ASCEND Key Talking Points for April

ASCEND
ELEVATING THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Please use the talking points below as a resource to share with your teams during team meetings and other opportunities.
For additional program and release specific information, click here to visit the ASCEND Intranet site.

1 Updated ASCEND Go Live Target Date Approved

Importance: On April 2, 2025, the Executive Oversight Committee (EOC) approved the updated Go Live date target cutover window for **Sept. 2-6, 2026.**

Key Talking Points:
- Cutover marks the transition from CSS to the new Customer Information System (CIS) when most customer applications will be unavailable.
- A dedicated cutover team from across the operating companies will work 24/7 to manage the transition and minimize downtime.
- Business continuity processes will be implemented to mitigate operational impacts.

2 Service Cloud Continues to Demonstrate Strong Reliability

Importance: Service Cloud maintains high reliability with minimal disruptions, and outages are primarily due to external issues that, once resolved, will enhance stability and reduce downtime.

Key Talking Points:
- Service Cloud achieved 99.4% uptime during operational hours over the last 10 weeks, showcasing strong system reliability.
- 11 of 12 outages over the 10-week period were caused by prolonged integration run times within another Cloud application.
- The team is reconfiguring multiple integrations through April to enhance reliability and improve technical resource availability.

3 Program Transition to Testing

Importance: End to End (E2E) testing began in March and will continue into Q1 2026. The E2E test phase will validate key business processes (e.g., starting services) function correctly across all systems.

Key Talking Points:
- The E2E test phase aims to ensure all interconnected systems and components function together as expected.
- A team of ASCEND testers, including business and technology subject matter experts, and Edge and Channel testers will validate business process scenarios.
- The E2E test phase will not involve running full-volume batch jobs or billing day-to-day - this will occur during Operational Readiness testing (ORT) starting in 2026.

4 Several Applications Enter Freeze Period

Importance: As of April 1, 2025, the following applications are in a freeze period: Online Customer Care (OCC), portals, Mobile App, Voice Response Unit (VRU), and Customer Service System (CSS). During this time, changes to solution code, configuration, external systems and master data are prohibited unless emergency approval is granted.

Key Talking Points:
- We are currently in a "soft freeze," allowing only emergency changes (major business disruptions with no workaround), regulatory, & pre-approved changes.
- At the end of April 2026, we will enter a "hard freeze," permitting only emergency and regulatory changes, which will continue through hypercare.
- Click here to review the governance process during the freeze period.