

# DATA ANALYTICS, A UTILITY'S BEST FRIEND

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While Marilyn Monroe was focused on diamonds sixty years ago, the most coveted asset for utilities of the future has to be data. These days, it's rare to find a business in any industry or of any size that isn't focusing on what data analytics and insights can do for them; utilities are no exception. While utilities are not new to the data sphere, the volume of data that modern, digital utilities are forced to deal with along with the increasing siloed state of information is making deriving actionable insights harder than ever for utility managers. A West Monroe survey in 2018 found that only 32% of utility respondents strongly agree their organization is highly adept at leveraging data for insights, predictive outcomes, and business growth, showing that our industry has a long way to go.

Utilities have a wealth of information at their fingertips: consumption data, customer contact information, customer bills, customer activities, meter flags and alarms, grid performance metrics, and many other data points that impact their operations and business. Unfortunately, the various data systems that most utilities possess often don't share information, creating data silos that leave various departments without a holistic view of operations or customer behavior. Integrating these disparate data systems is a critical first step toward surfacing actionable data insights. VertexOne supports nearly 200 utilities across the country with integration-as-a-service to help them break down these siloes. By leveraging standardized integration protocols, VertexOne powers bi-directional data exchanges between the systems.

Once the data has been integrated, utility managers should expect an improved experience accessing data insights to inform data-based decisions in an efficient manner. Luckily, aggregated data analytics solutions now surface previously invisible insights into customer behavior, usage, and system operations. This accessibility helps utility managers to avoid spending numerous hours combing through spreadsheets trying to identify trends and possible insights.

For example, water leaks can be detected through the laborious analysis of customer water usage data and identifying irregular use patterns. Many utilities create internal processes for doing this analysis and alerting customers to possible leaks. While these processes provide an opportunity for utility staff to engage their customers, the methods are often manual, time-intensive, and challenging to track and manage. Automated leak detection, alerting and resolution, available through VertexOne's WaterSmart platform, has saved utility staff approximately 10 hours per week! Utilities set the leak detection parameters that suit their needs for both AMI and non-AMI customers and are then off to the races with real-time visibility into suspected customer leaks. Without additional effort, customers receive automated alerts directly via their preferred form of communication (email, SMS text, or automated voice calls).



The use cases for data analytics are wide-ranging and proliferating. Now more than ever, utilities need the capabilities that data analytics platforms offer. This may be purely for optimizing operational efficiency; it may be to retain customers by providing the next level of customer service and customer experience; or, for utilities in deregulated areas, it may be the key to staying competitive. To learn more visit us at <https://www.vertexone.net/>

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Ali works closely with the marketing, product, and bid management teams at VertexOne to advocate for its SaaS solutions as a mechanism to address resource affordability concerns and evolving customer expectations. She oversees all of the company's marketing activities and provides support to the entire team as they look to help utilities improve operational efficiency, increase customer satisfaction, and deliver reliable implementations. Ali completed the Water Education Foundation's Water Leaders program in 2017. Prior to joining the team, Ali worked with the Town of Danville city planning department to manage zoning code enforcement. Ali received a B.S. in Environmental Policy Analysis and Planning with a focus on Advanced Policy Analysis from the University of California, Davis.

