



# 2014 Smart Grid Customer Education Awards

## Utilities Pave the Way for Next-Generation Customer Experience

BY JULIET SHAVIT

**THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A MORE EXCITING TIME** to be part of the energy and utilities industry. Technology is transforming the industry and modernizing the electrical system, and a future of smart-energy innovation lies ahead for businesses and consumers.

Building a smarter grid means providing utilities with long-term reliability and security as well as never-before-seen customer benefits. It also introduces a new paradigm, where communication between utilities and customers must become more responsive than ever before as the industry moves from a direct marketing model to one of customer engagement.

SmartEnergy IP™, the leading provider of smart grid customer education solutions, has teamed up with Forbes Custom to offer awards of distinction to four utilities that have demonstrated exemplary customer education and engagement around smart grid.

These awards were presented at a gala dinner hosted by Forbes Custom and SmartEnergy IP on April 28, 2014, in conjunction with the 2014 Smart Grid Customer Education Symposium.

## 2014 Smart Grid Customer Education Award™ Winners

### BALTIMORE GAS AND ELECTRIC Personalizing the Customer Experience Boosts Program Participation



Baltimore Gas and Electric Company's BGE Smart Energy Rewards® program focuses on changing energy awareness as well as behavior by delivering a personalized customer experience.

The utility sent personalized messaging to customers before and after an Energy Savings Day to encourage energy-saving behavior changes. Customers who saw significant savings in these reports received personalized messages encouraging them to repeat their energy-savings actions for future events. Customers who did not see initial savings, especially when compared to their neighbors, were given tips to help them make changes that would reduce their energy consumption.

BGE leveraged ongoing, personalized behavioral messaging before and after events to track progress and encourage continued customer participation.

"The BGE Smart Energy Rewards program allows us to achieve a number of key objectives," says Ruth Kiselewich, director, demand side management programs, BGE. "These included demonstrating the value of smart meters, supporting electric grid reliability during peak events, providing customers tools to reduce energy use and continuing to increase customer satisfaction."

**The result:** An impressive 82% of those participating earned credits on their summer energy bills.

### DELMARVA POWER Smart Grid and Energy Efficiency Programs Team Up to Boost Customer Savings Over Hot Summer Months



The summer of 2013 posed a challenge to Delmarva Power. The company had to introduce two important programs at the same time—a critical peak rebate program, Peak Energy Savings Credit, and a direct load control program called Energy Wise Rewards™. The programs shared complementary messaging to customers about receiving rebates for reducing energy use during peak periods.

In an effort to streamline communication and avoid customer confusion, Delmarva Power made a strategic decision to launch a joint campaign entitled "2 Ways to Save." The joint campaign underscored the importance of energy reduction while discussing how the programs worked together to provide more cost savings to customers.

"Delmarva Power has a vision for a more energy-efficient future," says Karen Lefkowitz, vice president, business transformation, Pepco Holdings, Inc. "We want to adopt the best mix of advanced technologies to meet our customers' energy goals—whether that's helping them get more value for their electricity dollar or more productivity from their businesses. Ultimately, what customers demand will drive innovation and change."

**The result:** 66% of Delmarva Power customers received a credit off their bill through the program.

## SACRAMENTO MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT



### Treating Customers as Partners Supports Successful Smart Grid Rollout

Sacramento Municipal Utility District's (SMUD) SmartSacramento project is one of the nation's most comprehensive smart grid rollouts, encompassing 51 integrated projects and an investment of \$307.7 million. The sheer scale and complexity of the technology required consistent educational outreach to ensure adoption, retention and a seamless customer experience.

A multiyear, multifaceted project of this scale carried tremendous risk. SmartSacramento was deeply integrated into the community, and a key goal was to change customer behavior.

"The connectivity and wealth of information provided by smart meters enabled the SmartSacramento team to envision a new customer relationship, in which we are partners in energy solutions," says Victoria Zavattero, manager of smart grid and of research and development, SMUD.

**The result:** Customer satisfaction has remained at 95% or better throughout installations.

## SAN DIEGO GAS & ELECTRIC Local Partnerships Supercharge Community Engagement



San Diego Gas & Electric's (SDG&E) Energy Solutions Partner Network is a best-in-class community engagement effort that it implemented in partnership with over 80 community-based organizations and nonprofits. These local groups helped connect hard-to-reach customers to important cost- and energy-saving solutions. Materials were translated into more than 14 languages, including Portuguese, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Farsi and Lao.

"By working with the Energy Solutions Partners, SDG&E was able not only to disseminate messages to hard-to-reach audiences in a more effective and customized way, but to enlist the help of valued and trusted partners in these diverse communities who helped engage their audiences to take advantage of cost- and energy-saving solutions," says Caroline Winn, vice president, customer services, SDG&E.

**The result:** Working with trusted community-based partners has allowed SDG&E to anticipate the changing requirements and concerns of evolving communities while communicating more effectively with them.

## Board of Advisors



**JEFF CONKLIN**  
Senior Director, J.D. Power and Associates

Jeff Conklin leads the energy utility practice at J.D. Power and Associates. Conklin has more than 30 years of experience in the energy utilities industry, working in customer care, distribution operations, and sales and marketing.

Conklin earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Duke University. He received a master's degree in management from the J.L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University.



**BECKY HARRISON**  
CEO, GridWise Alliance

Becky Harrison is the CEO of the GridWise Alliance. Founded in 2003, this coalition of public and private stakeholders advocates for the transformation of the electric grid to achieve a sustainable energy future. The Alliance facilitates effective collaboration among stakeholders to promote the adoption of innovative smart grid solutions that will intelligently integrate the actions of all users and devices connected to it.

Harrison has a B.S. in electrical engineering from the University of South Carolina and an MBA from Wake Forest University, and is a registered professional engineer in North Carolina and South Carolina.



**PAUL ZUMMO**  
Manager of Policy Research and Analysis, American Public Power Association

Paul Zummo joined the American Public Power Association (APPA) in 2005 and is the manager of policy research and analysis. He produces annual statistical publications and analyzes industry statistics. He also represents APPA's interests on industry-wide task forces focused on developing standards for smart grid data privacy and customer engagement, and is responsible for research on pricing-related issues such as demand response, time-of-use rates and distributed generation. Zummo has a B.A. in political science and history from Emory University and a Ph.D. in politics from the Catholic University of America.



**PETER KELLY-DETWILER**  
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Peter Kelly-Detwiler is a Forbes.com contributor who writes about a wide variety of energy-related issues. Kelly-Detwiler is the principal and co-founder of NorthBridge Energy Partners, LLC, and has been active in the field of energy for almost 25 years, both in the United States and overseas, spending 15 of those years in competitive power markets.