

Developments in the Overall Customer Satisfaction league: December 2022

Professor Stephen Littlechild

Professor Stephen Littlechild, former Director General of Electricity Supply (1989-98) and now Associate of the Energy Policy Research Group at the University of Cambridge, describes how suppliers' positions in the Overall Customer Satisfaction (OCS) League have changed over the past three months.

Citizens Advice has just published its star rating table for energy suppliers in Q3 2022. Whereas the last few quarters showed declining scores, this quarter the average score remained constant, and the median score actually crept up.

Of the 13 suppliers in the Overall Customer Satisfaction (OCS) league, So Energy rose by 8 percentage points on the Citizens Advice ratings. Other gains were by Shell Energy (+6) and Utility Warehouse (+4). Suppliers falling included E.ON Energy (-6), Ovo Energy (-5) and Octopus Energy (-4).

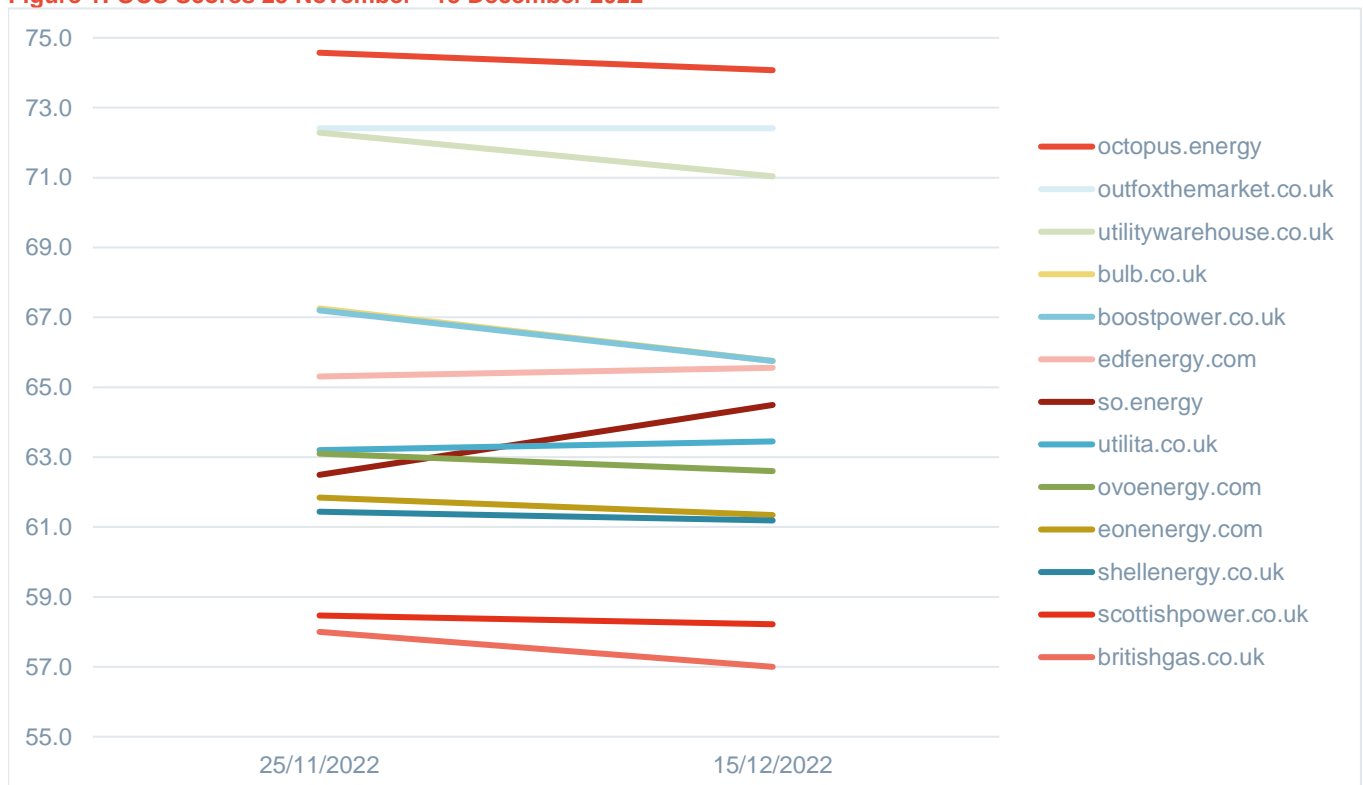
There was little change in Trustpilot scores over the last three weeks: over half the suppliers stayed constant while the others lost a couple of percentage points.

What does this mean for the OCS league? Figure 1 shows that Octopus Energy, Outfox the Market and Utility Warehouse remain in Division One, comfortably ahead of the rest of the pack in the judgement of customer organisations and customers themselves.

Eight suppliers occupy a rather wide range in Division Two, with Bulb Energy, Boost Power and EDF Energy at the top, a surging So Energy plus Utilita and Ovo Energy next, followed by E.ON Energy and Shell Energy.

Division Three comprises Scottish Power and British Gas, evidently failing to convince customers and customer organisations to speak out about their merits.

Figure 1: OCS Scores 25 November - 15 December 2022



Source: Professor Stephen Littlechild

The rankings of Ovo Energy and its prepayment associate Boost Power remain very dependent on their Ofgem complaints scores, which differ substantially from what they say on their own websites. I now understand that the Ovo, Boost and SSE websites publish the complaints data at brand level, whereas the Ofgem site publishes the data at license level, aggregated over the whole Ovo group. The implications of this are quite significant and will be explored in a later article.

Background: The OCS league

The Overall Customer Satisfaction (OCS) score is an average of four indicators of customer satisfaction, based on Ofgem complaints data, Which? ratings, Citizens Advice scores, and customers' own ratings on Trustpilot. The suppliers in the OCS League are those that have attracted and retained sufficient customer numbers to be worth ranking. Unfortunately, several smaller suppliers cannot be ranked in the OCS league because they do not meet Which?'s higher cut-off rate (50 customers interviewed).

