

RETAIL ENERGY –

Discovering Opportunities to Educate and Bust Industry Myths

ConneXion Research and Strategy conducted a survey in March of 2021 with a total of 109 nationwide participants. 56 were in a Restructured Market and 53 in a Utility-Controlled or Monopoly market. The purpose of this research was to understand what “fake news” are impacting the ability for restructured markets to grow and expand, what information customers want or need, and what REPs need to consider to properly educate customers about choice.



What customers understand vs what they don't understand

When it comes to understanding a “fixed price” and the “different term contracts”, respondents from a restructured market stated they understand these points, **98%** stated **somewhat to definitely yes**.

However, when it comes to understanding their bills, **only 2%** stated that they **understood all charges on the bill**. **38%** are still unsure of what exactly is the price per kilowatt hour charged; **32%** do not understand the utility charges; another **25%** either don't understand the average price paid per month, and/or the monthly service, if any.



Additional information customers want

The top things those in a restructured market want to know about their providers are – how much do they save compared to other providers (**50%**), how long their providers have been in business (**43%**), what are some energy saving tips (**39%**), what is the best plan for their households (**38%**), and do they offer renewable/environmentally-friendly plans (**34%**).

When it comes to sharing and educating their customers, **52%** of those in a restructured market believe their providers should share this information on their websites and **23%** are open to e-newsletters.



Retail Energy Choice - Restructured Market vs. Utility-Controlled Market.

76% of those in a restructured market answered **somewhat to definitely yes** in wanting to go back to a utility-controlled market. However, **81%** of those in a utility-controlled answered **somewhat to definitely yes** in wanting to be in a restructured market.



61% of those in a restructured market compared to **43%** in a utility-controlled market believe that enabling retail energy choice will cause detrimental harm to the reliability of the grid. Similarly, **63%** of those in a restructured market, compared to **40%** in a utility-controlled market believe retail energy choice results in higher prices overall.

The opportunity in a utility-controlled market

64% of those in a utility-controlled market believe energy prices are **somewhat to very high** with their utility companies.

58% believe a restructured market would give them better or more competitive pricing, **48%** believe it would provide better or improved processes (i.e., billing, customer service, etc.), **40%** believe it would provide more options on types of energy plans (i.e., renewable – wind, solar) and **38%** believe it would provide better or more investment in improving the infrastructure (i.e., grid, power lines, etc.).



Overall, there is work to be done in educating consumers in a restructured market and the sooner the industry can bust myths or fake news, the better they would be positioned when entering newly restructured markets who are more open to retail energy choice.