



Introduction

First Quartile Consulting (1QC) is a focused utility consulting firm that offers a powerful combination of management consulting and performance benchmarking services to help our clients achieve measurable performance improvements.

Our Vision

Our vision is to be the premier provider of consulting and benchmarking services to the utility industry in the areas of Customer Service, Distribution, Transmission, and Regulatory Support. We help our clients to improve their operating performance through the delivery of management consulting and operational benchmarking services, with the goal of achieving quantifiable performance improvements at both a transformational level and at a continuous improvement level.

We achieve this through delivery of superior and collaborative consulting services, accurate and useful data, comprehensive and complete analytic reports and presentations, insightful advice, and creation of valued communities within our client group of companies.

Our Values

The key values of the firm are the following:

- Providing **superior value** to our clients at a fair price.
- Delivering **outstanding customer service**, responding to requests in a timely and effective way, endeavoring to meet the needs our clients express to us.
- Creating a work environment in which the members of 1QC can work with our clients to engage in stimulating work, and enjoy the benefits of **teamwork while delivering great results for clients**.

Utility Business Areas Served	
<p>Transmission & Distribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital (Transmission, Distribution and Substation) project management process, roles & responsibility development, and performance measures • Reliability review and assessments • Asset management and capital planning • Efficient engineering design and planning processes • Emergency response • Service-enabling technology, including outage management, GIS, workforce management, workforce resource planning, integration with customer systems • Enhancement of outage management 	<p>Customer Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact centers, customer contact, self service and relationship management assessment and optimization • First Contact Resolution (FCR) • Credit and collections optimization • Metering, billing and field services • Non-regulated business processes • Service-enabling technology, including AMR, AMI, Field force automation (mobile data), contact center solutions, IVR optimization, internet, billing systems and data mining • Field order management and productivity • Sourcing and staffing evaluation
<p>Regulatory Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and defending rate cases • Developing appropriate service standards • Designing measures for service standards • Supporting audit preparation 	

Significant Experience in Bringing a Clear Focus on Utility Operations

First Quartile Consulting focuses very clearly on utility operations in order to be able to provide true expertise for our clients. We distinguish ourselves by bringing expert knowledge of the utility industry and operational areas, facilitation, team and project management skills. Each of our senior consulting team has over 20 years of consulting experience in the utility and energy industry.

Utility Management Consulting Services

1QC provides a full range of management consulting services from incremental and continuous improvement projects to strategy, transformational change and change management. We distinguish ourselves by bringing expert knowledge of the industry and operational areas and coupling that with superior consulting skills. Examples in the following areas:

Customer Service

- *Customer Contact and Contact Centers:* contact center assessment and optimization, first contact resolution, self-service solutions, multi-channel management
- *Credit Optimization:* assessing effectiveness of each step of the credit process, adherence to regulatory rules, implementation of changes to address process and practice gaps
- *Field Service Effectiveness and Productivity:* effective use of mobile data technology, process and roles and responsibilities alignment, organizational redesign including developing and implementing proper roles for supervisors, dispatch and field crews
- *AMR, AMI and Smart Metering Implementation:* Business case development, implementation project management

Transmission & Distribution

- *Capital Project/Portfolio Management:* assessing needs, identification of projects, prioritization, selection of projects across functions, project/program management (PMO) processes, organizational design, implementing PMO organizations
- *Engineering/Designer Productivity:* organization, staffing levels, process/systems, management and cultural support
- *Field Productivity Improvement:* effectiveness of work management systems, role of planning/dispatch/supervisors, estimating systems
- *Asset Management and Smart Grid Implementation:* Planning, analysis, execution of long-term asset strategies, incorporating smart grid elements

Regulatory Support

- *Rate Case Support:* Benchmarks and practices to support cost comparisons, demonstrate business cases, and provide written and oral testimony.
- *Developing appropriate service standards:* Helping develop service standards in both T&D and Customer Service
- *Supporting audit preparation:* Assisting companies in preparation for internal and external audits

Integrated Utility Benchmarking Solutions

We believe that benchmarking is a core component of successful improvement in a utility. Our benchmarking approach is built to study **key performance indicators** and the **best practices** that enable outstanding performance. We start with a comprehensive questionnaire, develop **detailed statistical reports and analytics**, augment it with **research into key areas of interest**, and finish by providing valuable insight into the findings.

Key Benchmarking Programs Offered

- *Utility Customer Service Benchmarking (Annual and Quarterly)*
- *Electric Transmission and Distribution Benchmarking (Annual)*
- *American Public Power Association (APPA) Customer Service Benchmarking (Annual)*

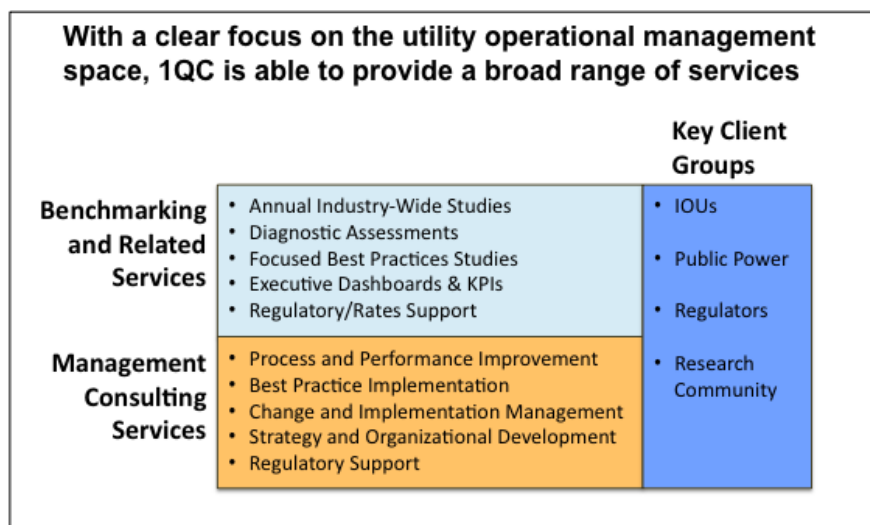
In 2010, over 40 large investor-owned utility (IOU) and 30 public power organizations participated with First Quartile in our Benchmarking Programs!

Building on our benchmarking programs, we provide value to our clients by creating an interactive community through the hosting of a series of conferences and forums at which members can interact and share experiences about practices and activities in the utility industry.

The Value of Our Community...More Than Simply Benchmarks

Our goal is to integrate customer expectations, demographic profiles, performance levels, and improvement opportunities with goal setting and implementation of actions to improve performance. We also believe in the importance of properly communicating and gaining “buy-in” to benchmarking results at both executive and functional levels within our client companies. 1QC supports our clients in the preparation and actual presentation of results, “best practice” approaches, and research findings, as well as how to best use internal community networks.

Our benchmarking services provide a knowledge base that supports our consulting activities, and the consulting assignments provide a mechanism to learn about new practices, trends, and occurrences in the industry, which can then be explored through our benchmarking programs. Having both capabilities together in the company provides a balanced and complementary set of services that benefit key client groups across the industry.



1QC Senior Consulting Team Members

Ken Buckstaff, Managing Director, leads the recruiting efforts for the 1QC benchmarking communities. He also serves as Engagement Director for consulting projects in T&D and Customer Service, as well as for our regulatory support projects. Some of his recent clients include PSE&G, TECO, Direct Energy, HydroOne Networks, National Grid, and Great Lakes Power. Prior to joining 1QC, Ken was a Partner at PA Consulting, a Senior VP at PHB Hagler Bailly, and a Partner at Theodore Barry & Associates. His career includes overall direction of utility benchmarking studies for over 20 years, as well as providing consulting services to major US and international utilities. Ken has served as an expert witness in numerous regulatory proceedings and has led the development of performance improvement approaches and techniques for three different consulting firms. Ken also worked for the Salt River Project as an engineer and manager. Ken holds an MBA (UCLA) and a BSIE (Lehigh University).

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Gene Dimitrov, Director, leads our consulting activities. Gene has more than 21 years of consulting experience in business change and process management including project development, management and implementation in the Energy, Telecommunications, Process Manufacturing, and Financial Services industries. Gene supports electric and gas utilities in the areas of Transmission, Distribution, and Customer Service with an emphasis on business strategy, process and organizational change. Over the last 10 years, Gene has managed Customer Service Benchmarking programs and large client engagements at National Grid, CenterPoint, Exelon, and SCE. He has worked as a Vice President and Managing Consultant for two international consulting firms. Gene holds a BS from Case Western Reserve University and a Masters in International Business from the University of South Carolina.

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Debi McLain, Director, is leading the infrastructure development for 1QC's Benchmarking Services. She also manages benchmarking operations for the Customer Service, APPA Customer Service and Electric Transmission & Distribution communities. Prior to joining 1QC, Debi was a manager of utility benchmarking surveys for 18 years. In this role she has managed the client interfaces and produced the questionnaires, statistical reports and analytics for the surveys. She also works on consulting projects for major North American utilities. Previously, Debi has worked for PA Consulting, PHB Hagler Bailly and Theodore Barry & Associates. Debi holds a BS (CSU).

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Tim Szybalski, Director, is leading the 1QC product development effort for Benchmarking Services. Prior to joining 1QC, Tim was a Managing Consultant at PA Consulting and a VP at PHB Hagler Bailly. He managed electric T&D, customer service, and corporate services benchmarking surveys for 12 years. Tim has been a consultant on significant client engagements at major US and international utilities. In addition, Tim has worked for PG&E as a director of an internal consulting group, in the energy practice of an international consulting firm, and at SDG&E as an engineer and Construction Methods Supervisor. Tim holds an MSIE (UC Berkeley), an MBA (SDSU) and a BSIE (Stanford) and is a registered Professional Engineer (IE) in California.

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