



E Source Blog

Welcome to the E Source Blog! Our staff will share insights and observations about life at E Source, our events, our research, and other fun stuff. 

- **In the Energy-Efficiency Lab with Cockroaches ... Seriously**

March 28, 2012 | Lee Hamilton - Research Associate | [1 comments](#)

Have you ever been mired in the details of an energy-efficiency project during your career? If so, you may have found it tedious and overwhelming (aka not fun)—whether it was setting reduction targets, vetting new technologies for your DSM portfolio, or simply verifying claimed savings.

This is very disappointing to me because I find efficiency projects to be a lot of fun. There's just something about implementing a new technology or process that gets this nerd's engineer's blood pumping. And, if I can do these things successfully—i.e., maintain the same level of performance by using less energy—then I will bore everyone I see about it for days.

That's what energy efficiency is to me: fun, exciting, pioneering—and hopefully successful. So in that vein, I'd like to present a couple of creative approaches to saving energy that I've come across lately where the innovators are clearly having more fun with energy efficiency than most.

- Phantom load plug ejector: I'm not gonna lie, this thing hits on every geeky fiber in my body. The PumPing Tap is a spring-loaded wall ...

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- **All-Points Bulletin: Toxic Terminology on the Loose at Utilities**

March 23, 2012 | Justin Rickard - Research Manager | [3 comments](#)

Sergeant Rickard, here. I'm the E Source Utility Customer Experience Cop (or ESUCEC for short). Self-designated, of course. Sometimes I can't believe it's not a paid position with health benes and 10 weeks paid vacation. It's a hard job, you know? But I digress. As the ESUCEC, I'd like to bring up something with you today that is of the utmost importance to the longevity of the utility industry. There are a couple of terms that, despite their absolutely antiquated nature, continue to percolate in the energy industry culture. These almost-cruel terms are often used when referring to the folks who pay their hard-earned monies to utilities. I shudder (insert Edgar Allen Poe shudder) to even think about typing them here. These terms are "ratepayers" and "meters." Oh, the horror!

Calling people ratepayers or meters further reinforces the fact that people served by regulated utilities don't have a choice when it comes to their energy needs. When customers don't have a choice about using a product or service, they can become easily dissatisfied. For utilities, dissatisfied customers become expensive to ...

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Categories: [Customer satisfaction & loyalty](#)

- **Get to Know an E Sourcer: Sarah Fiebiger**

March 16, 2012 | Kym Wootton - Senior Manager of Marketing Communications | [1 comments](#)

Sarah and I are in the Toastmasters Club together, and one thing I've learned about her from her speeches (besides the fact that she's incredibly well spoken) is that she is crazy about cats. Thankfully, she's not a crazy cat lady, but I will reveal that she had

one of the Lolcats in her internal e-mail signature for awhile. Sarah is one of our researchers, and she'll blow you away with how mega smart she is. Let's put it this way: She reads about human genetics and quantum science for fun.

Nickname: Sirrah or Kay Sirrah

Hometown: I was born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, then moved around Colorado during my school years. I consider Colorado to be my home!

What you do at E Source: I do research, writing, and analysis on a wide variety of customer experience topics such as credit and collections, billing and payment, prepaid metering, account management, e-business, and the customer-facing side of smart grid.

Why you like working at E Source: I love the people I work with because they're so intelligent, fun, and friendly, which creates a fantastic environment to work in. ...

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- **Three Ways to Connect with E Source on LinkedIn**

March 15, 2012 | Jenny Field - Marketing Manager | [0 comments](#)

A few months ago I helped my dad set up his LinkedIn account. He actually entrusted me with his account password so I could log in and update his profile on his behalf. Then we scheduled a time to talk on the phone for me to guide him through this foreign social media tool.

Thirty minutes into "training," I felt like I had contemplated the deep meaning of LinkedIn and its role in this world. His questions completely halted my original plan to show him around the website. Instead, we focused on who creates a profile and why and whether he should accept invitations from people he doesn't know in his industry or even from his own family and friends. "Most of my family isn't even in my industry," he very accurately argued.

I'm not suggesting that you connect with my dad via LinkedIn, but here are three ways for you to connect with E Source on LinkedIn.

One: Connect with E Source Staff

Don't be shy. There are lots of E Sourcers on LinkedIn. We write reports for you, e-mail with you, and hang out with you at our conferences, so let's connect through the closest social ...

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- **Get to Know an E Sourcer: Kerry McDonough**

March 2, 2012 | Kym Wootton - Senior Manager of Marketing Communications | [0 comments](#)

Kerry was part of the Customer Service team when I joined E Source, and she continually blew me away with all of her technical knowledge. She's especially good at creating better ways to work with our systems. It came as no surprise to me when she was promoted last year to our Business Technology team. Kerry is driven, innovative, super smart, and really fun—pretty much everything that E Source is all about!

Nickname: Kezza

Hometown: Syracuse, New York

What you do at E Source: I'm our business applications administrator. I'm responsible for the administration, maintenance, and end-user support for our critical in-house applications.

Why you like working at E Source: First and foremost, it's definitely the people. I love working with such a smart, diverse, fun group of people. Second, I really appreciate how much the management team and executives invest in employee

growth and development. As someone just starting out on their career path, that's been an invaluable resource.

Something most people don't know about you: I'm a Certified ...

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- **Servers May Be Eating a Big Piece of the Office Plug Loads Pie**

February 29, 2012 | Jenny Field - Marketing Manager | [1 comments](#)

In January, E Source hosted a web conference with the California Energy Commission's Public Interest Energy Research (PIER) division called Office Plug Loads: Energy Use and Savings Opportunities. This web conference, with presenters from New Buildings Institute (NBI) and Ecova, attracted several attendees and plenty of follow-up questions on related topics.

To the 200-plus attendees, thank you! You were exceptionally engaged, contributing insightful comments throughout the entire 75 minutes. One attendee even asked a question through chat before our presenters started speaking!

The web conference quickly grabbed my attention when we got to slide 9. Cathy Higgins of NBI showed attendees how much of the plug-load total consists of server loads. If you follow the yellow arrow, that small portion of the blue 30 percent pie slice excludes server loads, leaving the rest to the data needs of the offices in this study.

As you can imagine, we started getting server-efficiency questions right away. However, the presenters purposefully focused their research on the other plug-load sources, per the guidelines of their research study and ...

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Categories: [Office equipment](#), [Commercial](#)

- **What's Happening with Demand Response?**

[FERC Order No. 745—One Year Later](#)

February 28, 2012 | Jonathan Nelson - Research Associate | [1 comments](#)

It's been almost a year since the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issued Order No. 745. This landmark ruling was intended to effectively level the playing field for demand-response (DR) resources in energy markets across the United States. As we approach the anniversary of Order No. 745 next month (FERC issued the Order on March 15, 2011), I've noticed increased utility interest in the topic, especially regarding current technical changes in the market (AutoDR and openADR) and among utilities that want to offer more-robust and advanced DR programs to customers (demand response 2.0) that are beyond the traditional model of using DR only in emergency situations. I thought I'd share a few insights I recently gleaned from my own research on the topic. First, some quick-and-dirty background info.

A long, long time ago (actually not so long ago) in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Congress directed FERC to remove the unnecessary barriers to DR resources participating in organized wholesale electricity markets. Last March, FERC met this obligation with Order No. 745. The landmark ruling basically requires grid operators to pay DR resources the same ...

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Categories: [Federal Energy Policy](#), [Energy information tools & services](#), [Energy](#), [Resource & Environmental Management](#)

- **Get Social with E Source on Twitter**

February 24, 2012 | Jenny Field - Marketing Manager | [0 comments](#)

When I first joined Twitter with my @ESourceJenny account, I was so anxious to send my first tweet out into the world. I signed up with the intention of writing about

building efficiency topics, especially as they related to the California Energy Commission project that I've been working on. Here's that first tweet:

What does research on a sub-sea cable from Iceland to Europe have to do with building efficiency? Or the California Energy Commission? It's humbling to look back on that tweet. A co-worker eventually advised me to first listen to what others on Twitter had to say before blasting the world with random bits of information.

I'm still working on listening and engaging rather than "blasting," and I'd like to share a few of my favorite Twitter conversations from my fellow E Sourcers. You'll notice that I finally migrated from the regular Twitter interface shown above to the more sophisticated TweetDeck interface seen below. #BehindtheTimes

In this tweet, @ESourceKevinV, also known as Dr. Kevin Vranes, injects his dry sense of humor into his passion for climate-change policy from ...

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Categories: [Social media](#)

- **Get to Know an E Sourcer: Dave Charnick**

February 17, 2012 | Kym Wootton - Senior Manager of Marketing Communications | [0 comments](#)

I consider Dave Charnick to be one of the happiest people I work with, and that's for good reason—I'm not sure I've ever seen him without a huge smile on his face. Although he can quote *Caddyshack* by heart, he's serious about his job and loves working with energy managers. We're so glad to have him on our team!

Nickname: Carl Spackler, Assistant Greenskeeper, Bushwood Country Club

Hometown: Flushing, New York

What you do at E Source: Besides comedian, humorist, and overall fun guy? I'm a sales manager and sell energy-efficiency and sustainability solutions to major end users, marketers, energy service companies, and consultants.

Why you like working at E Source: The people make it special.

Something most people don't know about you: Two things: I've seen the Grateful Dead play over 150 concerts in six different countries and I once saved a man from bleeding to death after he accidentally shot himself in the thigh.

Check out this video of Dave to learn more:

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- **New Way to Measure Utility Midsize Business Customer Satisfaction**

[E Source Develops Midsize Version of Gap and Priority Benchmark](#)

February 13, 2012 | Sarah Fiebiger - Senior Research Associate | [0 comments](#)

Are you a fan of the E Source Gap and Priority Benchmark, a survey of utility large business customer satisfaction? Did you eagerly await the results of the 2011 study? Have you ever sat around the office daydreaming of the day when E Source would similarly measure the satisfaction of your midsize business customers? If so, then it's time to get excited! We've granted your wish. We're about to field the E Source Midsize Business Gap and Priority Benchmark: 2012. I'm finalizing the survey questions and preparing to field the survey next month—and I'm already excited! I can't wait to dig into the results and see what we can learn from them.

With this new study, E Source can help you and your business customer service team identify the top priorities for delivering outstanding value to your midsize business customers. We use a brief online survey of your midsize business customers—businesses that don't have an assigned account rep—to assess their most important needs. The survey then examines the performance of your utility and your business customer reps in meeting those needs. This allows you ...

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[« first](#) [< previous](#) ... [8](#) [9](#) [10](#) [11](#) **[12](#)** [13](#) [14](#) [15](#) [16](#) ... [next >](#) [last »](#)

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