Deepak Garg
CEO is responsible for the innovation, vision, strategy and leadership of SUS

Deepak Garg, Founder/CEO is responsible for the innovation, vision, strategy and leadership of SUS, has developed high-powered business and technology teams that have successfully developed leading Energy & Utilities Customer Engagement & Mobile Workforce with Smart iQ™ platforms addressing Energy & Utilities industry key challenges in areas of Customer Outreach, Energy Efficiency, Demand Response, Smart Grid Reliability, Work Efficiency, Field Mobility and Big data. Before SUS, he has held several senior executive positions with Fortune 500 companies focused in Energy & Utilities, during these positions he developed new direct and in-direct markets business solutions with rapid growth adding $500+ millions of dollars in company growth. Deepak has a MS in Computer Science with Bachelor degree in engineering along with executive management from Stanford Graduate Business School & MIT.

Which are the industry segments you cater to?
SUS was established in 2009, with a humane vision to address the global challenges of energy and water sustainability. We cater to the electric, water, gas utilities, helping them redefine their relationship with their customers and optimize the productivity, and efficiency of their workforce, through our cloud based platforms. We offer platforms with focus in areas of customer engagement, mobile workforce, energy efficiency, water conservation and big data analytics.

Tell us something about your products and the benefits they offer?
At SUS, we are committed to providing the utility industry with the most comprehensive and best-in-class cloud based (Software-as-a-Service) platforms for the complete value chain the utility, their workforce and the end-customers. We offer a customizable and configurable platform that seamlessly integrates with the existing back-end systems of utilities that makes it possible for the utilities to get more value out of the utility infrastructure and the resources.

Our suite of solutions leverage technologies such as cloud, mobility, big data and analytics, machine learning and internet of things to facilitate the modernization and digital transformation of utilities. The major solutions are -

SCM® (Smart Customer Mobile) - SCM® is an award winning customer-engagement web and mobile platform that provides self service capabilities to utility customers and enables real-time, two-way communication between the utility and its customers. SCM® can be easily configured based on utilities current and future requirements. SCM allows utilities to offer to their customers, simple and intuitive ways to track their energy & water consumption; keep them informed about outages & leaks with real- time, map based alerts recommend customized savings programs based on usage analysis

It also offers the customers a visibility to their real-time and historical usage data, provides flexible bill payment options, set budget goals, view efficiency ranking; enter and log customer service requests. SCM® is aimed at delivering effective customer engagement, while enhancing operational efficiency, and reducing complexity and costs of customer services operations.

SMW® (Smart Mobile Workforce) - It is a single integrated mobile workforce engagement platform that helps utilities improve productivity and efficiency of utility employees by providing them job, safety and asset related information in

real-time on any device. It helps utilities in effective decision making by providing analytics for monitoring field worker performance against operational KPIs, it also helps utilities to automate and streamline their business operations allowing workforce to manage, schedule and dispatch work orders in real time. SMW® operates in both online and offline mode allowing field workers to perform their jobs even when temporarily disconnected from the internet.

SiQ (Smart IQ)- SiQ® is an award-winning cloud Analytics SaaS platform with built-in customer and operational analytics. The platform provides real time data analysis on Energy and water use analytics, Peak Load Management, Customer Segmentation, Performance Evaluation, Energy Efficiency and Water Conservation. It also provides a detailed usage profiling that help in customer segmentation to roll out targeted marketing campaigns. Coupled with our customer engagement platform, SCM®, it gives incentives and rebates to customers to motivate them to enroll in demand response, energy efficiency and water conservation programs resulting in improved energy and water use efficiency.

What are some of the challenges faced by the utility industry in Asia?
The challenges faced by the utility sector are mostly global and similar in nature such as ageing infrastructure, lack of skilled workforce, demand supply deficit and a dynamic regulatory set up. However, the Asian utility market, in particular, is quite distinct and diverse primarily due to differences in terms of population,

demographics, economic development, energy consumption patterns, customers' awareness levels about energy usage and energy efficiency, technology adoption rate and the governments' focus on climate change.

Companies are moving to high alert on range of risk facing the sector. Alongside the leading risks of regulatory uncertainty in the region and difficulties of attracting investment, the utility sector is grappling with issues such as an ever increasing pressure to meet the demand supply deficit, frequent outages and blackouts, frequent system failures due to ageing transmission and distribution network, poor quality and unreliable supply, poor access to electricity leading to low per capita electricity consumptions and a lack of sector reforms that eventually affects the financial viability of the sector.

In addition to this, the expectations of today's tech-savvy customers from their service providers, including the utilities, are undergoing a paradigm shift. What they want is a holistic and connected relationship with their utilities rather than simply a traditional one based on billing and payment transactions. They expect utilities to provide personalized value added services along with continuously improving the customer service levels. This further increases the pressure on utilities to reinvent their processes and business models to become customer-centric and yet continue to optimize revenue realization and meet their bottom lines. However, as the sector seems to open up for improvisation, Asian utilities are looking forward to adopting global best practices and embracing latest technologies to

enable a digital transformation built as a customer-centric business model.

How can your solutions address the unique challenges of Asia's utility industry?

The challenges faced by Asia's Utility Industry can be addressed by technologies such as cloud, mobile, big data analytics, principles of gamification, artificial intelligence and internet of things. Our suite of solutions uses these disruptive technologies to focus on core aspects such as utility-customer relationship, real time data monitoring, outage management, peak load management, demand side management, engaging customers in energy efficiency and water conservation programs, thus leading the utilities on their journey of digital transformation. Through our suite of solutions, we help provide seamless interaction between utilities and their customers across all mediums and channels including portal, mobile, smartphones, and customer services centers in a cost effective manner. Our platforms provide a 360-degree view of customer interactions, thus, helping utilities align themselves to a customer-centric model while meeting their business objectives. Through our award winning cloud platforms, we facilitate real-time, two-way communication between utility and its customers. This allows utilities to engage, educate and empower their customers to be proactively involved in the in energy efficiency and water conservation

programs. One of the major advantages of our products is that they are fully configurable and modular. We integrate our platforms with the exiting back-end systems of utilities thus helping them save on deployment time, cost and effort. Our competitively products are user friendly, engaging and also something that will completely improve the customer experience through multiple digital channels.

Considering the fast changing technology scenario, what are some of the emerging trends in IT that can help in transformation of utility sector in Asia?

As consumers have embraced this digital mobile shift around the globe, businesses are now focusing on transforming the way they conduct business. The global utilities have embraced the benefits of adopting the technological advancements. They have been collaborating with technology service providers in their journey to modernization and digital transformation. Mobility is the key today and customers love the choices and convenience provided by the mobile technology. However, utilities have to adopt a holistic approach for digitalization encompassing a mobile first strategy before they are left behind the technology adoption curve.

As the utilities move through this paradigm shift of being electricity provider to being service providers, they are increasing adoption of technologies such as cloud based software, big data analytics,

mobility and Internet of Things. These platforms allow the utilities to analyze an enormous amount of data that is being acquired through smart meters, smart grid, customer engagement platforms that allows utilities to monitor their customers' usage and with such knowledge, can educate and motivate customers through targeted marketing campaigns.

Digital mobility and associated platforms promise a new era for utilities to engage with their customers. Mobile technologies are impacting utilities by enabling effective customer engagement, improving service levels and delivering critical business insights through big data analytics and the increasing adoption of mobile promise a new era for businesses to engage with their customers.

How smart grids and smart meters will reduce power sector losses and bring in real-time monitoring of power consumption?

Through successful deployment of smart grids & smart meters, the utilities globally have been transforming their services and becoming more reliable as service providers. With new investments in technology, utilities can gather, process the automated meter readings and convert that data into critical business insights that can help in improving the accuracy and information accessibility, making life easier for customers as they can monitor and manage their real-time and historic consumption. Smart grids & smart meter implementation can also potentially save the costs of manual meter reading and help utilities overcome challenges related to electricity and water theft, inconvenient billing and overcome operational inefficiencies through real-time, two way communication process that enable proactive customer participation, thus, helping the community move towards improving energy efficiency & water conservation.

Smart meters not only enhance the ease of generating and processing electricity bills and streamlining the collection process through inherent system accuracies; however, they also provide better control on consumers' electricity consumption by providing real-time consumption data that proves to be a great motivation for consumers to save on electricity bills and thus use electricity judiciously. Thus, some of the benefits of implementation of smart grids and smart meters are

Accuracy in meter reading: Unlike traditional techniques, Smart meters automatically transmit the readings to the connected utility. As a result, consumers are much less likely to be overcharged for their consumption.

- Real time tracking: Consumers can check out their usage patterns and make changes to their consumption accordingly
- Automatic outage detection: The real time synchronization with the elec-

tric grid enables less restoration time & improves customer satisfaction.
- Better service: Real time notification & communication helps in faster restoration of customers challenges. Thus, increases customer satisfaction & reliability.

How can Asian utilities benefit by replicating the customer-centric business model being deployed by mature markets in developed economies?

The current electrical power scenario in Asian countries has resorted the need for integration of technology that enables efficient management of resources to enable a continuous and reliable supply of power. Frequent grid failures have become a prominent concern triggering major interruptions in quality and reliability of supply. Moreover, along with the adoption of technology for modernization and digitalization of utilities, they need to emulate their counterparts in developed economies and redefine the traditional relationship with their end consumers for meeting the government regulations about energy efficiency and water conservation mandates.

By deploying and adopting a customer-centric approach, utilities can proactively engage with their customers. A customer-centric approach ensures two-way communication between a utility and its customers. The real value of this customer engagement is evident from the fact that the customer feels involved and accountable for their consumption patterns. The customers also become more proactive in terms of participation in demand response& energy efficiency programs, peak load shedding etc. The utilities understand the importance of involving customers in the broader spectrum of energy and water sustainability.