

Thought Leaders Speak Out 2021

ENGAGING CUSTOMERS WITH TECHNOLOGY

Key Takeaways: Offering Customers Personalized, Subscription Energy Bundles – AES' Plus Subscription Model

A Fireside Chat with AES and Uplight (December 2021)

The Institute for Electric Innovation's *Thought Leaders Speak Out 2021: Engaging Customers with Technology* series brings together electric company executives with customer responsibilities to share lessons learned and the results of successful customer engagement strategies.

The seventh dialogue of the series focused on offering residential customers personalized energy bundles using a subscription model and featured a discussion between Annmarie Reynolds of AES Corporation and Adrian Tuck of Uplight. These personalized energy bundles for customers can include green energy, energy use optimization, a flat bill, and flexible payment options. Lisa Wood of IEI provided welcome remarks, Bob Rowe of NorthWestern Energy moderated the discussion, and Lon Huber of Duke Energy provided closing remarks. Key takeaways are summarized and highlighted below.

[Click Here for the Agenda and Speaker Bios](#)

[Watch NorthWestern Energy's Opening Remarks Here](#)

Personalized energy bundles benefit customers and electric companies.

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Uplight shares how electric companies can build and deliver bundled program offerings for customers within six weeks using the Plus subscription product. Bundling a fixed energy bill with autopay, payment options such as Apple Pay and Google Pay, and energy device management increases enrollment for each program significantly.

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AES explains how their subscription offering (Plus) simplifies customer energy engagement via a mobile app and highlights how a flat bill, for example, addresses customer interest in a predictable monthly bill. More visibility into customer energy use and the potential for dispatchability also benefits electric companies in providing more affordable, clean, and reliable energy for all customers.

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Uplight describes new features in the 2022 Plus subscription product such as managed EV charging, simplified bill payments for roommates, and voluntary contribution to other customers' bills.

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AES addressed overcoming stakeholder concerns about how personalized, subscription bundles impact non-participants and whether customers really understand the subscription. AES explains how they can quickly test stakeholder concerns and learn from customers in the pilot, giving them options to engage.

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Uplight shares the results from a five electric company pilot proving that a personalized, flat bill bundled with smart thermostat energy optimization can reduce end-use energy consumption by an average of 6% and shift energy out of a 3-hour, high price or high carbon time period, by 23% - 45% during the summer cooling season.

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AES describes how preliminary data show that customers often switch to the subscription model after experiencing events (or behavior changes) that impact energy usage and that customers view the subscription as an opportunity to “fix” the change in their energy usage.

Closing Remarks

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AES emphasizes how subscription energy models respond to customer preferences. AES is learning from customers and seeing the potential for energy communities.

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Uplight describes how telecom and other industries proved that bundled products work. The goal is to create simple products for customers – for example, as much energy as needed, guilt free, at a fixed price (with the hardware and capabilities bundled into the service). The simpler you make it for the customer and the more complex it is in reality, the greater the role for the electric company. Electric company plus technology is a vital combination to deliver the energy future.

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Duke Energy summarizes how personalized, flat bill energy bundles are a triple win: participating customers get simplicity and predictability; non participating customers get more affordable, clean, reliable energy; and electric companies get compensated for doing a good job.