J.D. POWER

Press Release

Electric Utilities Set New Benchmark for Business Customer Satisfaction, J.D. Power Finds

Industry-Wide Focus on Improved, Multi-Channel Communications Drives Highest-Ever Satisfaction Scores

COSTA MESA, Calif.: 13 Dec. 2017 — Electric utility providers have found the ideal combination in customer communications, ramping up engagement efforts through a multi-channel mix of phone, website, mobile, and even face-to-face visits, driving record high levels of satisfaction among business customers, according to the J.D. Power 2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study℠, released today.

"Electric utilities are rapidly upping the ante on customer communications, setting an example for other service industries by demonstrating that it is possible to dramatically improve customer satisfaction by actively engaging across a number of channels," said **John Hazen, Director of Utility Practice at J.D. Power**. "While there is no one-size-fits-all formula for success, electric utility leaders are finding that a steady combination of proactive outreach through a mix of digital, mobile, community events, and dedicated account representative touch points can drive a strong positive perception of their brands."

Following are some key findings of the study:

- **Record high customer satisfaction scores:** Overall customer satisfaction among electric utility business customers improves for the fifth consecutive year to a record high of 765 (on a 1,000 point scale), a 10 point increase over last year's results. Satisfaction improved in each of the six factors, with the largest year-over-year increases in billing & payment (+13), communications (+13).

- **Customer satisfaction improving industry-wide:** The top 5 brands in the study all earn overall customer satisfaction scores in the 800s, compared to only one brand in the previous year results. Moreover, the gap between the top performer and bottom performer in the study has narrowed to just 111 points, down from 118 last year.

- **Fewer power outages and more proactive alerts:** The average number of brief power outage (five minutes or less) falls from 1.9 in calendar year 2016 to 1.7 this year. The average number of lengthy outages (longer than five minutes) is unchanged at 1.2. Utilities are doing a better job of communicating planned outages with 82% of customers being notified ahead of time, versus 78% last year.

- **More customers interacting with utilities via mobile device:** Business customers are increasingly relying on mobile devices to access their electric utility's website, with 26% of respondents indicating that they accessed the utility via mobile in 2017, up from 18% the previous year.

- **Dedicated account representatives play a key role in satisfaction equation:** The average overall satisfaction score for business customers who have a dedicated account representative is 824, 9 points higher than 2016 (815) and 85 points higher than those without a dedicated account representative (739).

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Study Rankings

Within each of the four geographic regions included in the study, utility providers are classified into one of two segments: large (serving 85,000 or more business customers) and midsize (serving 40,000-84,999 business customers).

Among the eight providers that rank highest in their respective regions in this study, none were ranked highest in the previous study.

The following utilities rank highest in business customer satisfaction in their respective regions:

- East Large: **BGE**
- East Midsize: **Duquesne Light**
- Midwest Large: **DTE Energy**
- Midwest Midsize: **WPS**
- South Large: **Alabama Power**
- South Midsize: **Entergy Mississippi**
- West Large: **Portland General Electric**
- West Midsize: **SMUD**

The 2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study, now in its 19th year, measures satisfaction among business customers of 87 targeted U.S. electric utilities, each of which serves more than 40,000 business customers. In aggregate, these utilities provide electricity to more than 12 million customers. Overall satisfaction is examined across six factors (listed in order of importance): power quality and reliability; corporate citizenship; price; billing and payment; communications; and customer service. Satisfaction is calculated on a 1,000-point scale.

The study is based on responses from more 19,000 online interviews with business customers who spend at least $200 a month on electricity. The study was fielded from February through June 2017 and July through October 2017.

See the online press release at http://www.jdpower.com/pr-id/2017225.

J.D. Power is a global leader in consumer insights, advisory services and data and analytics. These capabilities enable J.D. Power to help its clients drive customer satisfaction, growth and profitability. Established in 1968, J.D. Power is headquartered in Costa Mesa, Calif., and has offices serving North/South America, Asia Pacific and Europe. J.D. Power is a portfolio company of XIO Group, a global alternative investments and private equity firm headquartered in London, and is led by its four founders: Athene Li, Joseph Pacini, Murphy Qiao and Carsten Geyer.

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About J.D. Power and Advertising/Promotional Rules: http://www.jdpower.com/resource/us-electric-utility-business-customer-satisfaction-study.

# # #

Note: Eight charts follow

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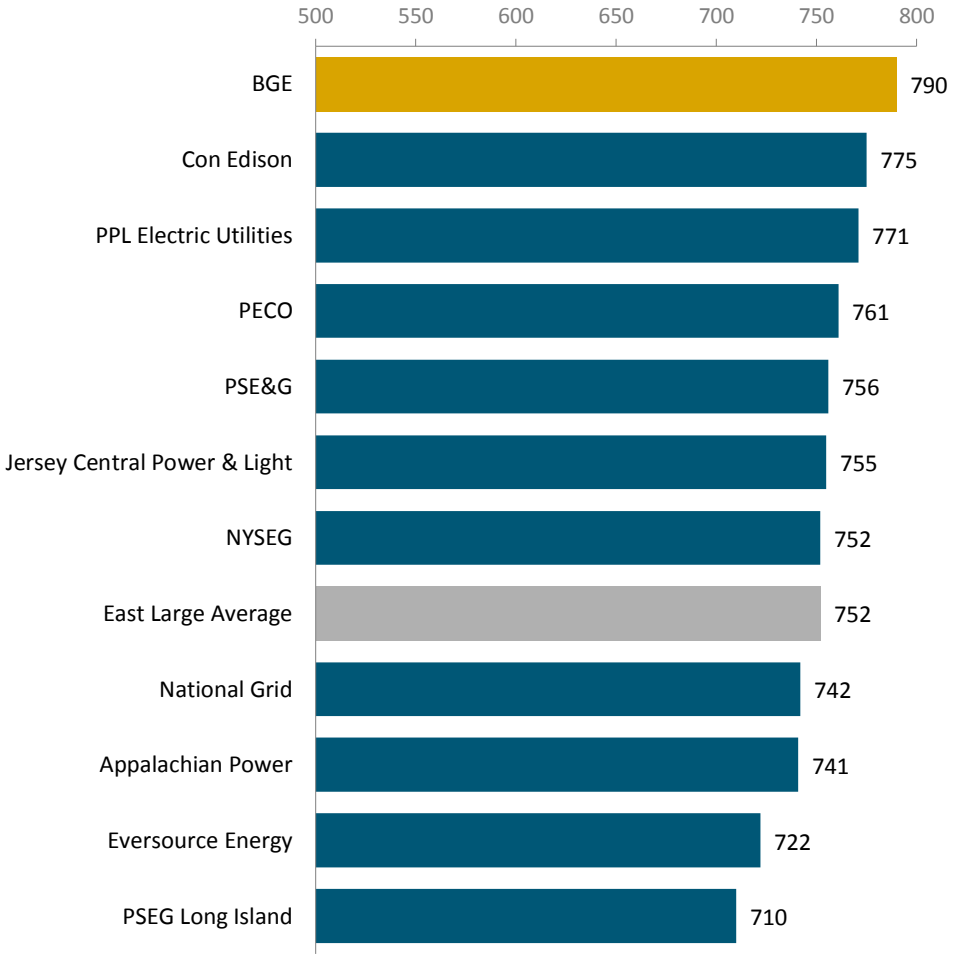
J.D. Power
2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study[SM]

East Region: Large Segment
Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Source: J.D. Power 2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study[SM]

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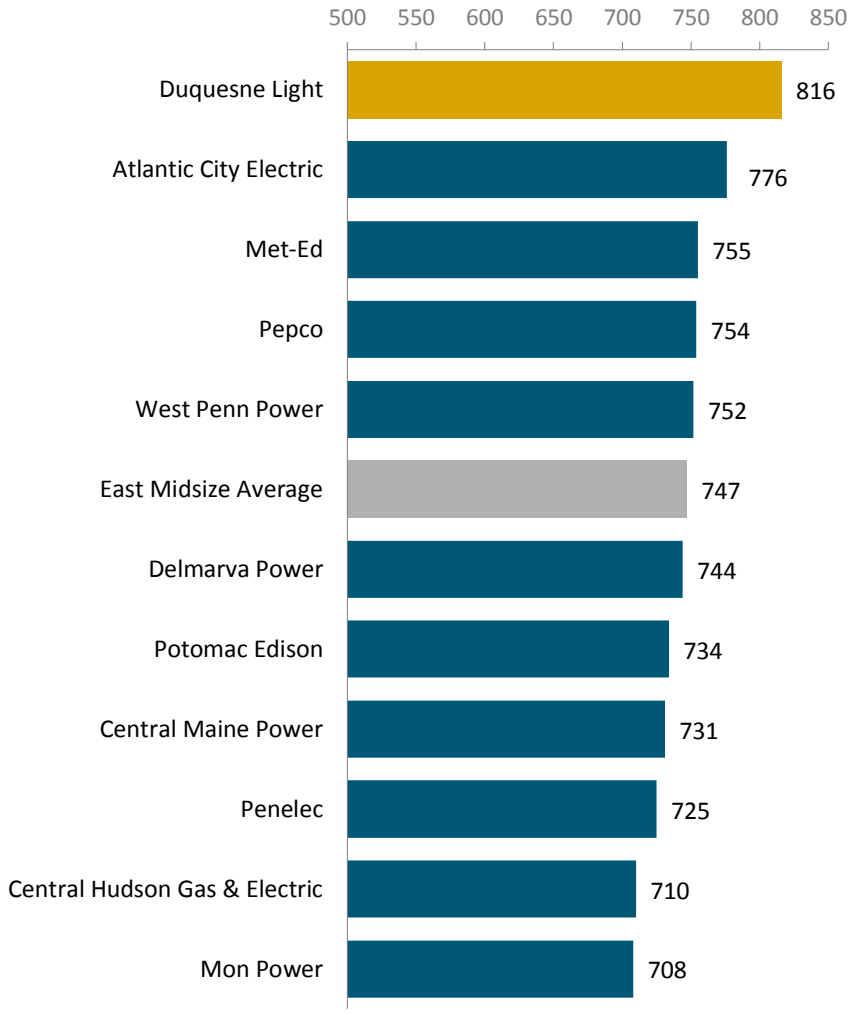
East Region: Midsize Segment
Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Source: J.D. Power 2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study[SM]

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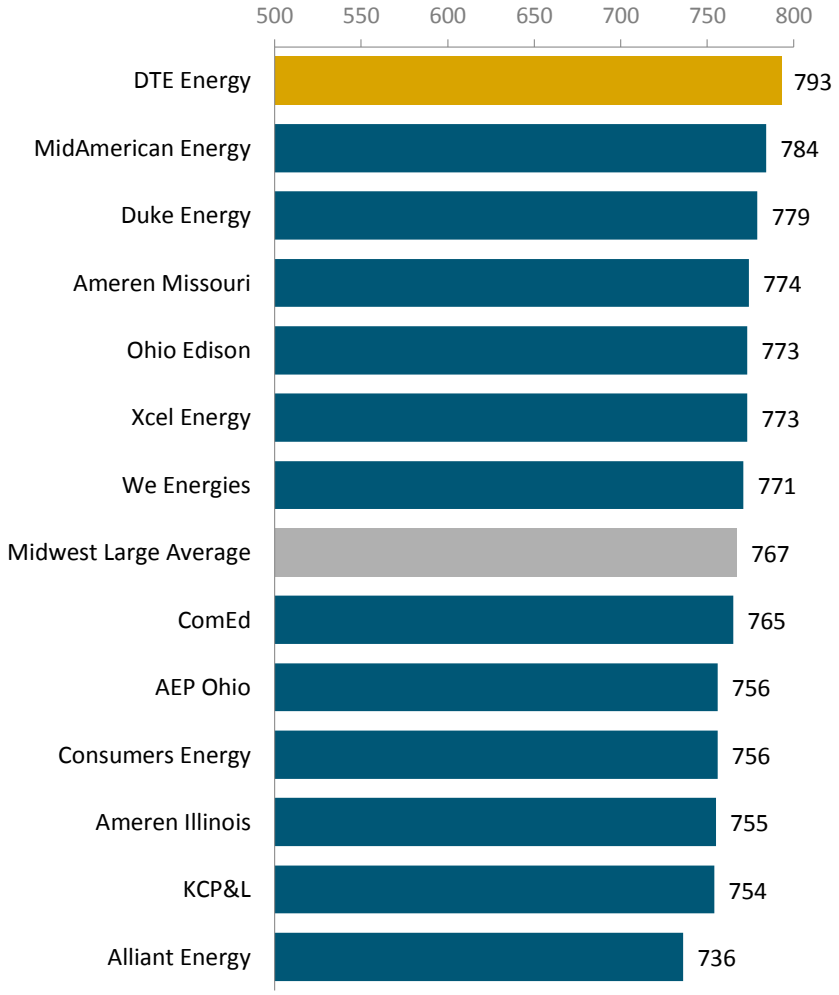
J.D. Power
2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study[SM]

Midwest Region: Large Segment
Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Source: J.D. Power 2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study[SM]

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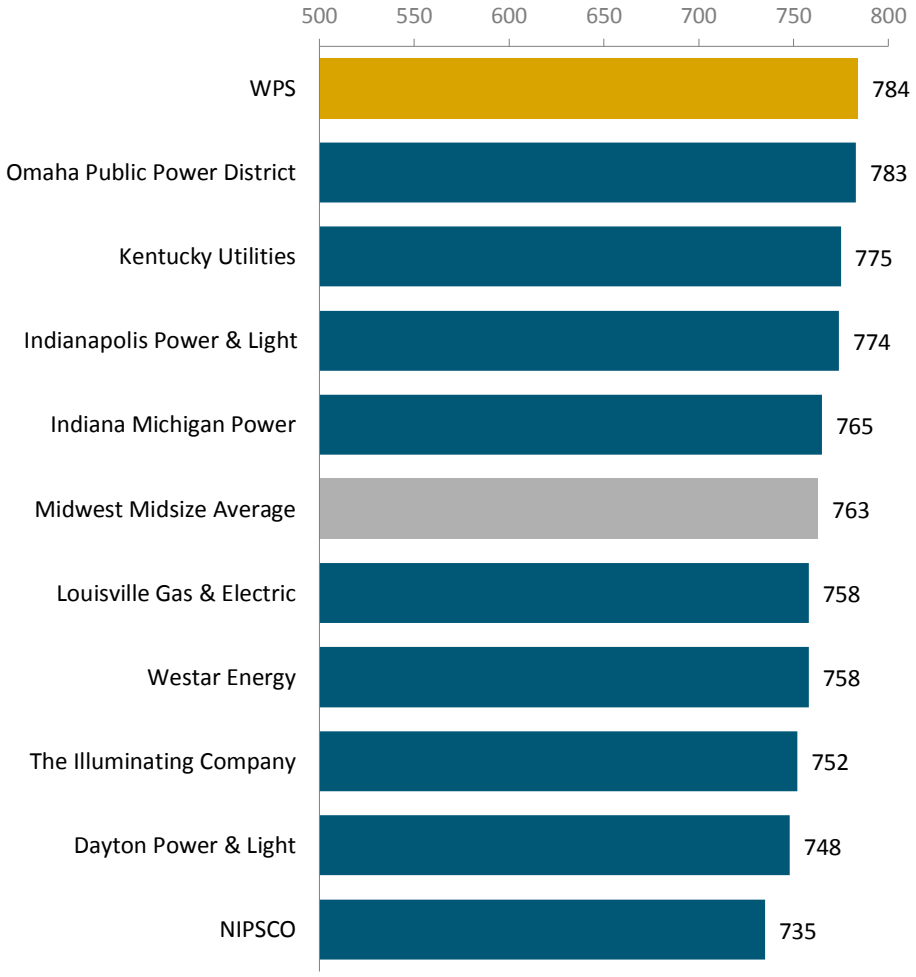
J.D. Power
2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study[SM]

Midwest Region: Midsize Segment
Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Source: J.D. Power 2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study[SM]

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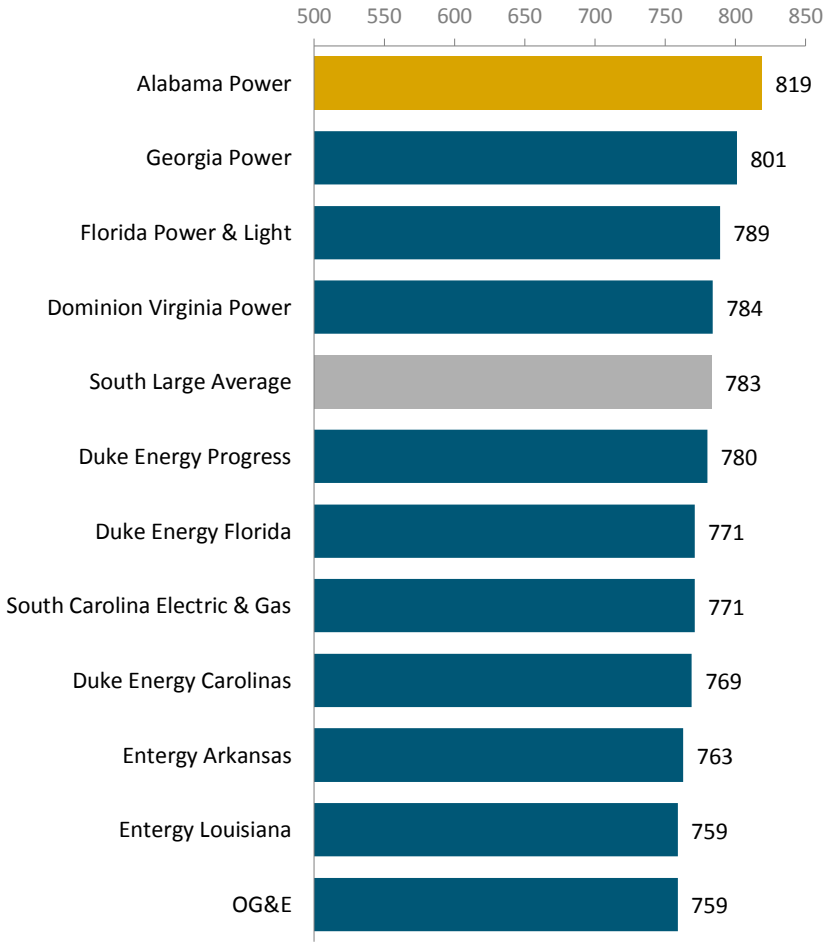
J.D. Power
2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study℠

South Region: Large Segment
Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Source: J.D. Power 2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study℠

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J.D. Power
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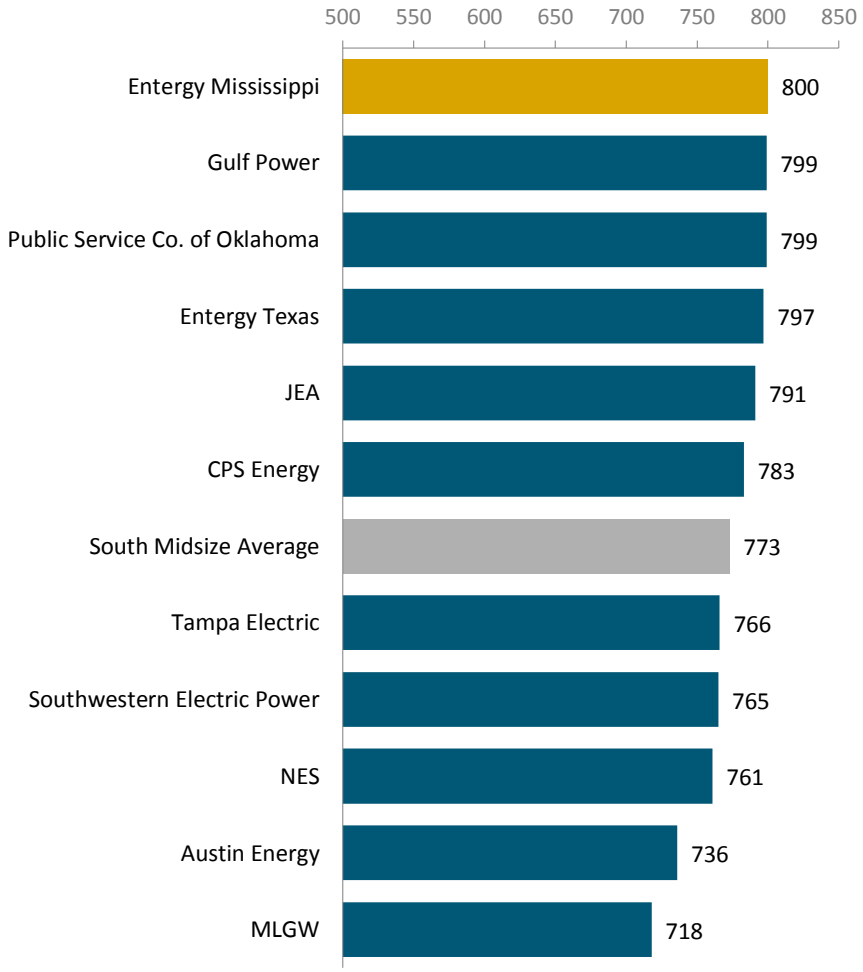
South Region: Midsize Segment
Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Note: Included in the study, but not ranked due to insufficient sample size is Xcel Energy-South.

Source: J.D. Power 2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study℠

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J.D. Power
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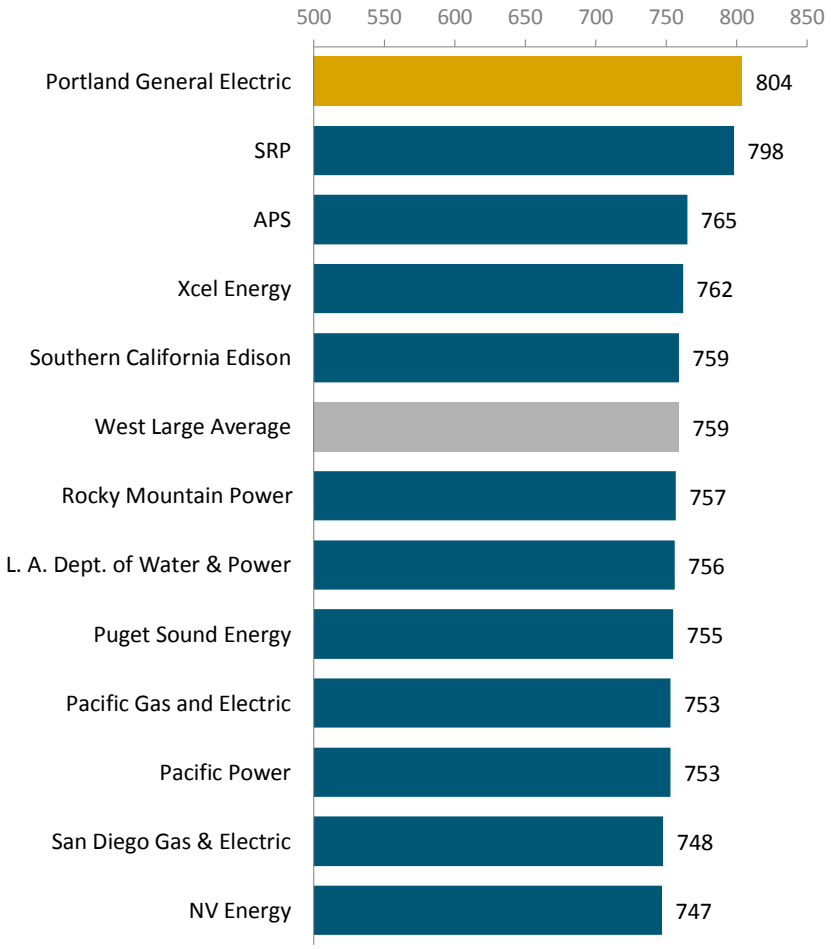
West Region: Large Segment
Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Source: J.D. Power 2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study℠

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J.D. Power
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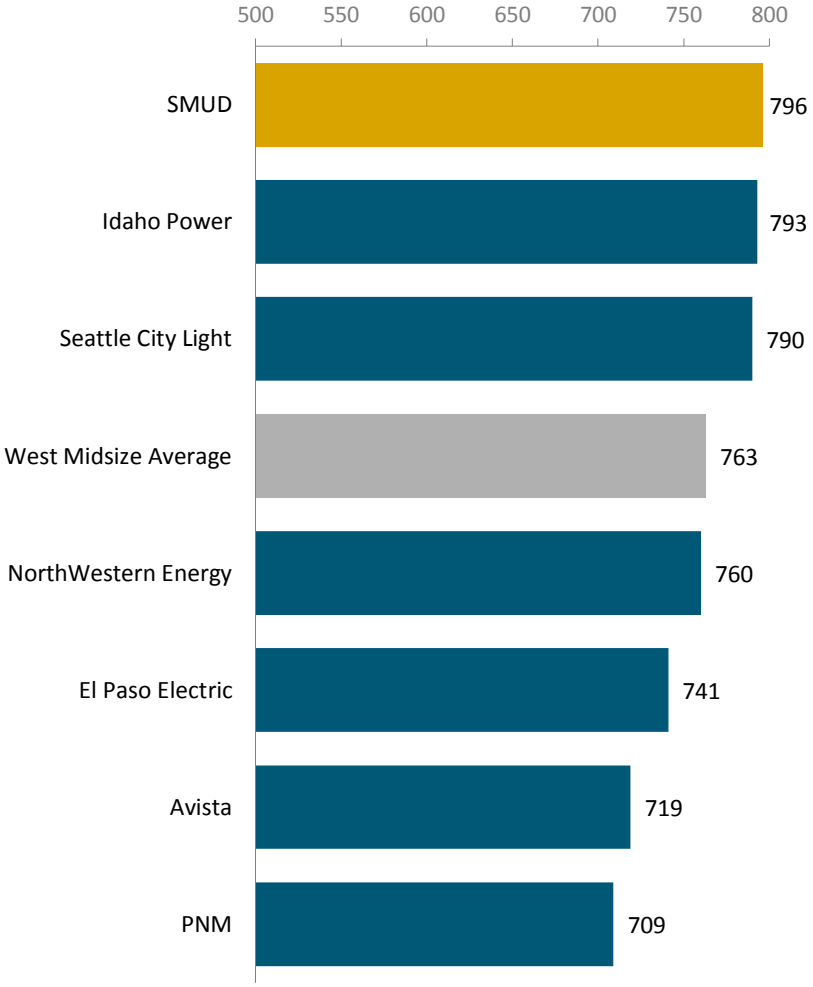
West Region: Midsize Segment
Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Source: J.D. Power 2017 Electric Utility Business Customer Satisfaction Study[SM]

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