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Overview

The Customer to Meter Release 2 (C2M R2) messaging map is one part of our overall ASCEND communications and engagement toolkit and will help drive consistent and relevant messaging to our targeted stakeholders. Organization Readiness (OR) analysts will leverage the messaging map as foundational messaging related to C2M R2 and will continue to update as more information is learned via key change impacts and stakeholder feedback.

Scope

Through message mapping, OR analysts can more easily align messages to engage and inform effected stakeholder groups and anticipate potential opportunities or challenges they may face in moving stakeholders across the **change curve**.

Approach

Leveraging existing communication collateral and in partnership with OR analysts, the message map was created to lay out C2M R2 messaging that will be used to engage and inform stakeholders.

Throughout 2025, the message map will continue to evolve based on new information (timeline shifts, change impacts, etc.) and feedback from stakeholders with the intention that this is our one source of truth for foundational C2M R2 messaging.

Key Takeaways:

1 The C2M R2 message map establishes clear and cohesive messaging that will be used to inform and engage stakeholders up to go live and beyond.

2 Outlines primary and secondary messages that communicate the benefits of C2M R2 to the business, effected stakeholders, and includes tailored messages for high impacted groups.

3 This messaging is the foundation for C2M R2 related communications and will be refined based on the audience. Communication channel selection will be instrumental in reaching effected stakeholders using a multi-channel approach.

C2M R2 Engagement Planning and Messaging

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From Q1 2025 through deployment of C2M R2 in Q3 of 2026, ASCEND can leverage the messaging map as a guide for providing clear and consistent information to the right stakeholders at the right time through the right channels and engagement activities.

	2025				2026	R2 Go-Live ●
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3

Build — Test — Go-Live / Prep

Awareness → Understanding → Buy-In → Commitment → Advocacy

Messaging during this time will focus on:

- **Sparking an emotional connection for stakeholders.**
  - There is a compelling story to tell about what makes the C2M R2 implementation so important – by leaning into *the why*, we prime their minds for the ups and downs they'll experience during their change journeys.

- **Addressing the rational needs of stakeholders.**
  - It's important to provide updates on program milestones and timelines, but what they really want to know is what's changing for them – we need to unveil the benefits and functionalities of C2M R2 early on to inform and educate stakeholders on how this implementation will impact their day to day.

Messaging during this time will focus on:

- **Building credibility with stakeholders.**
  - After they've digested high-level changes, they're ready to learn more of the 'what does it mean for me.'

- **Creating resilience in stakeholders.**
  - Everyone's change journey is different, but none of them are linear – we must guide them through the valleys on our way to the summit.

Messaging during this time will focus on:

- **Generating excitement among stakeholders.**
  - As changes are brought to life by seeing the functionality, they better grasp the benefits to themselves, the business and the customer.

- **Instill confidence in stakeholders.**
  - Everyone learns differently – we must teach them to use the system using multiple modalities and support them through go-live and beyond.
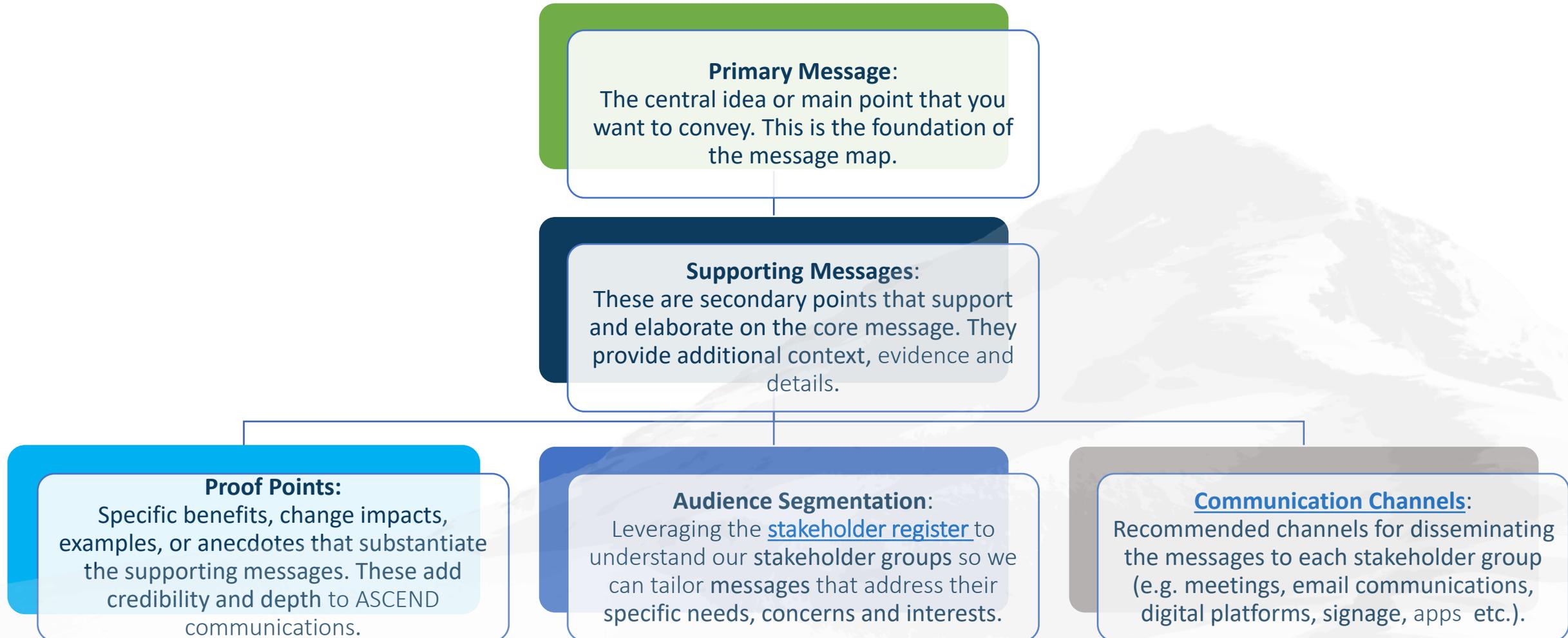
R2 Go-Live

Message Maps

What is a Message Map?

A message map is a strategic communication tool that serves as a blueprint for consistent and effective communication across various stakeholders and channels. Message Maps include the following pieces of strategic messaging:

Primary Message:
The central idea or main point that you want to convey. This is the foundation of the message map.

Supporting Messages:
These are secondary points that support and elaborate on the core message. They provide additional context, evidence and details.

Proof Points:
Specific benefits, change impacts, examples, or anecdotes that substantiate the supporting messages. These add credibility and depth to ASCEND communications.

Audience Segmentation:
Leveraging the stakeholder register to understand our stakeholder groups so we can tailor messages that address their specific needs, concerns and interests.

Communication Channels:
Recommended channels for disseminating the messages to each stakeholder group (e.g. meetings, email communications, digital platforms, signage, apps etc.).

C2M R2 Message Map: Why is this Important?

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Clarity and Consistency
- Ensures that all communications are aligned with the primary message and supporting themes.
- Reduces the risk of mixed messages across our team and stakeholders.

Efficiency
- Provides a reference guide for OR analysts - saving time and effort in crafting messages from scratch.
- Streamlines and structures the communication process.

Stakeholder Engagement
- Helps tailor messages to the specific needs and interests of different stakeholder groups.
- Enhances engagement by targeting stakeholder concerns.
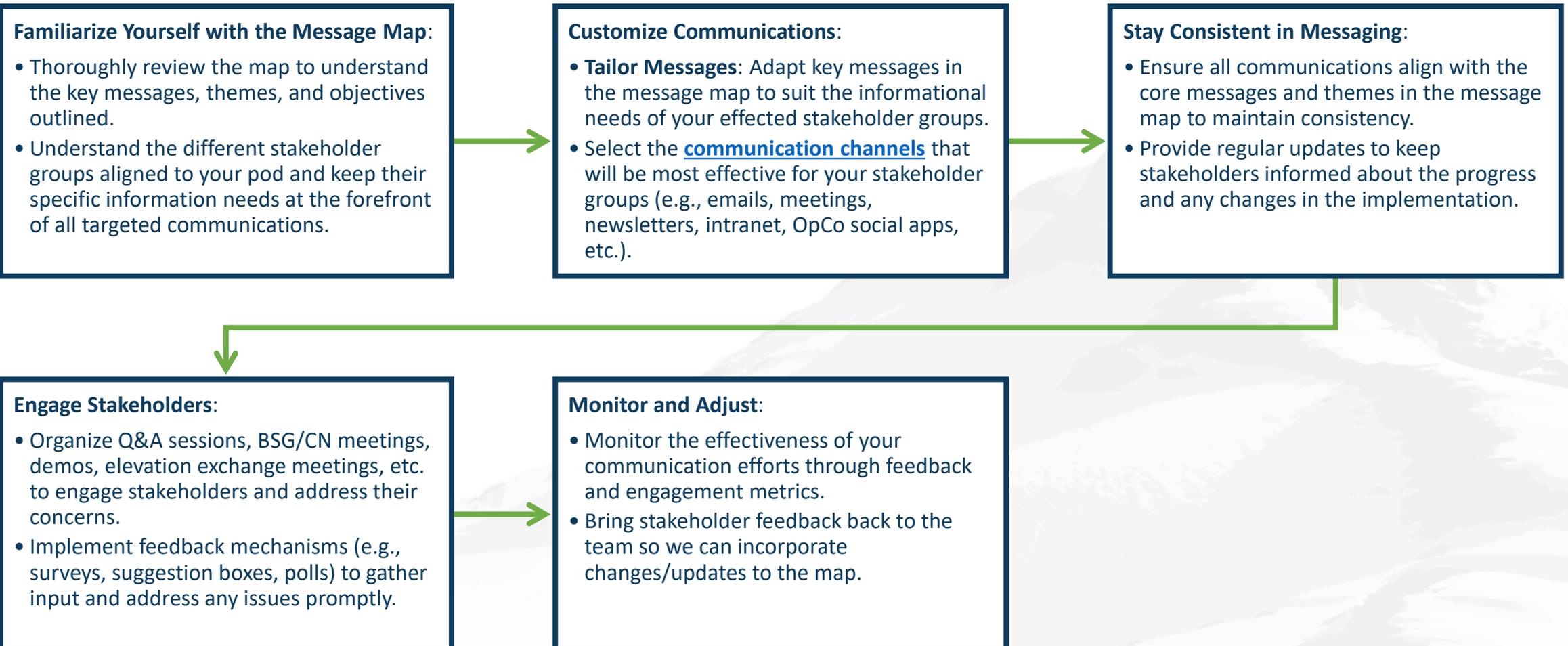
Change Management
- Facilitates effective communication during this time of change.
- Helps in managing expectations and reducing resistance by clearly communicating benefits and addressing concerns.

Feedback Loop
- The message map can be used as our source of truth for foundational content.
- Updated to include stakeholder input and changing circumstances.

How to Use the Message Map

To effectively use the message map in support of the C2M R2 implementation follow the steps below:

Familiarize Yourself with the Message Map:

- Thoroughly review the map to understand the key messages, themes, and objectives outlined.
- Understand the different stakeholder groups aligned to your pod and keep their specific information needs at the forefront of all targeted communications.

Customize Communications:

- **Tailor Messages**: Adapt key messages in the message map to suit the informational needs of your effected stakeholder groups.
- Select the **communication channels** that will be most effective for your stakeholder groups (e.g., emails, meetings, newsletters, intranet, OpCo social apps, etc.).

Stay Consistent in Messaging:

- Ensure all communications align with the core messages and themes in the message map to maintain consistency.
- Provide regular updates to keep stakeholders informed about the progress and any changes in the implementation.

Engage Stakeholders:

- Organize Q&A sessions, BSG/CN meetings, demos, elevation exchange meetings, etc. to engage stakeholders and address their concerns.
- Implement feedback mechanisms (e.g., surveys, suggestion boxes, polls) to gather input and address any issues promptly.

Monitor and Adjust:

- Monitor the effectiveness of your communication efforts through feedback and engagement metrics.
- Bring stakeholder feedback back to the team so we can incorporate changes/updates to the map.

C2M R2 Primary and Supporting Messages

Primary Message: Embracing the Future with C2M

Our Primary Essential Message:

Customer to Meter (C2M) is a customer modernization program that will enhance our operational efficiency, provide superior customer service and ensure a future-ready platform.

Supporting Messages: Embracing the Future with C2M

Formal Messaging

1. C2M is a comprehensive solution designed to manage the entire customer lifecycle from starting service to meter reading and billing - keeping the customer at the center of everything we do.

2. The new system will enhance Southern Company's ability to manage customer data, billing, and metering operations, leading to improved customer satisfaction and competitive advantage.

3. Through C2M, our business will benefit from advanced analytics and real-time data insights, enabling more informed decision-making and agile responses to market changes.

4. C2M represents a strategic investment in Southern Company's technological infrastructure, aiming to improve our operational efficiency and keep us at the forefront of innovation.

Conversational Messaging

What C2M Does:
C2M enables seamless customer service from when a customer begins service to when we read their meter and bill them.

Better Customer Management:
The new system will help us keep track of customer information and billing better, which means happier customers and a stronger position for us in the market.

Smarter Business Decisions:
With C2M, we'll have up-to-the-minute data and better analysis, so we can make smart choices quickly and stay ahead of the game.

Investing in Our Future:
C2M is an upgrade from our current systems, which will help us work smarter, keep the customer at the center of everything we do and be more efficient.

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The Why Behind C2M R2 – Formal Messaging

Enhanced Customer Experience:
C2M provides a 360-degree view of customer interactions, enabling utilities to offer personalized service, improve customer satisfaction, and respond quickly to inquiries and issues.

Customer Self-Service:
C2M enhances the functionality of our customer portals, where customers manage their accounts, view their usage, pay bills, and participate in utility programs, reducing the workload on ourC2 customer service centers.

Improved Operational Efficiency:
The solution automates many processes such as meter data management, billing, and payment processing, which reduces manual effort and the potential for errors, leading to increased operational efficiency.

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Integration:
C2M can integrate with smart meters and AMI systems, allowing for real-time data collection, which facilitates accurate billing, demand response initiatives, and improved grid management.

Flexible Billing and Pricing:
C2M can create and manage complex billing structures and dynamic pricing models, which can be used to encourage energy conservation and manage peak load.

Regulatory Compliance:
The system is designed to help utilities comply with regulatory requirements by providing tools for reporting, tariff management, and other compliance-related tasks.

Enhanced Analytics and Reporting:
C2M comes with robust analytics and reporting capabilities that help utilities gain insights into customer behavior, operational performance, and financial metrics.

Scalability:
C2M is scalable, which means that it can adapt to the growing and changing needs of our company, whether we are expanding our customer base or adding new services.

Improved Revenue Management:
By streamlining the billing and collections process, C2M helps utilities improve their cash flow and reduce outstanding debts.

Energy Efficiency Programs:
C2M supports the management of energy efficiency programs, which can help utilities meet regulatory targets and provide value-added services to customers.

Grid Optimization:
With the integration of smart grid data, utilities can optimize grid operations, reduce outages, and manage distributed energy resources more effectively.

Mobile Workforce Management:
C2M can be integrated with mobile workforce management tools to optimize field service operations, schedule maintenance, and manage service orders.

The Why Behind C2M R2 – Conversational Messaging

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Better Customer Service:
C2M lets us see everything about a customer's history, so we can give them a more personal touch, solve their problems faster, and keep them satisfied.

Easy Online Tools for Customers:
Customers can use online portals to handle their accounts, check how much energy they're using, pay bills, and join in on programs, which means our customer service teams can tailor opportunities to customer needs.

Work Smarter, Not Harder:
C2M automates meter reading, billing, and payments, helping to reduce errors and save time.

Smart Meters Work Together:
It works with smart meters to get real-time info, which helps with accurate billing and managing electricity demand and the power grid better.

Flexible Bills:
C2M can handle different kinds of billing and prices, which can help customers save energy and manage electricity use when it's in high demand.

Staying Within the Rules:
It includes tools to ensure legal compliance with reporting and tariff management.

Making Sense of Data:
C2M helps us understand our customers, how well we're doing, and our money situation through detailed reports and analysis.

Ready to Grow:
It can grow with us, whether we're getting more customers or offering new services.

Better Money Flow:
By making billing and collecting smoother, C2M helps us keep revenue coming in and reduces unpaid bills.

Supporting Energy-Saving Programs:
It helps us run programs that save energy, which can also be good for following regulations and offering extra services to customers.

Keeping the Power Grid in Tip-Top Shape:
By using data from the smart grid, we can keep the power system running well, cut down on blackouts, and handle energy from different sources better.

Helping Field Workers:
C2M can work with tools that help our field workers do their jobs better, like scheduling work and keeping track of service calls.

C2M R2: Message Guidance for Company-Wide Communications

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Strategic Importance:
Emphasize how the new C2M system aligns with the company's strategic goals, such as improving customer service, enhancing operational efficiency, and supporting the transition to smart grid technologies.

Customer Experience Enhancement:
Highlight how the new system will benefit customers through more accurate billing, improved outage detection and response, and personalized energy usage insights.

Employee Impact:
Discuss how the system will affect employees' day-to-day work, including any changes to processes, new tools or interfaces, and potential opportunities for skill development.

Training and Support:
Provide information about the training and support that will be available to help employees transition to the new system, ensuring they feel prepared and confident in using it.

Timeline and Milestones:
Share a clear timeline of the implementation process, including key milestones and dates when employees can expect changes to occur.

Innovation and Sustainability:
Explain how the C2M system represents an investment in innovation and sustainability, contributing to the company's commitment to environmental stewardship and long-term resilience.

Data Security and Privacy:
Reassure employees and customers about the measures being taken to ensure data security and privacy within the new system.

Feedback and Collaboration:
Encourage employees to provide feedback and participate in the implementation process, fostering a sense of ownership and collaboration.

Benefits to the Company:
Outline the expected benefits to the company, such as cost savings, reduced error rates, and enhanced data analytics capabilities.

Commitment to Excellence:
Reinforce the company's commitment to excellence and continuous improvement, and how the new C2M system reflects that commitment.

It's important to communicate these messages through various channels and formats to ensure they reach all employees effectively across Operating Companies.

Key Messages for All Employees: Embracing the Future with C2M

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Formal Messaging

1. **Empowerment Through Technology:** C2M will equip you with advanced tools to enhance your productivity, streamline your workflows, and enable you to provide exceptional service to our customers.

2. **Skill Enhancement and Growth:** This new system offers an opportunity for professional growth through learning and mastering cutting-edge technology, positioning you for success in an increasingly digital utility landscape.

3. **Collaboration and Efficiency:** C2M will foster greater collaboration across departments, simplify processes, and reduce manual tasks, allowing you to focus on strategic initiatives and innovation.

4. **Future Forward:** C2M is a strategic investment in our future, ensuring we remain competitive and continue to provide exceptional service.

5. **Training Approach:** Comprehensive training and support will be provided to ensure a smooth transition and empower all employees to utilize the new system effectively.

Conversational Messaging

C2M Empowers Operational Efficiency: C2M is going to give you a variety of tools that'll make your job easier, help you get more done and position you to provide our customer's top-notch service.

Learn and Level Up: With this new system, you've got a golden ticket to learn new tech skills. It's your chance to shine in a world that's going digital fast.

C2M Drives the One Team Mindset: Through C2M, all OpCos wil be working in the same systems, making things simpler, and cutting down on the repetition, so you have time to partner and collaborate with your teams, and other departments to drive innovation.

Building Our Tomorrow: Investing in C2M is like planting a tree for the future—it keeps us ahead of the game and makes sure we keep delivering amazing service.

We've Got Your Back: Learning a new system can be stressful but we have designed training resources to make sure you have all the training and support you need to make the most of it.

C2M R2 Benefits Messaging for Targeted Stakeholder Groups

Key Messaging: The Why for Affected Stakeholders: Formal Messaging

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Streamlined Workflows:
C2M automates and streamlines many of the day-to-day tasks that employees handle, such as meter data management, billing, and customer inquiries. This reduces manual workloads and allows employees to focus on more strategic tasks.

Enhanced Productivity:
With automation and improved data management, employees can work more efficiently. The system's ability to integrate and analyze data from various sources helps employees make informed decisions quickly, boosting productivity.

Improved Data Accuracy:
The solution's integration with advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) and other data sources ensures that employees have access to accurate and up-to-date information. This reduces errors in billing, customer service, and other areas, enhancing the quality of work.

Better Decision Making:
C2M's robust analytics and reporting capabilities provide employees with insights into customer behavior, operational performance, and financial metrics. This data-driven approach supports better decision-making across the organization.

Increased Job Satisfaction:
By automating routine tasks and providing tools that make their jobs easier, C2M can lead to increased job satisfaction among employees. They can spend more time on rewarding work, such as engaging with customers and developing new programs.

Enhanced Collaboration:
The solution facilitates better communication and collaboration among different departments within the utility company. Employees can easily share information and coordinate on projects, improving overall efficiency and teamwork.

Skill Development:
Working with a sophisticated system like C2M provides employees with the opportunity to develop new skills, particularly in areas like data analysis, customer relationship management, and digital technologies.

Mobile Accessibility:
For field workers, C2M can be integrated with mobile workforce management tools, allowing them to access information and complete tasks while on the move. This improves the efficiency of field operations and enhances the service provided to customers.

Regulatory Compliance Support:
The system includes features that help ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, reducing the burden on employees to manually track and report on compliance-related issues.

Customer Service Improvement:
With a comprehensive view of customer interactions and history, employees can provide better, more personalized service. This not only improves customer satisfaction but also makes the job of customer service representatives more rewarding.

Key Messaging: The Why for Affected Stakeholders: Conversational Messaging

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Simpler Daily Tasks:
C2M automates routine jobs like managing meter data, billing, and answering customer questions. This means less repetitive work for you and more time to focus on big picture tasks.

Get More Done, Faster:
Thanks to less manual work and smarter data handling, you can get your tasks done quicker and make smart decisions without the wait.

Trust Your Data:
With C2M pulling in accurate info from smart meters and other places, you can say goodbye to guesswork and hello to error-free billing and customer service.

Make Smarter Choices:
With all the insights C2M gives you about customers and how we're doing, you'll have what you need to make decisions that really make a difference.

Drives One Team Mindset:
C2M makes it easy for different teams to talk to each other and work on projects together, making our company a well-oiled machine.

Learn New Things:
Handling a high-tech system like C2M means you'll pick up some exciting new skills, especially in data, customer care, and technology.

Stay Connected on the Go:
For those of you out in the field, C2M works on mobile too, so you can get the info you need and check off tasks from anywhere.

Keep Up with the Rules:
C2M has features that help us stick to regulations and keep up with changes without as much manual work.

Make Customers Happier:
With a complete view of what each customer needs and their history with us, you can give them exactly what they want, making their day and yours a bit brighter.

Tailored Message Topics by Stakeholder Group

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Front Office Employees:
Focus on customer service improvements, user-friendly interfaces, and reduced administrative tasks.

Back Office Employees: Highlight process automation, financial management enhancements, and analytics capabilities.

Field/Metering Employees:
Focus on how C2M reduces the need for manual data entry and minimizes errors, mobile workforce management tools.

Customer Experience Employees:
Access complete and up-to-date information about customer accounts, billing history, service requests, and interactions, reduces the need to toggle between different systems and allows for more efficient customer service, automation, etc.

TO Department:
Emphasize system reliability, security features, and technical support during and after the transition.

Executive Leadership:
Outline the strategic benefits, expected ROI, and long-term impact on the company's competitive position.

External Stakeholders (Customers, Regulators, Partners):
Communicate the benefits they can expect, such as improved service quality, reliability, and transparency.

Audience Specific Key Messages: Embracing the Future with C2M

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For Front Office Employees:

- C2M lets you see everything about a customer's interactions with us, making it easier for you to give them a personal and quick service.
- With billing and payments being automated, you'll have more time to build better connections with our customers.

For Back Office Employees:

- Streamlined processes and integrated data management will improve operational efficiency and financial management.
- Advanced analytics and reporting capabilities will support better decision-making and strategic planning.

For Field/Metering:

- C2M provides a unified platform that streamlines field operations, making it easier for employees to access and update customer and meter data in real-time. This reduces the need for manual data entry and minimizes errors.
- C2M also includes mobile workforce management tools that may allow field employees to receive work orders on their mobile devices, report the status of their tasks, and navigate to job sites more efficiently.

For Customer Experience Employees:

- C2M provides a single source of truth for all customer data, which means CSRs can access complete and up-to-date information about customer accounts, billing history, service requests, and more. This reduces the need to toggle between different systems and allows for more efficient customer service.
- C2M can help continue to automate many routine tasks, which frees up customer experience employees to focus on more complex issues and provide personalized service.

It's important to target audiences through appropriate channels to communicate effectively across Operating Companies.

Organization Readiness Related Messaging for Targeted Stakeholder Groups

C2M Training – Formal Messaging

Value of the System:
Communicate the benefits of C2M, such as improved data accuracy, streamlined processes, and enhanced customer service capabilities. Help employees understand how the system will make their jobs easier and contribute to the organization's success.

Comprehensive Training:
Assure employees that they will receive comprehensive training tailored to their specific roles and responsibilities. Emphasize that the training is designed to build confidence and competence in using the new system.

Accessibility of Training Resources:
Inform employees about the availability of various training resources, including in-person sessions, online tutorials, webinars, and user manuals. Highlight that these resources are accessible and can be revisited as needed.

Support Network:
Outline the support network that will be available during and after the training period. This includes help desks, IT support, and super-users and/or change champions who can provide additional guidance and assistance.

Feedback and Continuous Learning:
Encourage employees to provide feedback on training sessions and materials, and to ask questions whenever they arise. Stress the importance of continuous learning and adaptation as the system evolves.

Hands-On Experience:
Stress the importance of hands-on practice with the C2M system. Ensure that employees will have opportunities to interact with the system during training to apply what they've learned in a practical setting.

Patience and Persistence:
Remind employees that learning a new system takes time and patience. Encourage them to be persistent and to take advantage of the support and resources available to them.

C2M Training – Conversational Messaging

Designed with You in Mind:

We'll show you how C2M makes your work life better, like making tasks simpler, and helping you serve our customers like a pro. It's all about making our company shine and your job smoother.

Training Tailored for You:

Don't worry, you'll get all the training you need for your job. We want you to feel confident and skilled when using C2M.

Help Whenever You Need It:

You'll have lots of support resources in place, from live classes to online videos and handy guides. They're always there, so you can brush up anytime.

People to Turn To:

There's a whole team ready to help you during and after training, with go-to experts just a call or click away.

Your Thoughts Matter:

Tell us what you think about the training and ask questions anytime. We're all about getting better together as things change.

Try It Out:

You'll get to roll up your sleeves and use C2M yourself during training. It's the best way to learn.

Take Your Time:

Remember, it's okay to take it slow and steady when learning C2M. Keep at it and use the help and tools we've created for you.

Business Readiness – Formal Messaging

Strategic Alignment:
Explain how the C2M implementation aligns with the organization's strategic goals, such as improving customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, and embracing digital transformation.

Benefits to Employees:
Highlight the direct benefits to employees, including streamlined workflows, reduced manual tasks, and enhanced decision-making capabilities through better data insights.

Commitment to Change Management:
Emphasize the organization's commitment to a structured change management process that supports employees through training, communication, and support systems.

Customer Service Excellence:
Stress the importance of C2M in providing high-quality customer service and how the system will enable employees to respond more effectively to customer inquiries and issues.

Process Improvements:
Outline the process improvements that C2M will bring, such as automation of routine tasks, more accurate billing, and efficient meter-to-cash processes.

Role-Specific Impacts:
Communicate the expected changes in roles and responsibilities, ensuring that employees understand how their individual roles may evolve with the new system.

Support and Resources:
Assure employees that they will have access to the necessary support and resources to transition smoothly, including training materials, help desks, and peer support.

Open Communication:
Foster an environment of open communication where employees are encouraged to ask questions, express concerns, and provide feedback on the implementation process.

Collaboration Across Teams:
Encourage collaboration across different departments and teams to ensure a cohesive transition and to share best practices for using the C2M system.

Continuous Improvement:
Reinforce the idea that the implementation is an ongoing process and that the organization will continuously seek to improve the system based on user feedback and performance data.

Recognition of Effort:
Acknowledge the hard work and adaptation required from employees during the implementation phase and express appreciation for their efforts.

Future-Ready Workforce:
Highlight the investment in creating a future-ready workforce that is equipped with the latest tools and technologies to meet the evolving demands of the utility industry.

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Business Readiness: Conversational Messaging

Big Picture Plan:
We're bringing in C2M because it fits right into our big goals like making customers happier, working smarter, and getting digital.

What's in It for You:
You'll see some real perks, like less repetitive work, easier day-to-day tasks, and you'll have the info you need to make great decisions.

We've Got Your Back:
We're totally focused on helping you adjust to the new system with solid training, clear updates, and support whenever you need it.

Customer Service Like a Boss:
C2M is going to help you give our customers the VIP treatment and solve their problems faster.

Making Work Better:
Expect smoother processes, like automatic billing and a straight path from meter reading to cash in the bank.

Your Role, Upgraded:
We'll let you know how your job might change with C2M, so you're ready to roll with the new system.

Help is Here:
You'll have all the resources you need to switch to C2M smoothly, from training stuff to help desks and buddies who can help out.

Speak Up:
We want to hear from you — ask us anything, share your thoughts, and let us know how it's going.

Team Up:
Let's work together across all our teams to make this change a win and pick up some tips and tricks along the way.

Keep Getting Better:
This isn't a one-and-done deal. We'll keep tweaking C2M to make it even better, based on what you tell us and how it's working.

Thanks for Your Hard Work:
We see the effort you're putting in, and we really appreciate it. Thanks for helping make this happen.

Ready for Tomorrow:
By learning C2M, you're getting set up with the latest skills for the future of our industry.

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Post Go Live Messaging for Targeted Stakeholder Groups

Post Go-Live Key Messaging

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Post go live, it's essential to communicate and engage effectively with employees to ensure they feel supported, informed, and motivated to use the new system.

Customer-Centric Approach:
Emphasize how the C2M system enhances the customer experience by providing more accurate billing, efficient service, and better response times. Encourage employees to adopt a customer-centric mindset when using the system.

Operational Efficiency:
Highlight the ways in which C2Mstreamlines operations, from meter reading to billing to customer service. Stress the benefits of increased efficiency and accuracy in these processes.

Training and Support:
Assure employees that comprehensive training is available and that ongoing support will be provided to help them adapt to the new system. Encourage them to take advantage of these resources to become proficient users.

Feedback and Continuous Improvement:
Create an open channel for feedback, where employees can share their experiences and suggest improvements. Make it clear that their input is crucial for refining and enhancing the system.

Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing:
Foster a collaborative environment where employees can share tips, best practices, and solutions with one another. This can help build a supportive community and accelerate collective learning.

Change Management:
Acknowledge the challenges of change and reassure employees that the organization is committed to supporting them through this transition. Highlight the change management strategies in place to facilitate this process.

System Benefits:
Communicate the specific benefits of C2Mfor different roles within the organization. Tailor the messaging to show how the system will make each employee's job easier and more impactful.

Patience and Adaptability:
Encourage patience and adaptability as employees get accustomed to the new system. Recognize that there may be a learning curve and that it's okay to take time to adjust.

Success Stories:
Share success stories of early adopters and departments that have seen improvements since using C2M. This can serve as motivation for others to engage with the system.

Long-Term Vision:
Connect the implementation of C2M with the organization's long-term goals, such as digital transformation, sustainability, and improved service delivery. Help employees see how their work with the system aligns with these objectives.

Contingency Messaging

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Prepared contingency messaging is a proactive measure that helps manage customer expectations, maintain trust, and ensure a smooth and efficient response to any issues that may arise post go live.

System Downtime:
"In the unlikely event of a system downtime, our team is prepared with a comprehensive contingency plan to ensure minimal disruption to our services. We have established protocols to quickly identify and resolve any issues, and our support team is available 24/7 to assist with any concerns. We are committed to maintaining the highest level of service continuity for our customers."

Data Corruption:
"We prioritize the integrity and security of our data. In the rare instance of data corruption, we have robust backup and recovery procedures in place. Our team will promptly identify the affected data, restore it from secure backups, and conduct thorough checks to ensure data accuracy. Our goal is to protect our customers' information and maintain trust in our services."

Inaccurate Bills:
"Accuracy in billing is paramount to us. Should any inaccuracies in billing occur, we have a dedicated team to swiftly address and rectify the issue. We will proactively communicate with affected customers, provide clear explanations, and ensure that any billing discrepancies are corrected promptly. Our commitment is to transparency and fairness in all billing matters."

Customer Communication:
"Effective communication is key during any contingency. We will keep our customers informed through multiple channels, including email, SMS, and our customer portal. Regular updates will be provided to ensure that our customers are aware of the situation, the steps being taken to resolve it, and any actions they may need to take."

Proactive Monitoring:
"Our systems are equipped with advanced monitoring tools to detect potential issues before they impact our customers. We continuously monitor system performance and data integrity to identify and address any anomalies in real-time. This proactive approach helps us mitigate risks and maintain seamless operations."

Customer Support:
"Our customer support team is always ready to assist. In the event of any contingency, our support channels will be fully operational to provide immediate assistance. Customers can reach out to us via phone, email, or live chat for prompt resolution of their concerns. We are here to support our customers every step of the way."

Continuous Improvement:
"We are committed to continuous improvement in our contingency planning. We regularly review and update our contingency plans to incorporate lessons learned and industry best practices. Our focus is on enhancing our resilience and ensuring that we can effectively manage any challenges that may arise."

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder Messaging Campaigns - 2025

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Q1 2025: Awareness and Engagement Campaign - ASCEND C2M R2 Launchpad: Igniting Our Future

Objective: Highlight C2M R2 and its significance to the company.

Key Activities:

- Communication from leadership highlighting ASCEND program – what's been accomplished and the importance of the final phase with a key focus on R2.
- Engagement sessions detailing the project scope and timeline.(BSG/CN, EOC,ESC, etc.)
- Briefing Decks and Change Impact Summaries – distributed to key effected stakeholder groups.
- Creation of an addition to the ASCEND intranet site highlighting ongoing updates, change impacts, etc.
- Distribution of an FAQ document addressing common questions and concerns.
- SoCo Today and OpCo apps highlighting high-level program information and benefits.

Q2 2025: C2M R2 Education and Insight Campaign – ASCEND Insights: Powering Knowledge

Objective: Educate employees /effected stakeholders on the features and benefits of C2M.

Key Activities:

- Series of educational webinars and workshops.
- Release of a C2M related newsletter and/or video series highlighting program updates and system capabilities.
- Interactive Q&A sessions with the project team.
- Testimonials from our key business partners – BEMs, Change Network members, etc.
- Did you know? Series
- Updated and engaging content added frequently to the ASCEND intranet site.

Q3/Q4 2025: C2M R2 – Learning to Lead through C2M

Objective: Begin highlighting upcoming training programs in 2026 and the work that will be critical to get to go live.

Key Activities:

- Rollout of a comprehensive training schedule.
- Feedback collection on training effectiveness.
- Demos, etc.
- Interactive workshops to discuss the upcoming changes.
- Surveys to collect employee feedback and suggestions.
- Change Network Outreach
- Town hall meetings for open discussion and updates.

Employee Messaging Campaigns - 2026

Q1 2026: Readiness and Reassurance Campaign - C2M Ready: Set for Success

Objective: Ensure employees and effected stakeholders feel prepared and confident about what's ahead.

- Focus on upcoming training dates, testing/testers, and support resources being built in preparation for go live.
- Readiness assessments and checklists.
- "Day in the Life" scenarios demonstrating post-implementation workflows.
- Support network establishment for post-go-live assistance.

Q2 2026: Final Countdown Campaign - C2M Countdown: Approaching Launch

Objective: Build excitement and ensure all final preparations are in place.

Key Activities:

- Final review and reinforcement training sessions.
- Release of "Go-Live" guides and checklists.
- Communication of support structures and resources for go-live.
- Countdown events and communications to build anticipation.

Q3 2026: Go-Live and Support Campaign - C2M Liftoff: Achieving New Heights

Objective: Support employees / effected stakeholders during the go-live phase and celebrate the launch.

Key Activities:

- Real-time support and war rooms for immediate assistance.
- Celebration events to mark the go-live milestone.
- Continuous communication on system status and updates.
- Recognition of teams and individuals who contributed to the implementation.

Q4 2026: Post-Implementation and Optimization Campaign - C2M Momentum: Thriving Forward

Objective: Gather post-go-live feedback, address issues, and optimize system use.

Key Activities:

- Post-implementation review sessions.
- Ongoing training for system optimization and advanced features.
- Success stories and case studies showcasing early wins.
- Long-term strategy communication for continuous improvement with C2M.

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Next Steps

Next Steps

1 Socialize the messaging map internally to the program and encourage usage to promote concise, clear, and consistent messaging around the program and C2M.

2 Use the messaging map to identify communication and engagement opportunities that are focused on topics relevant to effected stakeholder group(s) and begin to develop detailed messaging.

3 Leverage stakeholder communication and engagement metrics as key drivers for updates/additions to the messaging map to support long-term usage of the map.

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Messages and Channels Across the Change Curve

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	Awareness	Understanding	Engagement	Commitment	Ownership
Objectives	• Leaders will be able to explain the ASCEND program and its objectives, benefits, and key messages in their own words. • Southern Company employees are aware of the purpose on the program	• Directly affected employees will be able to describe the ASCEND program, its primary objectives, and how they will be impacted • Nominate change champions and agents	• Leaders have enabled their employees to conceptually understand the changes they are going to experience for each release • Encourage and support employees attending training • Two-way feedback with ASCEND engagement team	• Affected stakeholders know how they are impacted by the program and their role in the change • Affected stakeholders have an opportunity to provide two-way feedback to the program • Leaders are demonstrating key change behaviors	• Affected stakeholders have embraced the new changes from their respective releases • Affected stakeholders have adopted standardized ways of working and the new technologies
Topics	• Scope and timeline of the ASCEND program • Understand who is impacted by the program • Program benefits and case for change • High level program change impacts • How the program ties to Southern Company's mission and vision • High-level view of future state	• High level change impacts • Benefits at the individual level • Timelines and milestones updates • Implementation progress updates • Business involvement details (workshops, testing, etc.)	• Day in the life videos (Detailed change impacts) • Implementation progress updates • Training awareness • Training attendance and delivery	• Attending training • Implementation progress updates • Cutover and Go-Live preparation	• Benefits realized by the program and success stories • Help and support resources • Specific needs/asks of stakeholders • Workarounds for critical defects
Engagement Methods	• Case for change • Leadership messaging/talking points • Technology spotlight videos • 1-pager Technology spotlights • Key business decision reviews • ASCEND General update • Technology series spotlight • OpCo- specific mailbox • Department meetings	• Change Network Touchpoints • Key business decision reviews • Change Impact business briefings • ASCEND Updates • Leadership messaging/talking points • FAQs • Office Hours • Q&A Sessions with leaders • Feedback mechanism at OpCos • ASCEND Intranet site	• Change Networks • Roadshows and system demos • Microlearning videos • Change readiness / pulse surveys • Leadership messaging / talking points • Office Hours • OpCo Specific mailbox • ASCEND Intranet site • Q&A Sessions with leaders • Listening Sessions refresh • Product Demonstrations	• Knowledge Share sessions • Leadership messaging / talking points • Change readiness / pulse surveys • ASCEND Intranet site • ASCEND mailbox • Feedback sessions • Testimonials from leaders, testers, etc. • Day-in-the-life walkthroughs	• Post go-live support channels • Refresher training (if applicable) • Leadership messaging / talking points • Testimonials • Success stories • Realization of benefits – multi-channel communications • ASCEND Intranet site

Communication Channels

Each channel contributes different value to moving stakeholders across the **change curve.** The channels and methods below will be leveraged to distribute information to all stakeholders.

Quarterly Stakeholder Meetings and Engagement Events
Opportunities to inform directors, mid-level managers, supervisors and end users on program-oriented news, change impacts, training, etc.

Change Network
Leverage our community of change champions to help drive targeted engagement with stakeholders in the business.

Briefing Decks/Change Impact Summaries
Change impact information will be shared with all key stakeholders to inform them on the changes they will experience as we move towards go-live.

Digital Channels
Southern Today, ASCEND intranet and SoCo OpCo social channels can be leveraged to target relevant information to stakeholder groups.

Digital Signage
Leverage digital space across the OpCos, including flyers, QR codes, feedback boxes, etc. to drive stakeholders to support resources/intranet site.

Recurring Communications
Create an ongoing C2M related newsletter, Did you know? article/video series, as well as feature articles/ videos on the people behind the program and in the business who are ASCEND advocates.

ASCEND Program History and Information

Our History

Southern Company has embarked on a multi-faceted, multi-year journey to replace its current Customer Information System ("CSS – currently utilizing Customer/1") and Meter Data Management System ("MDM – currently utilizing Itron"), as well as add other new capabilities to engage and serve its customers moving forward.

Started evaluating replacement of CSS

Worked to identify business case for change

Worked to identify the process and people impacts of system change

1998 | **2014** | **2015** | **2018** | **2019** | **2021**

CSS was first implemented

Replacement recommended

Selected Oracle product Suite as the new solution
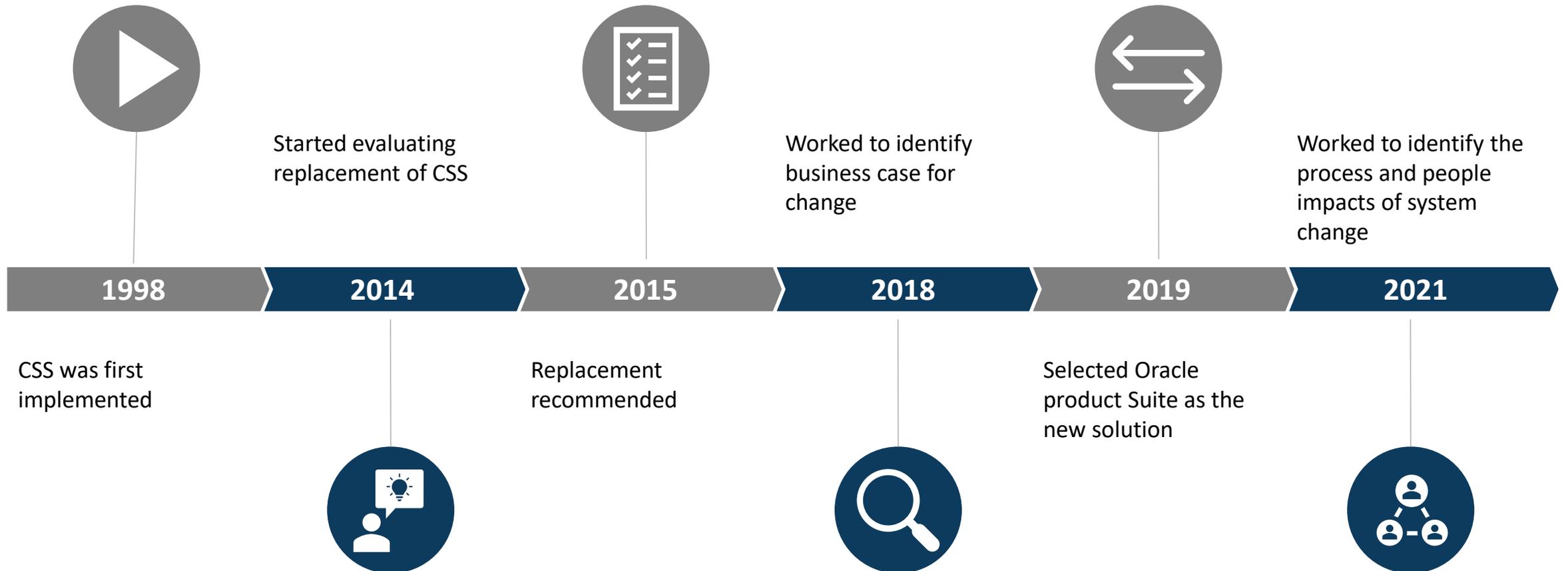
The ASCEND Journey

1 Pre-ASCEND: Initial Requirements and Scope

In 2017-2018 we began Pre-ASCEND activities (governance planning, business process reviews, revised estimate). The goal of this work was to determine the initial requirements and the scope of the implementation. We had industry experts provide insight in two key areas: Technology and People through stakeholder interviews, surveys, and case for change analysis.

2 Pre-ASCEND: Blueprint and Planning

In 2021-2022 we began developing the plans and strategies to be used while implementing the systems. During this time, we identified key changes in our business processes and customer journeys, as well as set up different strategies for engagement, communication, training, etc. We leveraged industry experts who provided insight into two key areas we were focused on: Technology and People.

3 Mobilization and Common Design

In late 2022 we expanded our delivery teams and initiated activities to mobilize ASCEND. During this phase, we focused on creating the design materials and supporting integrations and legacy components.

4 Implementation Phase
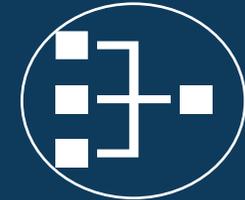
In 2023 and 2024, the team focused on de-risking the Service center first by implementing transactions in Service Cloud. Next, the team rolled out MDM ahead of CIS to verify consumption calculation and validation, implemented process changes associated with MDM and remediated all Edge systems that interact with MDM. ASCEND is currently still in this phase and will continue to reduce risk as we approach the implementation of the full C2M solution in 2026.

What Led Us to ASCEND?

During the Pre-ASCEND phase, the following issues were identified by the business as issues Southern Company would need to address to better serve customers and employees.

Dated, less intuitive system causes confusion and delays for impacted users.

Non-static, horizontal navigation menus lack visibility.

Requires swivels to multiple screens and systems to view account information for activities/tasks.

Processing limitations result in duplicate opportunity IDs being created, leading to rework.

Multiple validation tools and address formats lead to user confusion and data inconsistencies.

No integration with other MS apps leads to swivel chairs.

Data syncs happen in prolonged intervals and are not fully automatic which delay Sales processes.

Infrastructure needs constant maintenance, offers limited security and is not futureproofed or scalable.

ASCEND technology was designed specifically to address and remedy the issues identified by the business.

ASCEND Overview Messaging and Information

"ASCEND means increasing in size, importance or leading upward."

The name signals we are:
1. Elevating our customer experience
2. Growing our business and technology acumen and skills.

ASCEND draws inspiration from the Southern Company triangle to represent our goal of ascending to the top. The peaks in the middle represent the **3 electric companies** and signify movement upward and forward together.

Overview

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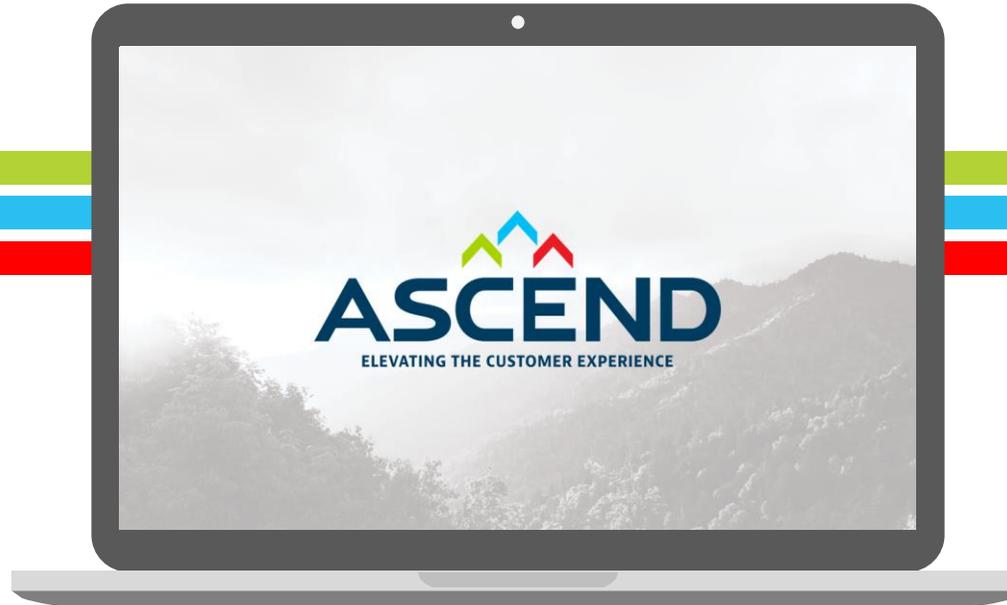
ASCEND is making company history!

ASCEND will be one of the most comprehensive Customer Service and Marketing transformation programs in Southern Company's history.

ASCEND will transform how we do business!

Through the program, we will replace our current Meter Data Management (MDM) and Customer Information (CIS) systems with a new Oracle CIS system called Customer to Meter (C2M). This will also include a Cloud Data Platform (CDP) and Service Cloud.

ASCEND will be deployed to three electric OPCOs!

C2M, an industry proven technology, will be rolled out to Alabama Power, Georgia Power and Mississippi Power in a consolidated implementation.

ASCEND will help us build the future of energy!

Through ASCEND, we will implement technology with new capabilities that will elevate the customer experience, empower employees and help us build the future of energy.

ASCEND Overview

ASCEND involves the implementation of multiple applications including Meter Data Management (MDM), Customer to Meter (C2M), Cloud Data Platform (CDP), Customer Experience (CX) and Customer Engagement Platform (CEP). Benefits the ASCEND program will bring:

- ✓ Increased automation and integration
- ✓ Improved customer experience through enhanced capabilities
- ✓ Better access to data across the organization
- ✓ Improved reporting and analytics
- ✓ Streamlined and standardized processes
- ✓ Reduced complexity of processes and manual process steps
- ✓ User friendly interface

*ASCEND is a **Program** not a project, as we have multiple business and technology initiatives happening concurrently.*

ASCEND Scope and Benefits

Program Scope and Benefits

- Improve overall customer and employee experiences.

- Ability to keep pace with customer expectations and industry changes.

- Flexibility and speed to add new products, services and programs.

- Selected software that has strong industry influence and investment.

- Utilization of data to proactively serve the customer and inform business strategy.

- Modern tools for our employees to more efficiently serve the customer.

- Reliable and supportable technology.
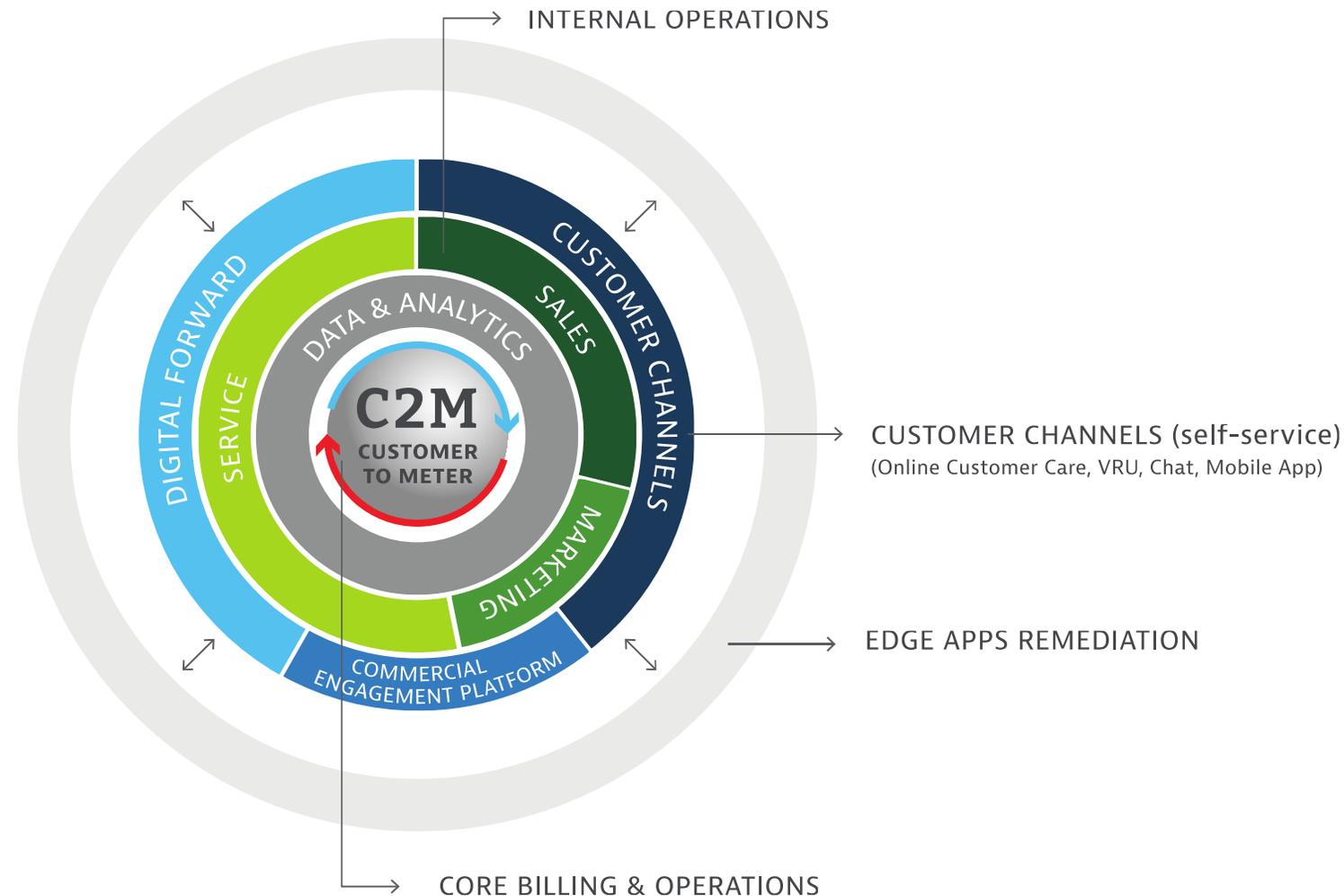
ASCEND Program Scope

ASCEND is a complex program that involves the replacement and introduction of multiple technologies to support the customer experience. These technologies will be deployed across the electric operating companies from 2023 through 2026.

Elevating the Customer Experience

1 Meet evolving customer expectations by enhancing Customer Engagement

2 Modernize Core Customer Operations Systems

3 Embed Insights and Data-Driven Decision Making and Actions

Today

Customer Engagement

Oracle CX

Sales Cloud

Marketing Cloud

Online Customer Care

Operational Systems

Meter Data Management System (ITRON)

Customer Service System (CSS)

Data Platform

Energy Information Exchange

Future

Customer Engagement

Oracle CX

Sales Cloud

Marketing Cloud

Online Customer Care

Service Cloud

Customer Eng. Platform

Application Remediation

Operational Systems

Oracle Customer to Meter (C2M)

Meter Data Management

Customer Care & Billing

Data & Analytics Platform

Advanced Analytics Platform

Energy Information Exchange

Changes from current to future state

What makes this program different?

Industry Lessons

03 GOVERNANCE — Governance established and executed for a number of key decisions in Pre-ASCEND.

04 EDGE Applications — Conducted Application remediation analysis during Pre-ASCEND and included effort and resources in estimate.

02 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT — Resource plan assumes full time dedication of most resources. Mobilization period planned to transition resources.

05 SCOPE & SCHEDULE — Common Design will be done upfront to fully align scope and timeline.

01 BUSINESS READINESS — Change impacts incorporated into Org Readiness plan.

06 STABILIZATION — Included call center and back office surge staffing for training and post-go-live stabilization.

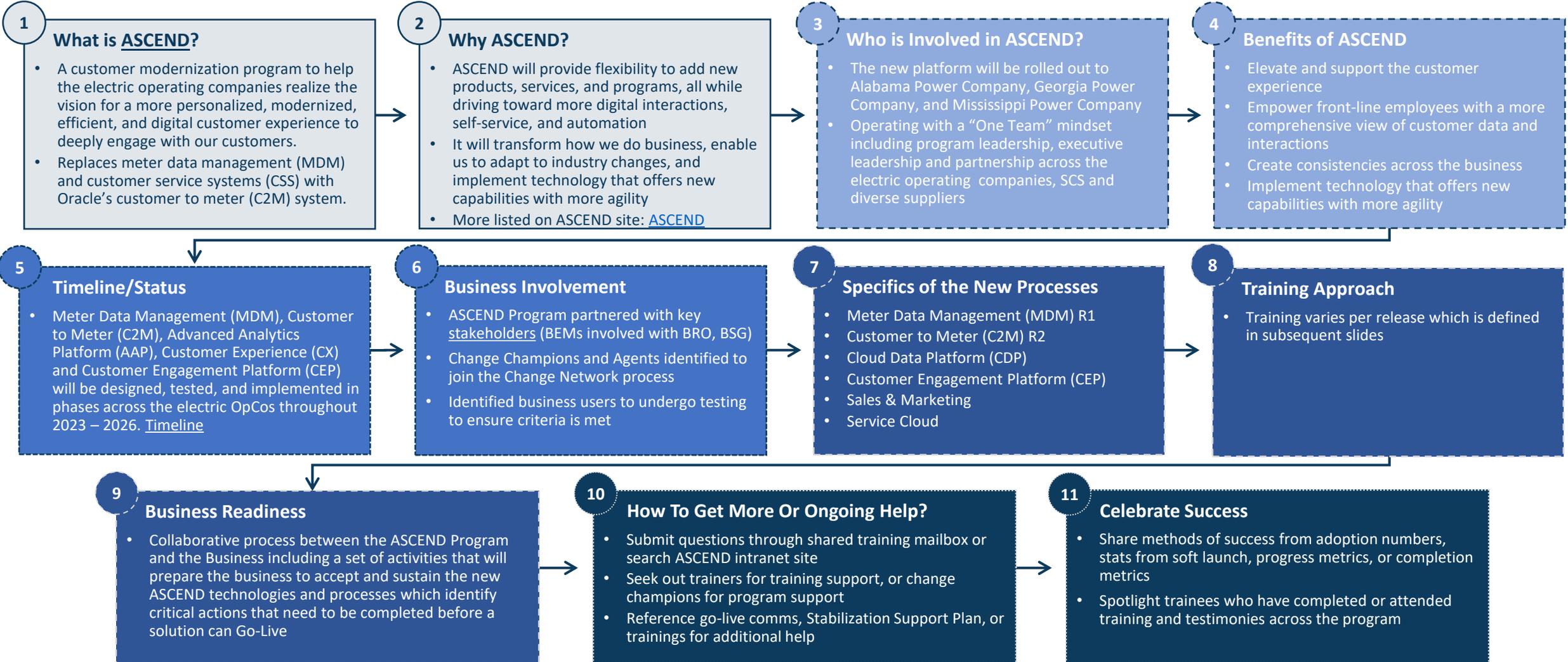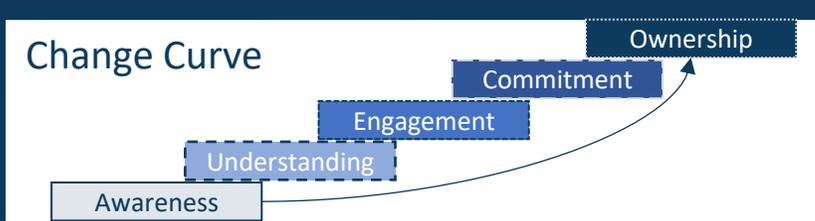**Integrated Business and Technology Framework**

- Comprehensive Planning Effort
- Early Business Readiness Planning
- Detailed People (Resource) Plan
- Strong Governance Model
- Mobilization Approach
- Proven Industry Product

ASCEND Program Message Map and Elevator Speeches

Program Level Map

Ownership
Commitment
Engagement
Understanding
Awareness

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1 **What is ASCEND?**
- A customer modernization program to help the electric operating companies realize the vision for a more personalized, modernized, efficient, and digital customer experience to deeply engage with our customers.
- Replaces meter data management (MDM) and customer service systems (CSS) with Oracle's customer to meter (C2M) system.

2 **Why ASCEND?**
- ASCEND will provide flexibility to add new products, services, and programs, all while driving toward more digital interactions, self-service, and automation
- It will transform how we do business, enable us to adapt to industry changes, and implement technology that offers new capabilities with more agility
- More listed on ASCEND site: ASCEND

3 **Who is Involved in ASCEND?**
- The new platform will be rolled out to Alabama Power Company, Georgia Power Company, and Mississippi Power Company
- Operating with a "One Team" mindset including program leadership, executive leadership and partnership across the electric operating companies, SCS and diverse suppliers

4 **Benefits of ASCEND**
- Elevate and support the customer experience
- Empower front-line employees with a more comprehensive view of customer data and interactions
- Create consistencies across the business
- Implement technology that offers new capabilities with more agility

5 **Timeline/Status**
- Meter Data Management (MDM), Customer to Meter (C2M), Advanced Analytics Platform (AAP), Customer Experience (CX) and Customer Engagement Platform (CEP) will be designed, tested, and implemented in phases across the electric OpCos throughout 2023 – 2026. Timeline

6 **Business Involvement**
- ASCEND Program partnered with key stakeholders (BEMs involved with BRO, BSG)
- Change Champions and Agents identified to join the Change Network process
- Identified business users to undergo testing to ensure criteria is met

7 **Specifics of the New Processes**
- Meter Data Management (MDM) R1
- Customer to Meter (C2M) R2
- Cloud Data Platform (CDP)
- Customer Engagement Platform (CEP)
- Sales & Marketing
- Service Cloud

8 **Training Approach**
- Training varies per release which is defined in subsequent slides

9 **Business Readiness**
- Collaborative process between the ASCEND Program and the Business including a set of activities that will prepare the business to accept and sustain the new ASCEND technologies and processes which identify critical actions that need to be completed before a solution can Go-Live

10 **How To Get More Or Ongoing Help?**
- Submit questions through shared training mailbox or search ASCEND intranet site
- Seek out trainers for training support, or change champions for program support
- Reference go-live comms, Stabilization Support Plan, or trainings for additional help

11 **Celebrate Success**
- Share methods of success from adoption numbers, stats from soft launch, progress metrics, or completion metrics
- Spotlight trainees who have completed or attended training and testimonies across the program

Updated Elevator Speech: Embracing the Future through C2M

Through ASCEND we are embarking on an exciting journey to replace our current customer information system with a new solution Customer to Meter (C2M). This initiative is a game-changer for us, marking a significant leap forward in how we manage and deliver utility services. The C2M system is designed to **streamline our operations from end to end**, enhancing the **efficiency of our metering and billing processes**, and providing us with **real-time data to make smarter, more informed decisions**.

But it's not just about operational efficiency; it's about our **customers**. With C2M, we're able to offer a more **personalized and responsive service**, ensuring our customers have a **seamless experience, whether it's managing their accounts, understanding their usage, or resolving any issues**. This system **allows us to anticipate their needs better and address them proactively**, which is crucial in today's fast-paced world.

Why is this important? Because at Southern Company, we're **not just a utility provider; we're a key part of the communities we serve**. Implementing C2M **aligns with our commitment to innovation, sustainability, and customer satisfaction**. It's about ensuring we can **meet today's demands while preparing for tomorrow's challenges**, keeping us at the forefront of the energy sector and **reinforcing our dedication to delivering exceptional service**. This is a pivotal moment for us, and we're excited about the positive impact it will have on our employees, customers and our future."

Key Talking Points:

- **ASCEND Initiative:** Launching the Customer to Meter (C2M) system as a transformative step in utility management.
- **Operational Leap:** C2M marks a significant advancement in streamlining metering and billing processes.
- **Real-Time Data:** The system provides immediate insights for smarter decision-making.
- **Customer-Centric Service:** Enhanced personalization and responsiveness in customer interactions.
- **Proactive Support:** Ability to anticipate and proactively address customer needs.
- **Community Integration:** Aligns with Southern Company's role as a community partner.
- **Innovation and Sustainability:** C2M reflects our commitment to innovation and sustainable practices.
- **Customer Satisfaction:** Ensures high levels of customer satisfaction and service quality.
- **Future Preparedness:** Prepares for future challenges, maintaining leadership in the energy sector.
- **Positive Impact:** Anticipated benefits for employees, customers, and the company's long-term success.

Conversational elevator speech included in speaker notes.

Strategic Message for Business Leaders

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"Through ASCEND, our journey to implement C2M marks a pivotal step forward in our relentless pursuit of excellence and innovation. This implementation is not just about upgrading our systems; it's about modernizing **the way we connect with our customers, streamlining our operations, and setting new standards in the utility industry.**

By harnessing the power of C2M, we are positioning ourselves at the **forefront of technological advancement, ensuring that we can meet the evolving needs of our customers with greater efficiency and reliability**.

Our commitment to this program reflects our dedication to not only enhancing customer satisfaction but also **empowering our employees with the tools they need to excel in their roles**. Together, we are building a smarter, more connected Southern Company, ready **to lead the way into a sustainable and efficient future.**"

Use these key points to guide discussions with your teams about the importance and impact of the ASCEND program and C2M implementation:
- ASCEND is our path to significant progress.
- Implementing C2M is a key moment for us.
- Our operations will become more efficient.
- We're equipping our employees to succeed.
- We're creating a smarter Southern Company.
- We're transforming customer interactions.
- We're raising the bar in our industry.
- We'll meet customer needs better and faster.
- We're focused on customer satisfaction.
- We're leading the charge toward a sustainable, efficient future.

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