.



Helping customers to help themselves.

When times are tough, it makes sense to pre-emptively push out digital journeys to customers that will preserve capacity and improve operational KPIs.

Digital self-service payment options instantly extend customer service hours **24/7/365** and can transform your collections operations. Minimising the number of customers that need to call in and speak to agents when they're ready to make a payment.

Digital payments can automate payment collection and help handle the **spike of both inbound and outbound payment calls that will occur when direct debits are cancelled** – without the need to hire more headcount.

Sycurio.Digital

Sycurio.Digital makes it possible to generate and deliver **frictionless payment links** in any channel – enabling the delivery of proactive messaging options like payment reminders and alerts that enhance a customer's bill-to-payment journey.

Embed the **secure payment** links in everything from e-mails and SMS messages to social media messaging, agent chats and more. Leaving customers free to interact, agree an amount and make a payment in their channel of choice promptly.



Enable frictionless payments



Automate seamless payments in chatbots and voicebots.

Today's chatbots are capable of handling complex interactions involving secure payment and personal data transactions.

Sycurio.Digital's API based digital payment link tools enable the creation of secure payment links that can be embedded into your agent chat and chatbot platforms.



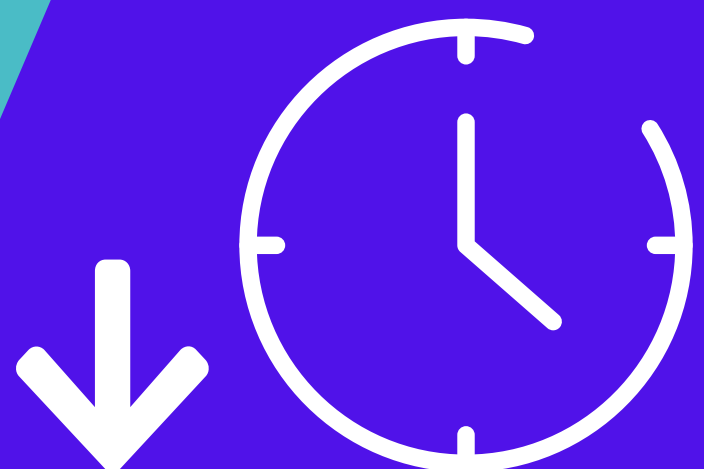
Automating these types of transaction processes will help **reduce the number of payment-related calls** that live contact centre agents need to deal with – leaving them free to focus on more complex customer issues and needs.

Plus, customers are able to transact fast and securely with no delays or unnecessary waiting on the phone.

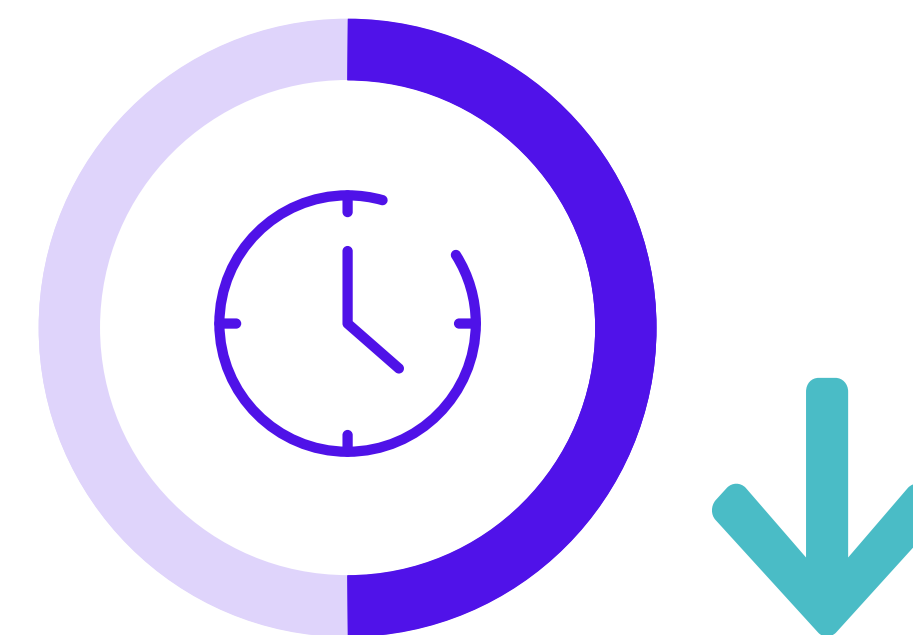
Enhance AHT and FCR rates.

When it comes to taking payments over the phone, **Sycurio.Voice enables contact centres to implement an easy agent-friendly payment process into CRM call flows.** Since agents are unable to hear or see any payment data – customers use their telephone keypads to enter their payment card data – there's no need for a clean room or complex pause-and-resume technologies.

Plus, agents can stay in communication at all times with customers, guiding them through the payment process.



Reduce AHT by up to **30 seconds.**



Our patented solutions have been proven to reduce average call handling times (AHT) by up to **30 seconds** and improve first-time resolution (FTR).

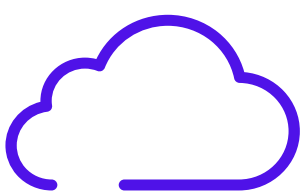


With **Sycurio.Voice** you don't need to redirect customers to a dedicated payments team, all your agents, including remote/home workers can take secure payments.

Flex your contact centre **manpower.**



Our solutions help organisations to enhance their operational resilience, using **work-from-home agents** or outsourcers to boost contact centre resources during periods of peak demand.



Our **secure cloud-based solutions** ensure remote teams are able to utilise the same processes and systems as office-based personnel and since no card data ever enters their home environment, all payment security risks are removed.



With Sycurio, you're free **to spin up personnel** – including agency staff – the moment you need them.



Rising to the CX challenge.

UK utility companies need to make sure they are investing in the right technology to improve the efficiency of **contact centre** operations and boost the capabilities of agents, particularly when it comes to delivering the essential support and the **best CX that customers need right now.**

With Sycurio, contact centres are able to:



Reduce average call handling times – using Sycurio.Voice, AHT reductions range from 7-30 seconds



Make every customer interaction timely, relevant and productive for all



Offer more self-help options to customers



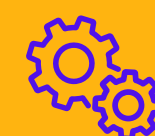
Preserve contact centre capacity and improve operational performance



Transform their payment collections operations



Extend customer service 24/7/365



Flex workforce resources as needed

For more information.

or to book a demo contact

/ +44 (0)845 543 0822

/ emeasales@sycurio.com

Sycurio.