

Preliminary Agenda

Wednesday, February 26th

5:00 – 7:00PM **Welcome Happy Hour**

Thursday, February 27th

7:00AM **Registration & Breakfast**

8:00 – 8:15AM **Welcome Remarks**

8:15 – 9:15AM **Joint Utilization of Utility Fiber Infrastructure**

Utility right-of-way's with optical infrastructure can be an ideal communications pathway for a variety of external customers. However, joint utilization of these pathways can be an intimidating venture for a valuable investment. This presentation will cover challenges and best practices in leasing dark fibers.

Speakers: **Mike Unser, OSP Engineer - Salt River Project
Carson Joye, Applications Engineer - AFL**

9:15 – 9:30AM **Networking Break**

9:30 – 10:30AM **Utility Benefits and the Impacts of 5G**

The impact of 5G on utility customers and grid modernization will be an important area of focus for utilities. There are many areas where utilities are best positioned to develop new revenue streams from 5G. This session will focus on how utilities will benefit from 5G as well as how they may be impacted by 5G.

Speakers: **Eric O'Brien, Manager of Utility Relations - Crown Castle
Mitch Simcoe, Director of Industry Marketing - Ciena**

10:30 – 11:30AM **Panel Discussion – Telecom Documentation – Challenges and Opportunities**

As private utility networks continue to expand and evolve, existing methods of documenting systems can become unmanageable. Spreadsheets, prints, or no documentation at all makes operating a robust, reliable, and configurable network increasingly more difficult. Join this panel for discussion on implementing documentation methods to keep pace with network evolution.

Panelists: **Mace Royston, Supervisor, Telecom Systems – Lower Colorado River
Authority**

UTC Region 7 Meeting – Preliminary Agenda Cont.

Bob Roy, Director, Major Underground – CenterPoint Energy
Daniel J. Stevens, Dept. Manager – Networks, Integration & Automation – Burns & McDonnell

11:30AM – 1:30PM Networking Lunch with Exhibitors

1:30 – 2:00PM Region 7 Member Meeting. Core Members Only

2:00 – 3:00PM Leveraging 3rd Party Service Providers in an Evolving, Technology driven Utility Environment

This session will address how Santee Cooper partnered with Buford Goff & Associates to replace its obsolete analog 900MHz trunking system. Emphasis will be placed on the key takeaways and lessons learned with how a communications technology consultancy added process and structure to a multi-year successful project.

Speakers: Tom Perry, Regional Representative – UTC (formerly with Santee Cooper)
Darrell Clark, Senior Consultant – Buford Goff & Associates, Inc.

3:00 – 3:45PM UTC Leadership Address

Presenter: Greg Angst, UTC's Chairman of the Board/CenterPoint Energy

3:45 – 4:30PM Federal Advocacy Update

Presenter: Brett Kilbourne, VP of Policy and General Counsel - UTC

4:30 – 5:00PM State of the Union Utility Presentations

The State of the Union Presentation is an opportunity to give an update on staff, projects, and plans taking place at each utility. The presentations are generally more specific to the telecom and IT areas, but interesting and major projects in other departments will often be discussed as well. The presentations are a good way to promote discussion between utilities about ongoing projects, lessons learned, etc.

Speakers: Utility Reps TBD

5:00 – 7:00PM Networking Reception with Exhibitors

Friday, February 28th

7:00AM Registration & Breakfast

8:00 – 9:00AM Advanced Network Monitoring Techniques to Improve the Reliability of Utility Communications

Traditionally Network Monitoring focused on the physical aspects of a network and that network's equipment such as port errors, CPU utilization, or bandwidth utilization. As utility communications networks become more complex and provide additional services, these legacy monitoring techniques

fail to improve availability and reliability. Manufacturer management systems work well with that manufacturer's equipment but fail to go deep on other manufacturers' devices.

Leading edge monitoring techniques including machine learning, constant network relationship

modeling, and automatic predictive analysis add reliability to communications infrastructure. Vendor issues and incompatibilities are exposed so that they can be rapidly corrected. Millions of messages and tens of thousands of measurements must be constantly analyzed to put network operators in control, and management at ease.

Major US utilities have implemented the above described systems to continuously evaluate network device interactions across the OSI stack. These systems find and correlate anomalies across dissimilar vendors and dissimilar technologies to make on-point network remediation recommendations before the anomalies impact the availability of the network, adding increased uptime and speeding time to restoration.

Speaker: Jeff Blank, Chief Technology Officer – Conxx, Inc.

9:00 – 10:00AM Understanding 5 Key Network Trends Driving a Grid in Transformation

The landscape of utility communication networks is rapidly evolving as utilities respond to critical challenges such as increasing consumer demand and the growing frequency, impact, and cost of natural disasters. In fact, over the past five years, 87% of consumers were impacted by some form of disaster. Meanwhile, utilities are working to improve service and sustainability through investments in technologies like AMI and Distribution Automation, but how are utilities choosing the “right” networks? Join this session to learn about five key network communication trends along with the business and technical requirements that are shaping the next era of distribution grid infrastructure. Presenters will share findings of recent industry research that explores how utilities are deploying advanced communications networks to connect Industrial IoT (IIoT) devices as part of grid modernization efforts. Hear real-world examples of how utilities and cities are using IIoT-connected solutions to enable quicker disaster mitigation and recovery, improved safety and more efficient grid operations.

Speakers: Entergy Rep TBD
John Lampe, Senior Business Development - Itron

10:00 – 10:15AM Networking Break

10:15 – 11:15AM Data Analytics Drives Operational Excellence

Our world is only becoming more interconnected and our tools more intelligent, which means every day, hour and minute, we encounter data from a variety of sources. With data changing the way we make decisions at such a rapid pace, it's important to know the power of data and how to leverage it. Data analytics is playing a key role in helping businesses drive operational excellence.

Speaker: Carol Bogacz, Associate Data Specialist – Burns & McDonnell

11:15AM – 12:00PM Roundtable Discussion & Wrap Up

