



escalent

Data Center Communications Playbook

Understand, Engage, Influence:
Data-Driven Strategies
to Effective Data Center
Communication

April 2026

Data center construction across the US is driving public scrutiny, skepticism, and opposition. Utilities, retail electric providers (REPs), policymakers, and industry stakeholders face growing pressure to clearly and credibly communicate the value of data centers and address misinformation and misconceptions.

Escalent and Hahn partnered to develop a Data Center Communications Playbook that provides the messaging clarity and direction organizations need to effectively communicate, based on a 13-state survey of 3,400 participants. The research reveals how consumers perceive data centers: what they believe, where misconceptions persist, which messages resonate, and which commonly used messages to avoid. The playbook translates these insights into actionable communication strategies, helping organizations match messages to audience segments, respond to criticisms, and build trust with public stakeholders.

DECODE PUBLIC AWARENESS & SENTIMENT

Learn how consumers truly perceive data centers with insights on awareness, familiarity, and the key benefits, concerns, and misconceptions shaping public opinion

ACTIVATE THE RIGHT COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Pinpoint the information sources consumers trust most and how they prefer to engage so you can deliver the right messages where and when they matter most

SHARPEN MESSAGING THAT RESONATES

Identify the messages and narratives that resonate with consumers, equipping you to address concerns directly, strengthen understanding, and effectively communicate the value of data centers

Data Center Communications Playbook Overview

AREAS OF INQUIRY

- Awareness and familiarity with data centers
- Consumer attitudes, concerns, and perceived benefits of data centers
- Perceived environmental, economic, and community impacts
- Knowledge gaps and common misconceptions
- Trust in utilities, regulators, media, and other information sources
- Preferred channels for receiving information
- Reactions to and effectiveness of proposed messaging and talking points

Findings capture a broad range of consumer perspectives, spanning political affiliations, demographic groups, and underlying attitudes.

SAMPLE SIZE AND METHODOLOGY

- 3,417 U.S. consumers participated in a national web-based survey
- Respondents include heads or co-heads of household ages 18+
- Research conducted across key states, including Virginia, Texas, California, Illinois, Arizona, Ohio, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Louisiana, North Carolina, Indiana, Florida, and New Mexico
- Data weighted to ensure representation across key demographics such as age, education, region, race, and ethnicity
- Standard quality-control procedures (attention checks, speed checks, and bot detection) applied to ensure data integrity

SURVEY FIELDIED

March 4 – 23, 2026

PRIMARY AUDIENCE

The research delivers data-anchored insights for:

- **Utilities & REPs:** Understand customer perceptions and how to communicate to strengthen trust
- **Policymakers:** Ground decisions and public communication to shape constituent sentiment
- **Industry stakeholders:** Address misconceptions and respond effectively to deliberate misinformation to move projects forward

DELIVERABLES

- Detailed report with analysis of data
- One-hour virtual consultation covering key findings, implications, and communications strategies

Escalet and Hahn partnered to deliver a data-driven communications guide that helps organizations build trust, address misconceptions, and engage stakeholders around data center growth.

Escalet is an AI-enabled market research and advisory partner with unmatched industry depth, including in the energy industry. We are trusted advisors to many of the world's leading utilities, technology companies, and infrastructure stakeholders. Our research and consulting combine deep industry expertise with rigorous quantitative methodologies to help organizations understand stakeholder perceptions and make informed strategic decisions. In addition to our Cogent Syndicated and collaborative research, Escalet offers custom market research, stakeholder analysis, message testing, and communications strategy support to help clients address emerging industry challenges and opportunities.

Hahn is an award-winning, integrated marketing communications agency specializing in the energy and electric utility sectors. With deep expertise in data-driven strategy, predictive analytics, and persuasive communications, Hahn makes the complex compelling by helping organizations translate insights into messaging that builds trust with audiences and drives measurable outcomes.



Talk to us today.

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