Strategies

20th AESP Association of Energy Services Professionals Anniversary 1990 - 2010

Monthly Member Newsletter

Newsletter Sponsored By:

Letter from the President

Meg Matt

What was your 'aha' moment?

In talking with attendees, exhibitors, and speakers at our Fall Conference in Portland, I heard that many of us had our share of "aha" moments. For the AESP staff, we were delighted to see the conference set a record in attendance (up 35% over last year's event). I attribute that to a great deal of energy efficiency and demand response activities in the Northwest, thought-provoking conference sessions, and an outstanding location.

Stephen J. Wright, CEO of Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), delivered an inspirational keynote speech focusing on how integrating renewable power will be "the great engineering and economic challenge of our time." Wright also talked about a number of BPA Smart Grid and test programs that are currently under way and how BPA looks at the Smart Grid as a short-term problem solver of their customers' energy needs.

One of the emerging issues everyone seems to be tackling is consumer adoption of the Smart Grid. At the conference, a few industry experts admitted that they already have a Smart Grid device installed in their homes, but never take the time to look at the load shape. If they don't, what will make a consumer want to? There also seems to be a level of fear and distrust surrounding the Smart Grid. As an industry, we are challenged to make consumers understand that the Smart Grid is not an invasion of privacy, but rather a tool to help them better manage their energy usage and reduce their overall energy costs.

Our signature Speed Meetings event held on Tuesday afternoon was as energetic as ever. Attendees moved around the Expo Hall visiting booths, gathering information, and making new contacts. Over $2,000 in gift cards were raffled off at this event. I hope you were a winner, and if not, try again in Orlando in January at our National Conference!

A final aha moment for me occurred right after our evening reception closed on Tuesday. I looked around the Expo Hall and there was well over half of our attendees still in the hall visiting with exhibitors and each other. How gratifying it is to see AESP serve as a catalyst for developing so many new and productive business relationships!

November 2010

Please email feedback on Strategies to kisha@aesp.org

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Upcoming Events

Brown Bags

November 4, 2010
The Smart Meter Debate: Managing Key Risks During the Deployment Period

November 18, 2010
How Can Market Research and Evaluation Help the Smart Grid Succeed with Customers?

December 9, 2010
Achieving Deep Refrigeration Energy Savings in the Grocery Market

December 16, 2010
Smart Grid: What's needed to develop the residential market for Complimentary Products and Services

If you would like to organize a Brown Bag, please contact Kisha Gresham at kisha@aesp.org.

AESP Training Courses

If you would like to schedule an onsite training please contact

Will You Have an iPad for the Holidays?

AESP's membership drive is still going strong thanks to you! So far we have sent out over $350 in Target gift cards to those people who referred a colleague to join AESP! You are also automatically entered to win a $250 gift from your choice of retailers AND the person who refers the highest number of individuals who join AESP will win an iPad. Will it be you?

Send your friends, colleagues and peers to www.aesp.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=4 and encourage them to join today! Be sure they include your name as the person who referred them so that we can send you a Target gift card and enter your name into the drawing.

Notes: Membership drive ends December 15, 2010. Target gift cards are distributed monthly. The $250 gift card drawings and award of the iPad will occur on December 16, 2010. Winners will be notified by phone or email. New memberships must be paid in full to receive gifts. Terms are subject to change without notice.

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Featured Articles

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Stimulus News

The following executive summaries of current news items were written for Strategies after being compiled from various news sources.

Energy Challenge Helping Small Businesses, Homes in Whatcom County

The Community Energy Challenge in Bellingham, Wash., assesses the energy use of homes and small businesses, gives them a plan for improvements, oversees remodeling projects, and finds government and utility rebates for the conservation job. A partnership of Bellingham-based nonprofits Opportunity Council and Sustainable Connections, the challenge aims to reduce the amount of electricity and natural gas used by making energy efficiency efforts easy and affordable. The effort was launched in early 2010 with $4 million, the majority of it from federal Recovery Act funding. It was part of nearly $2.7 billion in clean energy projects that have been funded through the Recovery Act in Washington state. Other funding sources for the Community Energy Challenge included the

704-5900 or suzanne@aesp.org. For more information about the AESP Institute, click here.

Conferences

January 17-21, 2011
AESP's 21st National Conference & Expo
Orlando, FL

May 16-19, 2011
AESP's Spring Conference: Program Implementation and Marketing
Atlanta, GA

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AESP is a member-based association dedicated to improving the delivery and implementation of energy efficiency, energy management and distributed renewable resources. AESP provides professional development programs, a network of energy practitioners, and promotes the transfer of knowledge and experience.

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Submissions are due by the 12th of each month

Environmental Protection Agency and utilities. Those signing up for the program receive an assessment of their energy consumption, including the type of lighting used and how well the building's shell is insulated. A detailed plan is then drawn up with recommendations for improvement. The Community Energy Challenge's goal over the next two years is to help 900 homeowners with energy efficiency improvements to cut the amount of energy their homes use by up to 30 percent, and all the businesses to reduce energy use by at least 5 to 15 percent. The challenge is also creating a revolving loan fund totaling $1.25 million - to which the city of Bellingham, Whatcom County and all six small cities in the county have contributed their federal stimulus dollars - to finance conservation projects that will grow out of the energy audits. The loan loss reserve program provides a bank with limited protection from the first losses on a portfolio of energy efficiency loans. When started by the Community Energy Challenge, the loan program was the first of its kind in the state and among the first in the nation to use stimulus money to encourage private investments.

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From "Energy Challenge Helping Small Businesses, Homes in Whatcom County"
Bellingham Herald (WA) (09/26/10) Relyea, Kie

Industry News

The following executive summaries of current news items were written for Strategies after being compiled from various news sources.

Plans Detailed for KCP&L Energy Efficiency Program

The Kansas Corporation Commission provided information at an Oct. 6 public meeting to Kansas City Power & Light (KCP&L) customers about an energy efficiency program the utility is proposing. The utility seeks to spend $43 million over five years on the effort, with the money raised from customers through an extra charge on electricity bills. Among other things, the money would be used for programmable thermostats that would automatically reduce the use of air conditioners on hot summer days. The utility would get half of the savings because it will not have to use as much fuel or build another power plant. KCP&L has said it needs the incentive because energy efficiency will reduce its revenue. In documents filed with Kansas regulators, the company has threatened to drop its energy efficiency programs if there is not a sufficient incentive. The company says it has been offering energy efficiency programs for five years and has received tremendous support from its customers and groups like the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Sierra Club as well as local businesses. The proposed program is similar to others being implemented around the country. Opponents of the efficiency proposal assert the program is one-sided and provides KCP&L with a larger percentage of the savings than has been granted to utilities in other states. In addition, there are questions about how the savings would be calculated. KCP&L says its energy efficiency programs are its lowest-cost resource and help customers several ways, including reduced energy consumption, an improved environment, and the creation of jobs and economic development opportunities.

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From "Plans Detailed for KCP&L Energy Efficiency Program"
Kansas City Star (10/06/10) Everly, Steve

Cutting-Edge Home Show: Houses Serve as Labs for Energy Innovations

Schaad Companies, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, BarberMcMurry architects, TVA, and other building technology companies have built a unique laboratory of energy efficient residential living, producing data that collaborators hope will ultimately trickle down to homebuilders across the country. The coalition - called the Zero Energy Building Research Alliance or ZEBRAlliance - recently unveiled four homes built to test the latest advances in efficient technologies and building practices that are rendering the Oak Ridge homes 55-60 percent more efficient than their traditionally built counterparts. "The goals really were to merge science with industry to drive innovation into the marketplace," says Schaad Companies CEO Jenny Banner. More than 30 construction companies have provided new products to be tested in the homes. The houses are wired with dozens of sensors to measure the effectiveness of the efficiency measures and will remain unoccupied for two years as researchers measure the results. The homes are computerized to imitate a traditional family's energy use. The lab already has launched a home renovation project and is exploring opportunities on the business side. The research is important as the nation

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Risser, program manager for the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) office of building technologies. According to DOE statistics, the buildings sector is responsible for 40 percent of the nation's carbon emissions and over the next 20 years, 82 percent of growth in electricity demand will be attributed to buildings.

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From "Cutting-Edge Home Show: Houses Serve as Labs for Energy Innovations"
Knoxville News-Sentinel (TN) (09/21/10) Brass, Larisa

Hard Sell for Decoupling

Hawaiian Electric Co. (HECO) and the Hawaii Public Utilities Commission (HA PUC) are implementing decoupling, a new rate-setting mechanism designed to encourage the development of renewable energy and energy conservation by eliminating the economic incentive on the part of the utility to sell more electricity. The system essentially guarantees utilities enough revenue to cover their fixed costs if their electricity sales decline. Proponents say that by decoupling sales from earnings, a utility is free to pursue alternative energy sources or increased efficiency without worrying about hurting its bottom line. Decoupling has gathered steam in recent years as more states have embraced alternative energy sources. The HA PUC concluded that while the decoupling initiative "will put upward pressure on rates," it should improve HECO's access to capital and accelerate the state's transition to clean energy. HECO is assembling a multi-pronged campaign to prepare customers for the change, which could take effect as soon as next year. "We are working on a plan with the state Consumer Advocate to help explain the new ratemaking method to customers, including steps for training customer service reps, bill inserts, Web site explanations, briefings and many other steps," says Lynne Unemori, HECO's vice president for corporate relations. "We know that ... most customers are less interested in the mechanics and really just want to understand how this will impact their bills and what the benefit of the change is." Officials at Idaho Power say that preparing their customers for a decoupling pilot program launched in 2007 was a top priority. One of the biggest challenges was explaining to customers that although the utility would be compensated for lost revenue when electricity consumption fell, individual rate payers could still lower their bills by reducing electricity usage. Unemori notes that Idaho Power uses a tiered rate scale that charges customers more per kilowatt hour as their electricity usage goes up and that HECO is planning a similar system.

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From "Hard Sell for Decoupling"
Honolulu Star-Advertiser (09/20/10) Yonan Jr., Alan

Going Green to the Max

National Grid is sponsoring a project to reduce home energy costs as part of the Massachusetts utility's "Deep Energy Retrofit Pilot Program." Participating houses save money while serving as a laboratory in an experiment on the best ways to make an old house energy efficient. "The deep energy retrofitters are the warriors," says Caitriona Cooke of the Conservation Services Group, a company that advises on energy efficiency. "They're setting an example and leading the way, showing what's possible." The true cost of deep retrofit projects is beyond most homeowners' budgets, but the utility hopes its efforts will show what is possible on the energy efficiency front. Participant Andrew Koh is cutting home energy costs in half through such actions as installing a new water heater in his Boston house that is 96 percent efficient, compared with the 80 percent efficient water heater he had not so long ago. That translates to using nearly a fifth less energy, he notes. The old heater cost about $500, while the new super efficient one sells for "well north of $2,000," Koh says. However, the utility is picking up the initial cost as part of its program, and Koh will save money in reduced utility costs. "Obviously, we wouldn't do all of this if there weren't some funding dollars behind it," he says. "The ultimate goal is the trickle-down effect. Not everybody will go to the extremes we have, but there are a lot of practical lessons to be learned from what we are doing." Meanwhile, the town of Milton, Mass., recently adopted the new Stretch Energy Code mandating energy efficiency, so it can apply to be named a green community by the state. The designation will make Milton eligible for state grants for energy-efficient projects.

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From "Going Green to the Max"
Boston Globe (10/10/10) Seltz, Johanna

Massachusetts Energy Efficiency Programs Gain Attention

Several projects launching now to provide Massachusetts homes with energy efficiency upgrades could break new ground nationally, according to project proponents. Three major efficiency retrofit projects are under way in Boston through Mayor Thomas Menino's "Renew Boston" program and made possible by stimulus funding and utility incentives. One project, an $11.8 million effort that began in August, plans to provide free retrofits to 3,000 qualifying single-family homeowners by early 2012. "We have what I believe will soon be looked at as a national model of energy efficiency service delivery," says Jim Hunt, chief of environment and energy for the city of Boston. The single-family homes will receive energy audits and retrofits, mainly air sealing and insulation, through $10 million in incentives from utilities NSTAR and National Grid, and $1.8 million in funding from the city's stimulus allotment. Homeowners must have income that falls between 60 percent and 120 percent of state median income to get the free retrofit, but through the outreach around the program, a large number of homeowners who earn above the income guidelines will also be referred to a utility-sponsored program that provides 75 percent of the retrofit cost. Mass Energy Executive Director Larry Chretien says he is not aware of a program in another U.S. city that expects to achieve such a high penetration rate.

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From "Massachusetts Energy Efficiency Programs Gain Attention"
Sustainable Business Oregon (10/04/2010)

Engineers Foresee Big Changes for Electric Grid

Officials from the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers say the electric grid could see all sorts of changes in the near future, including new forms of grid storage and power electronics that control large flows of energy more efficiently. Stanley Blazewicz, vice president and global head of technology at the utility National Grid, says government policies to improve energy security and reduce pollution are speeding up innovation. Energy storage could be a disruptive technology to the electric power industry because it would "firm" up the supply of wind and solar power, which are intermittent sources of energy. One option to make wind more reliable is to add storage, according to Blazewicz. The most economically viable grid storage technologies right now are for supplying short periods of power to stabilize the grid with flywheels or batteries, though he adds that utility regulations need to be updated to address such technologies. "Storage breaks a founding principle of the utility industry which is that you can't store the commodity. That principle has driven everything around the industry - the way it's designed, how you regulate it and the way to make money," he says. Another technology that could have a great effect on energy efficiency is solid-state lightening, such as LED bulbs, which allows for elements such as wavelength and temperature to be tuned. Meanwhile, the Agile Delivery of Electrical Power Technology program from the Department of Energy's ARPA-E agency is funding research in power electronics to reduce the amount of wasted energy in power delivery. Improvements in power electronics, which match electrical supply with the load, can make a significant difference to the overall efficiency of the grid and other electric components, such as variable speed industrial motors and power supplies.

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From "Engineers Foresee Big Changes for Electric Grid"
CNet (09/28/10) LaMonica, Martin

How to Cut Energy Use 50 Percent in Commercial Buildings

The U.S. Department of Energy has joined with its National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) to release a couple of technical reports that provide recommendations on how to achieve 50 percent energy savings in large office buildings and hospitals. Titled "Technical Support Document: Strategies for 50 Percent Energy Savings in Large Office Buildings," the

first evaluates the potential for new large office buildings to achieve a 50 percent net onsite energy savings compared to a baseline standard. Researchers found such savings can be achieved in both low-rise and high-rise office buildings in a broad range of U.S. climates. The analysis was conducted in 16 cities that represented different climate zones. Among the energy-efficiency measures that helped researchers reach their goal were installing occupancy sensors in infrequently occupied spaces; adding high-efficiency boilers, chillers, air distribution units and service water heating equipment; and using special controls that shut off equipment when not in use. The second report, "Large Hospital 50 Percent Energy Savings: Technical Support Document," details the technical analysis performed and the resulting design guidance that will enable large hospitals to achieve whole-building energy savings of no less than 50 percent over the above standard. Researchers determined that such savings can be achieved in large hospitals in all eight U.S. climate zones, with the highest energy savings achieved in marine climates.

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From "How to Cut Energy Use 50 Percent in Commercial Buildings"
SustainableBusiness.com (09/27/10)

State Finds Cool Use for Hot Air

Montana's new IT data center is built to withstand an 8.0 earthquake for the next 500 years, has room to double its capacity as needed, and is equipped with extra power supplies and generation, extra security doors and fences, round-the-clock staffing, and a second fiber-optic connection to the Capitol campus. The center uses a unique Kyoto wheel system to perform most of its cooling needs. The new system can lower cooling costs to as low a five cents for each dollar's worth of energy used, says Montana CIO Dick Clark. "This is really one of the lowest cooling costs in the nation for data centers," Clark says. The heart of the system is three wheels, each 16 feet in diameter, made of a loosely wrapped coil of treated aluminum eight inches wide, with small gaps between the bands of metal that allow air to pass through. The system depends on a closed-circuit for the air it cools, so instead of venting heat into the data center, the server cabinets are sealed, and hot air generated by the servers is pumped through the ceiling and out to the Kyoto wheels. "The more heat generated in the room and the cooler it is outside, the more efficient the wheel becomes," says data center manager Ed Sivils.

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From "State Finds Cool Use for Hot Air"
Helena Independent Record (MT) (09/19/10) Harrington, John

Communications Update - Data Standards for Home Energy Management, Renewables Integration

As networking and information technology standards were critical to the Internet's mass adoption, likewise, standards will be essential to guarantee a seamless transition to the intelligent smart grid. In January, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) put out Release 1.0 of its "Framework and Roadmap for Smart Grid Interoperability." Release 1.0 is phase one of a three-tiered plan NIST created to identify and begin adoption of a set of protocols necessary for smart grid conformity, interoperability, and certification. Phase two involves public-private agreements with the goal of developing the road map to guarantee ongoing coordination and ultimately implementation. The final phase is the testing and certification phase, where implementation will begin this year. In Release 1.0, NIST selected 75 standards and specifications that apply to the "ongoing transformation of the smart grid," in addition to 15 priority areas of further investigation. In the seven months since the road map's release, some strides have been made in compliance and implementation. NIST's Smart Grid Interoperability Panel (SGIP) created task forces to begin adopting compliance standards. The SGIP has defined 16 priority action plans that range from wind plant communication to power line provider standards and designated panels for each plan.

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From "Communications Update - Data Standards for Home Energy Management, Renewables Integration"
Electric Light and Power (08/10) Vol. 88, No. 4, P. 51 Tan, Wei-En

Featured Articles

Featured Articles

Stuart Schare

Michael Rutkowski

Todd Lester

The Grid May Be Smart, But the Customer Is Always Right
By: Stuart Schare, Michael Rutkowski, and Todd Lester, Navigant Consulting

As the Smart Grid rolls out to the residential sector, customers observe two aspects of the utility efforts: 1) the “programs” that are often marketed to deliver bill savings, customer control of their energy usage, and a variety of environmental benefits, and 2) the new electric meters that measure consumption and communicate with the customer and the utility. The question is, “Do customers like what they are seeing?”

This series of two articles describes these two aspects of the Smart Grid, presenting findings from a benchmarking study of utility Smart Grid marketing efforts and from a study of meter accuracy in a state where customer complaints threatened to derail millions of dollars in investment in Smart Grid technology. Taken together, the articles convey the importance of customer education and communication in rolling out the Smart Grid, and they demonstrate that no matter how smart the technology, the customer still decides what is a passing grade.

Best Practices in Marketing Residential Smart Grid Programs

The term “Smart Grid” is relatively new in the electric industry, and few utilities have administered programs with the “Smart Grid” moniker or even the term “smart,” such as Xcel’s Smart Grid City and Baltimore Gas & Electric’s Smart Energy Pricing Pilot. However, many utility programs incorporate one or more of the components that are part of typical residential Smart Grid offerings, including:

- Advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) and other two-way communications to and from the home
- Enhanced direct load control and dynamic pricing
- Web-enabled control of thermostats and other home appliances
- Near real-time usage and billing information for customers using home area networks (HANs) and/or the AMI infrastructure

Thus, utilities that are recruiting customers and developing marketing strategies for “new” Smart Grid programs can leverage best practices from a variety of successful Smart Grid, load control, and pricing offerings.

This article discusses overarching themes that emerged from benchmarking efforts to identify common marketing strategies and successful approaches for recruiting and retaining customers in a residential Smart Grid program. Findings were constructed from more than a dozen utility programs through secondary research (including program documentation and Web sites, marketing collateral, and evaluation reports) and interviews with utility program staff and implementation contractors.

Theme 1: Utilities’ primary marketing messages are bill savings and financial incentives. There are many reasons for customers to participate in a Smart Grid offering, including real and perceived environmental benefits; enhanced ability to control comfort levels; and the desire to have a high-tech, Internet-enabled device. However, virtually all programs prominently advertise the economic benefits of participation, and several utilities have emphasized the importance of providing significant financial incentives—especially for

Theme 2: Direct mail is the most common method of enrolling customers. Telemarketing is also a common recruitment method that occurs in a parallel fashion, and it may allow for more rapid enrollment in a pilot where the time prior to program launch is an issue. Mass market advertising is used, in a complementary fashion, to support direct marketing approaches or broader energy efficiency programs, and Web sites are used for virtually all programs as a source of information and to facilitate enrollment.

Theme 3: Smart Grid consumer technologies and customer understanding are still immature, suggesting that utilities should manage customer expectations and not overpromise benefits that may not mature. Smart Grid may sound attractive to many customers, but there are many ways that participation can result in a negative experience. These include smart thermostats that malfunction after a pilot has ended (and support is no longer available), high electric bills due to hot weather and high fuel prices (but attributed to new smart meters by concerned customers), and delays in AMI deployments and related Smart Grid functionality. Utilities must delicately balance a strong message of the benefits of Smart Grid with the reality that not all customers, and not even all participants, will want to take advantage of the new opportunities—and even those who do may not realize the benefits they were expecting.

Theme 4: Marketing programs with dynamic rates can be more difficult than programs encompassing only load control or the provision of enhanced billing and usage information. Customers already have a difficult time reconciling their usage with their monthly bills even on flat rates, and dynamic rates can pose even greater problems. According to one focus group, some customers may not realize that their underlying rate structure is changing. Peak-time rebates were designed to avoid some of the pitfalls of dynamic rates by giving customers only upside (profit) potential; but the uncertainty in the baseline calculations provides little assurance to customers that their efficiency behavior will be rewarded. In short, greater education efforts are needed for "smart rates."

Theme 5: Customer recruitment and retention require different, but complementary, sets of skills and program attributes. Recruitment can usually be done successfully through direct marketing, possibly supplemented by telemarketing; for high-penetration or long-running programs, advertising and brand awareness can also be beneficial. Customer retention: After recruitment, 20% or more of participants may drop out due to ineligibility/incompatibility or from voluntary withdrawals. The better the recruitment screening, the fewer ineligible participants will need to be removed from the program. Customer retention is a function of a well-designed and well-operated program, which may entail embedded program features such as 1) easy-to-use technologies; 2) strong technical support for equipment installation, operation, and maintenance; 3) effective education on dynamic rates and the use of the "smart" technologies provided through the program; and 4) communication with participants regarding their individual benefits (e.g., bill savings) and the collective impact of the program on grid reliability, resource usage, and electric prices.

Residential Smart Grid programs require more than smart technologies—they require smart program design and marketing approaches that recruit appropriate customers and prepare them to succeed. Utility experience in load control, dynamic pricing, and even energy efficiency can help make for intelligently designed and operated programs worthy of the name "Smart Grid."

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Smart Meter Accuracy … Lessons from Texas

In Texas, the three largest electric transmission and distribution service providers (Centerpoint Energy, Oncor, and AEP Texas) began deploying advanced meters and associated systems in late 2008 and early 2009. As of July 2010, these utilities have installed over 1.7 million meters and expect to install approximately 6.5 million meters over the next three years.

In early 2010, the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT), media, and other interested parties noted that customer complaints related to electric bills increased significantly in certain areas in Texas. Much of the media and public attention focused on customers claiming higher electric bills in the months following installation of new advanced meters across the state. Certain consumer interest groups and a number of state legislators called for a moratorium on smart meter deployment, which could have cost the utilities and their customers millions of dollars and the loss of federal grant money. While advanced meter deployment was not stopped, there was a clear loss of public and customer confidence in

Scope of Evaluation

The PUCT commissioned an independent evaluation and investigation into the various questions and concerns raised regarding the deployment of advanced metering systems in Texas. The overall objective was to evaluate the accuracy of advanced meters and metering systems being deployed in Texas and to either re-instill public and customer confidence or identify issues for resolution.

During the course of the evaluation, the Navigant Consulting team reviewed over 18,000 pages of hard copy documents and files and approximately 345 million records (45 gigabytes) of electronic information, including customer billing records for over 1.5 million customers as well as historical meter accuracy test data for over 1.2 million advanced and electromechanical meters. The team also conducted interviews and discussions with over 60 utility personnel responsible for the business processes and controls surrounding the advanced meter deployment and system development, as well as the associated data generated by the advanced meters and systems. In addition, nearly 5,700 meters were independently tested for accuracy by an independent test lab, and the field installation of nearly 500 advanced meters was observed by the Navigant team.

Results

The evaluation yielded the following results:

1. The advanced meters accurately measured and recorded electricity usage. Out of 5,627 meters tested, 99.96% were found to be accurate by ANSI standards of +/- 2%. Side-by-side testing, as well as the review of historical accuracy testing results, indicated the advanced meters were significantly more accurate than the electromechanical meters.
2. The higher electricity bills observed appeared to be due primarily to significant changes in the weather and electricity usage during the recent severe winter in Texas.
3. There was no statistically significant difference in metered usage between customers with advanced meters and customers with electromechanical meters.
4. Processes and control points were in place to ensure the accuracy, effective deployment, and data management of advanced meters by the utilities.

Moving Forward...

The Smart Grid will be ineffective for utilities and consumers unless the key components, including advanced meters and associated systems, are properly developed, deployed, administered, and monitored. Only then will customers trust the new technology to a point where they are comfortable taking actions based on the information these advanced meters provide, thus yielding benefits for themselves, their utility companies, and the environment. While this evaluation shows that the advanced metering infrastructure and associated business processes for each of these three utilities is functioning accurately as planned, this technology is still perceived as “new” to many customers, and a significant ongoing effort will be required to establish and maintain the trust of the customer.

Bob Stull

Highlights from AESP’s Fall Conference
By: Bob Stull, PECI

AESP’s 2010 Fall Conference and Expo in Portland, Oregon, was a success, bringing participants a wealth of information regarding demand response and energy efficiency and how to tie the two together to create real energy savings.

The conference started out with Meg Matt introducing the Royal Rosarians, who gave AESP and all 250 conference attendees a formal welcome from the city of Portland, dressed in their royal outfits, including capes and hats. The Rosarians also provided a brief history of the city and why it is nicknamed “The Rose City.”

Stephen Wright, CEO of Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), was the keynote speaker for the conference. He conveyed to the audience how important energy efficiency and demand response are to BPA and that they are a major part of their business plan,

currently and in the future. In fact, BPA has used energy efficiency to save 3,900 megawatts of energy and $1.7 billion for ratepayers. As well, BPA plans to meet 85% of load growth with energy efficiency.

During the conference sessions on Tuesday, participants learned about the largest Smart Grid demonstration project in the nation going on in the Pacific Northwest. They also learned how to communicate with and educate Smart Grid participants since, ultimately, the success of Smart Grid programs depends on the customers they serve. There was also a session that outlined case studies of actual customers' interaction with the Smart Grid, demand response, and the efficiency gains realized through these programs in California and Wisconsin, again showing the involvement of customers and communities to make the programs work.

The sessions were followed by a rousing round of "speed meetings," where conference participants worked their way around the exhibit hall, getting a four-minute pitch (and a sticker for conference bingo) from each exhibitor. With Meg taking on DJ duties, letting participants know when to move from booth to booth, it was a fun, casual, and unique way to interact with each conference exhibitor. Although no one actually got up to dance to Meg's music selections. The evening wrapped up with a networking session with food and drinks as well as the drawing for the winners of the conference bingo, with great prizes generously donated by OPOWER.

Speed Meetings

Day two of the conference sessions provided attendees with a mix of information for making Smart Grid and demand response work to create energy efficiency. The first session featured a discussion on how to take customer information and data and integrate them into Smart Grid programs that allow for additional energy savings. This assures the focus of the smart grid is on the customer and making it is easy to use and effective. Session two focused on how to engage customers through Web analytics and multi-channel communications to increase not only the level of efficiency they receive from programs, but also their level of satisfaction with the utility providing the programs.

In the closing plenary, speakers again stressed the importance of consumer engagement and developing value propositions that are compelling to the customer to get their participation, because without customer participation in demand response and Smart Grid programs, there will be no energy and cost savings for utilities and their customers. In all, it was an informative and fun conference that provided great insight into the burgeoning Smart Grid and demand response markets for participants. Next comes Orlando! We are looking forward to seeing you there.

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AESP News

Updates and News from AESP

Registration is Now Open for AESP's National Conference

Thought provoking speakers, lively discussions, and interactive networking sessions, mixed with a little bit of fun, await you at AESP's 21st National Conference & Expo, January 17-21, 2011 in Orlando, Fla.

If you thought last year's event was great, this one will be even better. Take a look at the preliminary agenda to get an idea of what's in store.

For additional information about the conference or for a list of available sponsorships, visit www.aesp.org or call (480) 704-5900.

It's Time to Vote!
AESP Board Elections are underway! Look for ballot instructions in your email. Please take the time to vote and make your voice heard!

Midwest Chapter Update

Click here to view the Autumn 2010 issue of the AESP – Midwest Chapter Newsletter. In this issue you will find the following information:

- Upcoming Events and Technologies
- AESP – Midwest Points of Interest
- Training Opportunities and Professional Development
- AESP – Midwest and National Membership Information

If you'd like more information about the newsletter or AESP – Midwest, please contact Jessica Burdette at jburdette@emsenergy.com.

Measuring Behavior Subcommittee Update

The Measuring Behavior subcommittee is gathering resources on best practices for measuring behavior-based programs to share with the AESP member community. Do you have any recent case studies, pilots, articles or papers to contribute? If so, please forward them to subcommittee chair Teri Duncan, tduncan@peci.org.
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New and Renewing Members

New Individual Members
Click here to view a list of new members

New Group Members
Simantel

Renewing Group Members
ClimateMaster
Dayton Power and Light
Fluid Market Strategies
Global Energy Partners
NYSERDA
Research into Action
Snohomish PUD
Tetra Tech
The Cadmus Group
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News Releases and Announcements

AESP Announces the Call for Nominations for its 2011 Energy Awards Program

APOGEE Interactive Addresses American Public Power Association's Customer Connections Conference in California

Bonneville CEO Stresses Need for Smart Grid Programs to Make Economic Sense

The Smart Grid: It's coming
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