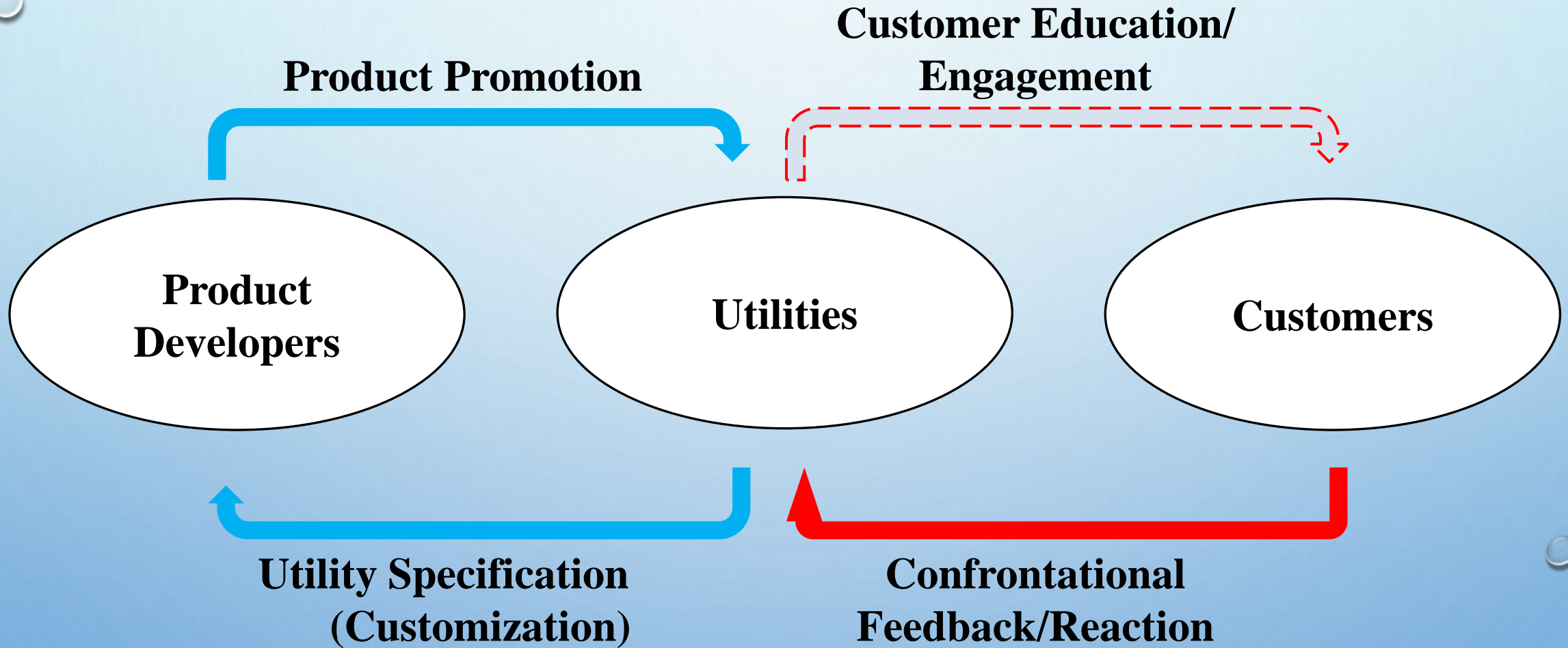
The background is a light blue gradient with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered across it. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance.

Smart Metering: Creating A Better Utility Service to Customers, OR Creating Better Customers to the Utility.

ISAAC ADU-BOTCHWAY



BENEFITS OF SMART METERING TO UTILITIES.

1. Eliminating manual meter reading.
 2. Monitoring the electric metering system more quickly.
 3. Providing Real-time data used for load balancing and outage reduction.
 4. Managing and storing vast quantities of metering data for future forecast.
 5. Ensuring the security of metering data.
- * These benefits translate into internal efficiencies of the Utilities. No real/direct benefit to customers.

CUSTOMER CONCERNS

1. Ability to re-charge meters with credit cards and cell phones without going to the vendor.
2. Customers' inability to monitor electricity consumption in units from Smart Prepayment meter.
3. Lack of load details to justify High Bills.

DEALING WITH CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

1. Customers complain that Smart Prepayment meters have increased utility bills.
2. Some complain of health hazards.
3. Many reported cases of public demonstration against Smart Prepayment Metering projects.

ENSURING CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE

- Customers who cannot make direct complaints vent their frustrations to friends and in worse cases, across social networks.
- The cost of Managing negative public reactions to ensure customer acceptance can be very high.
 - * Public Responsibility Cost - (Media Engagement)
 - * Public Action Cost – (Damage Control)
 - * Private Action Cost –(Withdrawal/Investment)

The Case Of The Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) - The Accra Public Demonstration and Burnt Meter Warehouse in Kumasi.

In many instances, instead of creating better customers to increase profitability, utilities have rather incurred the displeasure of customers through Smart Metering Projects.