# Octopus Energy customer emails

IMPLEMENTED 2023–2026 · ENERGY AND UTILITIES · UK · BAND C TO D · CLAIMED ONLY
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AI writes replies to routine customer emails. In 2023 the chief executive said staff checked all its output.

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Facts and figures are as reported by the sources listed below, which may be incomplete, self-reported or out of date. Check the original source before relying on any figure.

The impact band, proof marker and SEAM view are MarLuc's opinion. The organisation is not a MarLuc client and has not reviewed or endorsed this synopsis. Names and trademarks belong to their owners.

NOTICE WORDING LAST UPDATED 16 NOVEMBER 2026

AT A GLANCE

AI used: Generative AI drafting customer email replies, checked by staff.

Implemented: 2023–2026.  Grade: band C to D, Process change, Claimed only.

Headline result, as reported: AI answered 44% of customer emails, at least in part, seven weeks after rollout in 2023, by the chief executive's account

## 1 · The case

The facts, as reported by the 3 sources listed at the end. Where a source is silent, the field says "Not reported".

### Organisation

Octopus Energy. British energy supplier and clean energy and technology business serving 11 million households across 27 countries, by its own account. Its Arlo assistant was built with Kraken, a technology platform since spun out of Octopus Energy Group. Canvas block: 4. Operations and process. Also 3. Customers and proposition, 5. People and skills.

### Business challenge

The challenge. Octopus says its mission is to use technology to make energy simpler and improve customer service. Its deputy chief technology officer said too many chatbots keep customers away from people; Octopus wanted to remove repetitive work so its specialists could focus on complex cases.

How it was addressed. In 2023 Octopus began using generative AI to answer customer emails, with staff managing and checking all output, the chief executive said. In 2026 it ran a three-

### Who implemented it

In-house (In-house): Octopus's own tech team.
Kraken (Software vendor): Built Arlo with Octopus on the Kraken operating system.

### Technology (SEAM pillar E)

SEAM types: T3 API integrations. Deployment: Not reported. Vendors and products: Kraken, Arlo.

Where it was built in: Arlo, built by Octopus's tech team and Kraken on the Kraken operating system, answers routine customer emails on tariff renewals, payment dates and account details.

### What changed

Before: customer emails were answered by staff. After: AI answered 44% of emails, at least in part, by May 2023, by the chief executive's account; in the 2026 trial, Arlo handled about 8,000 emails a week, 4% of UK customer emails. [1] [2] [3]

### What it cost

Not reported

### What it saved

In 2023 the chief executive said AI was doing the work of 250 people and scored 80% customer satisfaction against 65% for staff, per City AM. In the 2026 Arlo trial, Octopus reported 76% satisfaction against 72% for comparable human responses, on about 4% of UK customer emails. Achieved cash saving: Not reported. [1] [2] [3]

### Governance and control

In 2023 the chief executive said staff managed and checked all AI output. For Arlo, Octopus says it handles only routine enquiries within strict guardrails, never handles vulnerable customers, sensitive cases or complex complaints, labels every AI-written email, and lets customers ask for a person at any stage. Accountable owner and error monitoring: Not reported.

**S2 · Accountable owner · Not reported**
Not reported.

**A1 · Safe use · Claimed**
Octopus says Arlo handles only routine enquiries within strict guardrails, never handles vulnerable customers, sensitive cases or complex complaints, and labels every AI-written email. [1]

**A2 · Human in the loop · Claimed**
In 2023 the chief executive said staff managed and checked all AI output; for Arlo, Octopus says customers can ask for a person at any stage. [1] [2]

**A3 · Monitoring and assurance · Claimed**
Octopus reports a 76% satisfaction score for Arlo in the trial against 72% for comparable human replies. [1]

**A4 · Vendor AI · Not reported**
Not reported.

**A5 · Agent controls · Not reported**
No agents described.

**A6 · Standards and regulation · Not reported**
Not reported.

### What worked, what did not, what is unproven

WORKED

– Customer satisfaction above comparable human responses in both 2023 and 2026, by Octopus's account.

– Clear limits on what AI handles, with vulnerable and complex cases kept with people, by Octopus's account.

DID NOT

– Not reported

UNPROVEN

– Whether satisfaction holds as Arlo extends beyond 4% of emails.

– How the 2023 figure of 44% of emails relates to the 2026 trial at 4%; the sources do not explain the difference.

– Effect on jobs and cost, beyond the chief executive's 2023 statement that AI would not cost jobs at Octopus.

### Timeline

May 2023 AI answers 44% of emails, seven weeks after rollout [2]

May 2023 Chief executive reports 80% satisfaction against 65% for staff [3]

Jul 2026 Arlo trial reports 76% satisfaction on 4% of emails [1]

## 2 · Grade and SEAM assessment

MarLuc's opinion, made on the evidence above. How cases are graded: marluc.co.uk/case-studies/how-we-rate

### Level of change and impact

Claimed: Not applicable. Grade: C to D, Process change. Proof: Claimed only. Level of change: Process change.

Process change (Level 2, between bands C and D). AI drafts routine replies inside the existing email process, with people checking and handling complex cases.

### The SEAM view and lessons learnt

Octopus set the boundary between AI and people explicitly: routine emails to the assistant, vulnerable and complex cases always to staff, and a person on request. That design choice is what a mid-sized or larger service organisation can copy most easily. The figures are the company's own, and the gap between 44% of emails in 2023 and a 4% trial in 2026 is not explained in the sources.

1. Write down which cases AI never handles, before launch.
2. Label AI-written replies and keep a route to a person.
3. Compare satisfaction on like-for-like cases, AI against human.

### Evidence

Score 3 of 4. Self-reported: the chief executive's statements and company releases.

Evaluation method. Self-reported company figures: satisfaction scores compared with human responses, as reported by the company.

Sources disagree. City AM's headline says AI was doing the work of over 200 people; its article says 250. The 2023 figure of 44% of emails answered at least in part by AI differs from the 2026 trial's 4% handled by Arlo; the sources do not reconcile them.

Status. Ongoing: Octopus plans to extend Arlo to more customers after the trial.

## 3 · Original sources

Read these in full. To challenge a fact or a grade, use the contact form at marluc.co.uk or the link on https://marluc.co.uk/case-studies/octopus-energy-customer-emails


[1] Octopus Energy: AI trial release (2026)
https://octopus.energy/press/more-news-press-releases/octopus-energy-s-ai-trial-wins-customer-approval/

[2] Sky News, via Yahoo: Octopus chief executive on AI and jobs (2023)
https://uk.news.yahoo.com/artificial-intelligence-hit-workplace-freight-153200359.html

[3] City AM: Octopus Energy AI emails (2023)
https://www.cityam.com/ai-doing-the-work-of-over-200-people-at-octopus-chief-executive-says/

Octopus Energy website: https://octopus.energy



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