

Case Study:

CPS Energy Savers

CPS Energy Savers, a program of San Antonio municipal utility CPS Energy, deployed EnergySavvy Optix Engage to increase customer throughput and energy savings. Engage enables homeowners to complete an online energy audit to understand their home's energy profile and self-qualify for the program. As a result, **CPS Energy nearly tripled the number of completed retrofits while reducing the cost to acquire a retrofit by more than 6 times compared with an in-home audit alone.**



Customer Acquisition: Online vs. In-home

CPS Energy offered their customers the choice of using EnergySavvy's online audit or a subsidized in-home audit¹. Customers got a \$5 bill credit for completing the EnergySavvy audit. For the in-home audit, the customer paid \$25 and CPS Energy subsidized the remaining at approximately \$300 per in-home audit.

Reaching More Customers

CPS Energy found that 85 percent of all participating customers opted for the online audit as their first step for interacting with CPS Energy's energy efficiency programs vs. opting for the in-home audit. This allowed CPS Energy to reach a much greater portion of their customer base than an in-home audit program alone. After all, an in-home audit is a higher burden for the customer: a cost of \$25 and the need to be at home with a contractor for at least 2-4 hours.

More Cost Effective

Seventy-three percent of the 1,727 customers who completed a deep measure(s) retrofit during the period from June 2011 – March 2013 chose to start with the EnergySavvy online audit. Those customers represented a 10 percent conversion rate from online audit to completed retrofit.

While the retrofit conversion rate for customers who chose the in-home audit was 21 percent², a smaller number of homeowners chose this option. CPS Energy spent a total of \$688,000, or \$300 subsidy on average per in-home audit completed.

¹ CPS Energy did not require an in-home audit prior to receiving a retrofit.

² Hypothesis: conversion-to-retrofit rate was higher for in-home audits because a customer who would choose to pay \$25 and spend a half-day on an in-home audit has a deeper commitment to a retrofit, and thus greater likelihood of completion.



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One of the things we wanted to do was provide a self-assessment for our customers. Optix Engage asked all of the questions that we needed. The presentation was so easy, perfect for our customers. It's helped us reach so many more retrofits because of the sheer number of customers coming through.”

- Carla De La Chapa, CPS Energy

Figure 1.

Online audit was 6 times more cost effective and resulted in higher average energy savings per customer:

Type of Audit	# of Audits	Conversion Rate (Audit to Retrofit)	Retrofits Completed (% of Total)	Cost to acquire a Retrofit	Average Energy Savings Achieved per Customer
Online audit	12,631	10%	1,253 (73%)	\$238	12.4%
In-home audit	2,294	21%	474 (27%)	\$1,452	7.9%

Conclusion

In-home audits have a place among energy efficiency programs, particularly if safety testing is required at some point. But, the data shows in-home audits are not the best way to pre-screen and enroll customers. CPS Energy's customer acquisition cost per completed retrofit was \$238 per customer who opted for the online audit and \$1,452 per customer who opted for the in-home audit. Optix Engage enabled CPS Energy to reach more customers at a lower cost, almost tripling the number of completed retrofits while reducing the cost of customer acquisition by nearly 6X compared to the subsidized in-home audit method.

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