

# This presentation premiered at WaterSmart Innovations

[watersmartinnovations.com](http://watersmartinnovations.com)





# Brief Agenda

Let's talk about...

- *why it's important*
- *how to frame your messaging*
- *what to communicate*
- *building customer relationships*
- *how to build communication channels*
- *reviewing and improving your communication*

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## Role of the Alliance for Water Efficiency and Utilities



### Responsible for prompt and transparent communication

- Rates
- Restrictions
- Schedules
- Alerts

Communication barriers (like language) can lead to isolation, misunderstandings, dissatisfaction and customer strife

## Role of the Alliance for Water Efficiency and Utilities

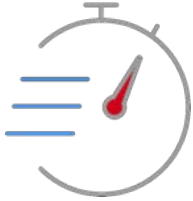


Utilities shouldn't be expected to be language subject matter experts for every language in their service area

Organizations and services exist to reduce language barriers between English-speaking staff and English-second-language customers

**AWE's goal is to support and champion these resources**

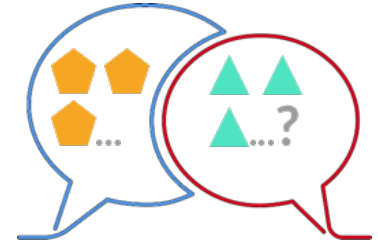
## Barriers to Communication



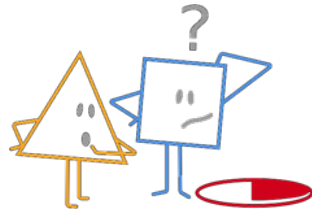
Speed



Cost



Language



Complexity



Delivery

## Additional reasons for change

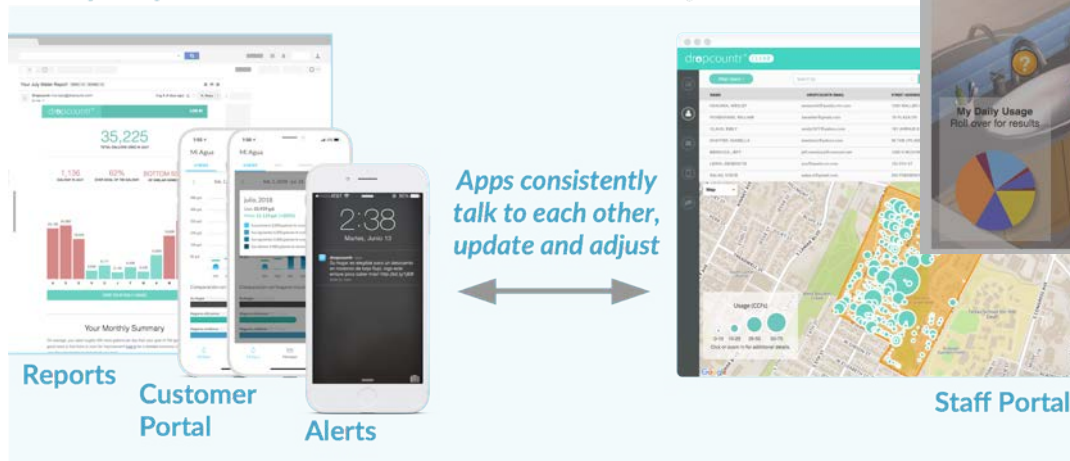
- Recurring utility and end-user request
- Framework for additional languages
- Realized we weren't supporting vast % of customers

# Using software to overcome barriers

## Many Inputs:



## Many Outputs:



### How much water do you use?

Using water in the bathroom

Click on one of the question marks to see if this is where your water is going. Click on the letter "I" to learn water saving tips.

Back

How much water do you use?

Do any of the toilets in your home leak or get stuck so that water continually flows until adjusted?

☐ yes  
☒ no  
☐ I don't know

Submit

My Daily Usage  
Roll over for results

Percent Complete  
Roll over for number of questions

Areas to Complete

How does my water usage compare

☒ Previous Usage  
☒ Current Usage  
☒ Neighborhood Average

(Short Report)  
 (Full Report)  
 (All Reports)

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

Message Line 1: 50-60 characters (upper/lower) Arial Sp...  
 Message Line 2: 50-60 characters (upper/lower) Arial Sp...  
 Message Line 3: 50-60 characters (upper/lower) Arial Sp...  
 Message Line 4: 50-60 characters (upper/lower) Arial Sp...  
 Message Line 5: 50-60 characters (upper/lower) Arial Sp...  
 Message Line 6: 50-60 characters (upper/lower) Arial Sp...  
 Message Line 7: 50-60 characters (upper/lower) Arial Sp...  
 Message Line 8: 50-60 characters (upper/lower) Arial Sp...  
 Message Line 9: 50-60 characters (upper/lower) Arial Sp...  
 Message Line 10: 50-60 characters (upper/lower) Arial Sp...

### YOUR MONTHLY STATEMENT

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 99999-999999  
 BILLING DATE: 02/13/2015  
 Amount Due Now: \$425.19

ACCOUNT NAME: JOHN Q. SAMPLE  
 SERVICE ADDRESS: 83 W. FIELDVIEW CIR.  
 RATE CLASS: RESIDENTIAL  
 CYCLE/ROUTE: 01-23 BILLING DATE: 01/13/2015

#### ACCOUNT SUMMARY

PREVIOUS BALANCE	\$300.54
PAYMENT - THANK YOU	\$0.00
ADJUSTMENTS	\$0.00
TOTAL CURRENT CHARGES	\$0.00
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE NOW	\$425.19

#### CURRENT CHARGE SUMMARY

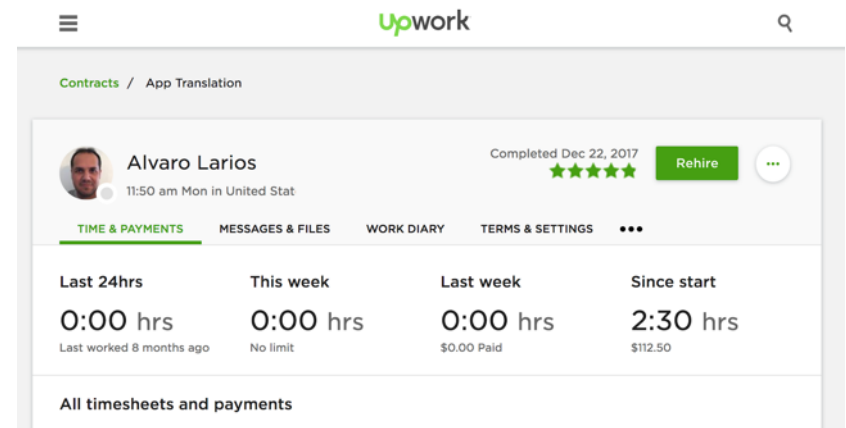
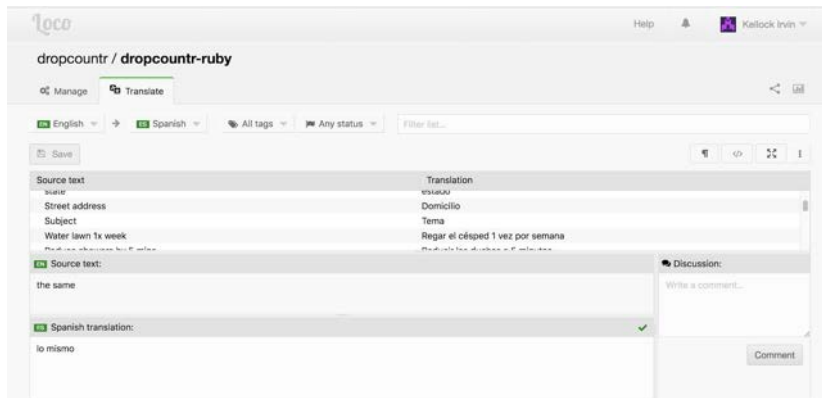
DESCRIPTION	USAGE	CHARGE
WATER SERVICE		
MINIMUM FIRST 2 HCF	2.00	\$4.77
USAGE 2.8 HCF	0.45	\$1.07
EXTRA LINE 4	0.00	\$0.00
EXTRA LINE 5	0.00	\$0.00
EXTRA LINE 6	0.00	\$0.00
EXTRA LINE 7	0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL WATER		\$10.54
SEWER SERVICE		
SEWER SERVICE CHARGE		\$14.20
USAGE PER HCF	2.45	\$7.11
EXTRA LINE 10	0.00	\$0.00
EXTRA LINE 11	0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL SEWER		\$22.33
GARAGE/RECYCLING SERVICE		
100 GAL RECYCLE TOTE	10/31/14-10/29/14	\$0.50
100 GAL RECYCLE TOTE	10/31/14-10/29/14	\$0.78
EXTRA LINE 14	0.00	\$0.00
EXTRA LINE 15	0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL GARAGE/RECYCLING		\$1.28
STORMWATER SERVICE		
STORMWATER CHARGE		\$0.12
EXTRA LINE 17	0.00	\$0.00
EXTRA LINE 18	0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL STORMWATER		\$0.12
TOTAL CURRENT CHARGES		\$34.27

Keep top portion for your records and return the bottom stub with your payment. Make check payable to: City of Broomfield

Applications use words, variables, algorithms that function together to present information. The information displayed we call "slugs"

## How we approached the problem

1. Log all customer-facing slugs in database
  - web/mobile application
  - Reports and alerts
  - Rebates, conservation tips
2. Employ application Localise to read these slugs and provide translating template
3. Employ three translators to review and translate in Localise application.
4. Deploy translated app to a “staging environment” where staff could review
5. Solicit feedback from Spanish-speaking staff at utility partners (Los Angeles)
6. Finalize translations and deploy to “production”
7. Ongoing / additional translations are deployed instantly through Localise







*The Culture of  
Communication*

More than just a language barrier



*The Culture of  
Communication*

Start your story from the beginning



*The Culture of  
Communication*

Have a presence – show up!



*The Culture of  
Communication*

Create strategic partnerships



*The Culture of  
Communication*

Pair technology with outreach



# Have a plan and start now!



- More than just a language barrier
- Start your story from the beginning
- Have a presence
- Create strategic partnerships
- Pair technology with outreach efforts
- Have a plan and start it!

## Lessons Learned

### Prompt and transparent communication

- Communication barriers (like language) can lead to isolation, misunderstandings, dissatisfaction and customer strife

### Adopt a culture of communication

- Knowing your customers, partnering with influencers, showing up and communicating with transparency will improve satisfaction and trust

### Employ others to support customers + staff

- Not everything should be built/supported in house.
- In the absence of internal resources, organizations exist to provide staff with subject matter expertise, resources and tools.

*Bridging the gap with your ESL community will drive conservation, satisfaction and trust, and help with utilities that regularly consider usage restrictions or rate increases*

***Thank you!***

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