



# What does the future of the utility industry look like?

By Wayne Greenberg

December 11, 2019

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September 11, 2019

## What Does the Future of the Utility Industry Look Like?

Wayne Greenberg

As we approach the end of the year, I find myself reflecting back on our signature event: the [E Source Forum](#), which brought together more than 700 utility professionals for a week of education, innovation, networking, and fun in Denver. As the CEO of E Source, it's Utility customers care about climate change, and you should too.

In the first keynote session [Who Cares About Climate Change? Your Customers Do, and They Want You to Care Too](#), we welcomed Dr. Anthony Leiserowitz of the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication to the stage. Leiserowitz's presentation focused on In a postsession interview, Leiserowitz explained the diverse views Americans have about climate change. There are numerous audiences within the US and each views climate change from a different perspective, lumping people into groups of believers and nonbelievers.

What this means for utilities is that there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to climate change and clean-energy communication or implementation. He challenged utilities to empower their customers to feel like they're part of the solution and to contribute to the belief that they can make a difference.

Watch the full keynote session, which also features Alice Jackson, CEO of Xcel Energy Colorado, and the postsession interview by visiting the [Who Cares About Climate Change? Your Customers Do, and They Want You to Care Too](#) session page.

[Watch the recordings](#)

How Google and Microsoft view the utility industry

On the second day of the Forum, during the [From Poles and Wires to AI and VR](#) session, I welcomed Hannah Bascom, director of energy partnerships at Google, and Vikram Singh, head of utility partnerships at Microsoft, for a conversation about how these tech giants are changing the utility industry.

Singh spoke about the importance of technologies that enable utilities to achieve two specific goals: become more agile and flexible and become extremely customer-focused. Specific examples of this include technology that allows utilities to better leverage the data they have and use it to improve customer service. Bascom agreed about the importance of data but focused more on the importance of that data in context with the grid. "There's a ton of data flying around out there, and I think making sense of all that data is really challenging," said Bascom. "If we think about how we can use data to improve the grid, that's where I think there's a lot of opportunity."

During the rest of the session, we tackled additional topics such as the disintermediation of the smart home, the reputation of the utility industry, how utilities should work with tech companies, and the safety of the cloud. We also conducted individual interviews with each speaker.

[Watch the recordings](#)

Join us next year

The E Source staff might tell you that I sound like a broken record because I'm certain that every year we continue to outdo ourselves, and we again hosted the best E Source Forum in 2019. For every Forum, we do our best to go above and beyond to ensure that if you're an E Source member who wasn't able to attend or if you attended and want to see which sessions you missed, you can [download the presentations now](#). We also did a few new things this year: We conducted interviews with some of our speakers to dive deeper into their expertise and experiences, and we introduced a new feature called "Ask the Experts" where you can submit questions to our speakers and get answers directly from them.

I hope you'll join us next year for [2020 E Source Forum](#), September 22 to 25, in Denver, where we're sure to line up an equally impressive roster of speakers, topics, sessions, and workshops.

[About the author](#)

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CEO

Wayne Greenberg is a senior executive with over 35 years in business management, including two stints at E Source. In the 1990s, he piloted E Source to a position on the Inc. 500 List of fastest growing companies prior to the sale of the company in 1999. Since then, he has held senior executive positions at several companies, including the CEO of the E Source Forum.

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If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact [Sannie Sieper](#), Senior director of marketing.