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PSE&G Unveils Interactive On-line Customer Site

Some 150 builders and developers got a preview of a new Internet service that Public Service Electric & Gas unveiled at the recent 3rd Annual Builders/Developers Conference, an online system which they can use to fill out documentation and obtain new installations of gas and electric or make changes.

Being rolled out June 18, Conversive will be available to customers on a 24/7 basis and provide developers with web pages, forms, graphics and data. The Internet system is designed to increase service, decrease response time and improve customer satisfaction.

Rob Rappaport, president and CEO of California-based Conversive, explains “The use of Conversive technologies will allow PSE&G customers the convenience of accessing Information, asking customer service questions, receiving answers, as well as submitting requests for new/added or change of gas/electric service at their leisure. The Conversive solution will allow PSE&G customers the ability to access the ‘Ask PSE&G’ Interface on a 24/7 basis from any computer/location having access to the Internet.”

PSE&G will be using two of Conversive’s Enterprise Class products – AnswerAgent and Assisted Response Agent. Answer Agent is an interactive application. The AnswerAgent’s concept and design is for the application to be a “virtual agent” thus truly interactive similar to the conversation a customer would have with a real agent. “We expect the product to be fully interactive by the end of June,” says Rappaport.

The Assisted Response Agent (ARA) provides the ability to escalate a question which the AnswerAgent cannot answer to a “live” CSR (customer service representative) and will be “interactive” (manned by a CSR during PSE&G business hours, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

PSE&G will be the first energy company to deploy Conversive’s groundbreaking solution. In a presentation at the Conference by Donna DeWitt, a Conversive representative, and David Saraceno, a PSE&G builder/developer relations consultant, a Power Point display showed the typical site which will give customers fast, reliable access to information they can use. Saraceno told the developers that “This new system is your system. It is designed for your needs.”

The Converse advanced platform acts as a natural language interface layer for all digital applications and provides users with coherent, flexible access to vital information.

Developers can key in what their needs are with respect to the number of units being built and their requirements – from air-conditioning to heating to street lighting. Developers will be able to key in, for example, the number of meters, the amount of energy need, all the loads that will be required and myriad of nuances to creating a residential, commercial or industrial property.

As Converse officials explain, the system uses Natural Language Processing (NLP) which is quite different from a search engine. In this system, PSE&G will be able to give customers a simple answer to the questions they choose. Not a list of answers, but one -best answer. In addition, customers get a confirmation number in an email back to them.