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CUSTOMER STORY

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# BATTLING A CUSTOMER EROSION CRISIS

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Thunderhead and the energy supplier

[thunderhead.com](https://thunderhead.com)

*Intent-driven customer journeys*



# IN AN ERA OF EVER-EASIER SWITCHING, SUPPLIERS ACROSS THE ENERGY SECTOR HAVE A HUGE ISSUE IN THE BATTLE TO KEEP CUSTOMERS AND BUILD LOYALTY.

*Up until now, choosing an energy supplier has mostly been about price, making it easy for consumers to be seduced by a better offer from another supplier. What if things were different? What if we focused on forming lasting relationships that are based on customer engagement, and not simply saving a few pounds?*

This was the exact problem facing one of the biggest suppliers in Europe. With millions of customers and billions in revenue, their business was becoming unwieldy. It was too complex, with countless retail products, dozens of touchpoints and not enough understanding of their customer base.

And, as with many large organizations, parts of the business had developed separately creating silos and causing unfortunate inefficiencies. Their gas and electricity divisions didn't share valuable customer insight, leading them to lack a more detailed understanding of their customers and generate opportunities for cross and up-sell.

To further compound the challenges, their operations were designed to benefit the business itself, rather than make life easier for the customer. That led to poor engagement and sagging satisfaction, with their customer base bombarded by irrelevant, confusing communications that wasted their time.

Things were getting serious, the company was suffering a very real customer erosion crisis – losing a significant percentage of their business via aggregator sites and to new entrants, who were offering something fresh and exciting. The cost of acquiring new customers was also soaring, meaning retention and loyalty of their existing base had to become a business-wide strategic priority.

## *Time for lightning in a bottle*

A radical change was needed to address the crisis head on. It was time to stop looking inward and start listening to their customers to understand their true intent as they interacted with their energy supplier.

That's where the ONE **Engagement** Hub came in. They rolled out ONE in phases across each of the company's brands, giving them the ability to understand the customer and reach them on their journey. The platform then allowed them to take action, building a much more relevant and engaging experience.

### *Why were customers leaving?*

*Five failings that led to a customer retention crisis.*

#### *A brand first approach*

What was operationally easier for the company wasn't great for the customer.

#### *Organizational silos*

Different parts of the business simply weren't communicating.

#### *Operational inefficiencies*

Cross-selling and upselling opportunities were being missed.

#### *Uncoordinated customer experiences*

Bombarded with irrelevant communications the business wasn't showing they understood their customers.

#### *Spiralling cost-to-serve*

Badly informed and confused customers were making expensive customer service calls as they couldn't find the answer via self-service channels.

### *So how did ONE do it?*

The platform listened across six channels to capture and rapidly build a true view of each and every journey. ONE was used to understand in-the-moment context and enable the business to take the right action at the right time, no matter the channel.

ONE uncovered challenges that were preventing customers achieving their goals and also highlighted opportunities for the business to step in and provide assistance. With this in place, transforming their business to be customer centric was becoming a reality.

### *Delivering the power to create change*

Working with Thunderhead, the company focused on key areas to improve customer engagement. ONE provided a huge amount of insight, bringing journeys, customer behaviour and intent into sharp focus.

#### *Prompting personalization*

With this complete customer view, FAQ prompts were able to be personalized to become much more useful to individuals. The company's website was able to be tailored based on the individual customer circumstances, preferences and energy consumption.

#### *Reducing cost-to-serve*

ONE has been used to encourage self serve and reduce the overall cost to serve individual customers. Providing them with more relevant, targeted information has reduced expensive calls to the contact center and allowed online Smart Help to be used more easily. Contact center agents can see customers' historic and recent digital activities in real-time when a customer contacts them, reducing handling time and solving more problems in the very first call.

#### *Preventing bill shock*

By listening and understanding the customer's current and historical context and behaviour, ONE has helped to reduce bill shock enquiries. Previously, if a customer's usage had increased, they would only find out afterwards when they receive their next bill. ONE allowed the business to engage with customers well before they received any bill shock helping to mitigate the urge to switch suppliers, and ultimately build trust.

### *Why ONE?*

ONE was selected for its speed and simplicity to deploy, and because it works across existing systems including CRM, CMS, analytics and more. This allowed them to adopt a single reporting method to export and share insight across the entire business, whether they were a customer of gas, electricity or both.

The change has been significant. The ongoing data and insight ONE is providing is giving the company the power to put the customer first, retain their market share and, most importantly, build lasting one-to-one relationships.

*“ONE allows us to understand our customers’ intent and gives us the ability to respond in the right way, reducing the desire to switch suppliers.”*

Chief Solutions Officer

### *About Thunderhead*

Thunderhead is leading the movement to transform customer engagement, enabling brands for the first time to understand each customer’s *true intent* and orchestrate personalized journeys for millions of customers across billions of touchpoints, seamlessly and in real-time.

With Thunderhead’s ONE Engagement Hub it’s now possible for brands to deliver exceptional engagement for every customer across every journey, driving topline growth, reducing cost-to-serve, increasing customer happiness and building customer lifetime value.

A recognised global leader in the customer engagement market, Thunderhead is headquartered in London and has its development HQ in Boston.

*Thunderhead. Customer Engagement just got personal.*



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