

powering the

A look back at the event that highlighted electric utility and technology company partnerships and the value of electricity. By Tara T. Young

On March 22, the Edison Foundation and its Institute for Electric Efficiency hosted an invitation-only conference, Powering the People 2.0, at the Newseum in Washington, DC. The event brought together nearly 350 power industry leaders, corporate executives, policy makers, regulators, and members of the national media to discuss the electric revolution shaping the 21st century.

JOE RIGBY, Pepco Holdings' chairman, president, and CEO, kicked off the conference by talking about our energy future and the opportunity that the electric power sector has to lead the second electric revolution and to fundamentally shape and change the 21st century. Tony Earley, chairman, CEO, and president of PG&E Corporation and then-chairman of the Edison Foundation, followed with opening remarks addressing the challenges facing the electric power industry and describing the industry's outlook.

"The growth, prosperity, and innovation that electrification set in motion have been so extraordinary that the resulting demands on the grid will require us to rethink the system that got us here," said Earley. "The electrification of the 20th century dramatically changed the way we live. Now, in the 21st century, we are facing technology, policy, and energy challenges. So today, our industry can't rest. We have to adapt. We have to develop new solutions. We have to re-envision and rein-



Tony Earley

vent what we've built over the last century. This is an incredibly exciting challenge, and it's an opportunity for all of us who are in this business."

One of the major opportunities is in the transportation sector, and Powering the People 2.0 featured an electric transportation experience. Edison Electric Institute (EEI) president Tom Kuhn discussed the importance of electrifying the last major sector of the economy and the challenges and opportunities that face us as we transition to electric vehicles and other forms of electric transportation.

New Technologies and Engaging Consumers

Throughout the day, electric company leaders, energy technology and information technology (IT) company executives, military and government officials, policy makers, and consumer engagement experts all participated in presentations and dialogues.



Lisa Wood

"The purpose of Powering the People 2.0 was to bring together electric utility leaders and technology company partners to talk about innovations and new technologies that are fostering change in how we generate, manage, use, and think about electricity," said Lisa Wood, executive director of the Edison Foundation's Institute for Electric Efficiency (IEE). "It is very much about what we can do with all of these new technologies, how to motivate people to embrace the fu-

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INSTITUTE FOR Electric Efficiency

ture, and how to engage consumers in managing energy.”

The New Energy Innovation Marketplace

Paul Bonavia, UniSource Energy’s chairman, president, and CEO, moderated a panel focused on how advances in new energy technologies are creating distinct roles and opportunities for policy makers, scientists, entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, and electric utility companies. The discussion featured Nick Akins, president and CEO of American Electric Power; Cheryl Martin, deputy director for commercialization of the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E); Paul Leggett, executive director of the global power and utility group for Morgan Stanley; and William Conlon, senior vice president of engineering for AREVA Solar.

“You would be amazed how many ideas come into utility companies because tech firms are looking for hosts, and we really have to think about and prioritize the projects that make sense for us,” said AEP’s Akins. “The venture capital side of things provides that window into new technologies and provides it in a way that’s unbiased. If venture capital firms see opportunities for investment in companies that have good ideas, ideas that we—electric utilities—can filter through them, that helps us make sure that, in the move from bench-top to commercial scale, we’re really using our time and money efficiently and investing in the right technologies. We know that in the future our customers will want different things. So, for an electric utility, the venture firm

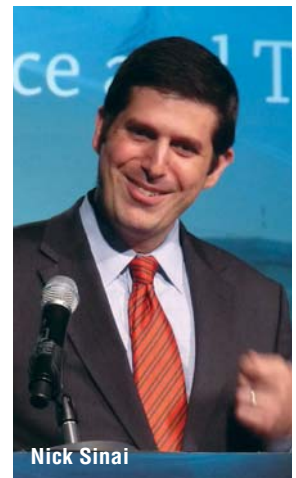


relationship can provide a good platform for evaluating technologies on our system.”

The Green Button Initiative

Nick Sinai, a senior advisor with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, discussed the White House’s “Green Button” initiative, a voluntary industry effort to provide a standard format for energy usage data generated by smart meters and to make that data available to customers on participating utility websites. He pointed to the benefits of that availability and the privacy challenges that went along with it.

“Who knows? We might see an ‘Angry Birds’ app for energy,” said Sinai. “But we also know that consumers are going to take advantage of innovative services and applications if they feel confident that their data are secure. And privacy has never been more important than today in the age of the internet.”



Our Nation’s Military: Transforming Their Energy Future

U.S. energy policy and energy use are linked strongly to America’s national security, and electric companies and the military are collaborating on several initiatives to secure the nation’s energy future. Amy Harder, energy and environment correspondent for *National Journal Daily*, moderated a

Tara Young is senior communications specialist at Edison Electric Institute.



Dan Pink

Smart Talk

From an interview with IEE executive director Lisa Wood by Smart Grid News founding editor and chief analyst Jesse Berst at *Powering the People 2.0*.



Berst: It seems like the pace of adoption [of technological innovation] is beginning to increase.... Is that what you're finding?

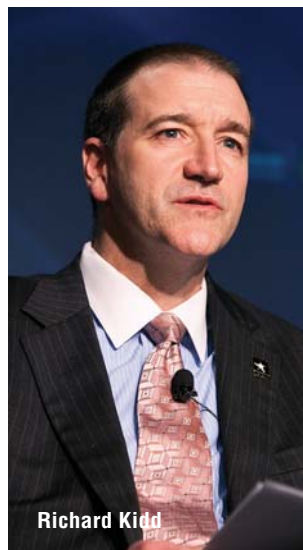
Wood: The utility industry has realized that we all need to work together to make this work. And there's a lot more reaching out across borders to bring technology companies into the utility business. But also

technology companies are realizing that they can't do this without the industry that already has the customers. It's a two-way street.

To see the complete video, visit www.edisonfoundation.net/IEE

panel that included Susan Story, president and CEO of Southern Company Services; Richard Kidd, deputy assistant secretary of the Army for energy and sustainability; and Dorothy Robyn, deputy under secretary of defense for installations and environment for the Department of Defense.

"An energy-secure Army installation has three attributes: energy efficient buildings, onsite power generation or power storage of some sort, and a smart micro-grid to connect the two," said Kidd. "Over the past years, the Army has taken



Richard Kidd

significant steps to improve the energy efficiency on our installations. We've instituted a number of policies and have worked through the budget process to triple the amount of appropriations that we will apply on our built environment. Additionally, we are supplementing these investments through partnerships with energy service companies and our utilities."

How Do You Motivate People?

What truly motivates people in the workplace? What

strategies can electric company executives use to inspire their employees to do extraordinary things in times of change? Dan Pink, a leader on economic transformation and author of *A Whole New Mind* (New York: Penguin Group, 2005) and *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*, (New York: Riverhead Hardcover, 2009) addressed those questions in a thought-provoking keynote speech.

"Next week, if you have any kind of leadership role, if you want to answer these questions about breaking silos or cross-

Powering the People 2.0 featured two exhibit areas—Electric Avenue and Innovation Alley—where electric companies, energy technology companies, and IT companies demonstrated how their partnerships and collaborations are leading the way toward smart homes, smart buildings, and grid modernization. The local FOX News affiliate aired live reports from the exhibits.



industry collaborations, have two fewer conversations about *how* and two more about *why*,” said Pink. “And you’ll see an uptick in performance. Here’s the thing: Human beings are not automatons. They’re people like you and me, and by their very nature they want to do good work. They want to contribute to the world. And if we just get out of their way and give them a reason for doing it, you might be surprised.”

Engaging the New Energy Consumer

New technologies and products are transforming the way consumers use and think about energy. Lisa Hillenbrand, Procter & Gamble’s global marketing director, discussed the challenges and opportunities that face electric companies as they seek to engage customers in the new energy marketplace. She focused on the idea of “people power” and related that to P&G’s objective always “to delight the consumer.”

“Innovation does not stop with invention,” said Hillenbrand. “In fact, invention is just the very first step. I know it feels good. You’ve got something. It’s invented. But if people don’t adopt it, it’s not an innovation. Successful innovation needs to delight people. And we need to get to the point with smart grid technologies where more and more people are delighted with the solutions you guys are proposing.”



Lisa Hillenbrand

Watch videos of the panel discussions and the keynote address at www.EdisonFoundation.net/IEE, where you can also read colloquies of the discussions. And plan now to attend the next Powering the People event on March 21, 2013.

Peter Delaney, OGE Energy’s chairman, president, and CEO, noted that “smart meters have changed the way we interact with our customers and how our customers view and use electricity.” Delaney moderated a subsequent discussion about ways to engage the new energy consumer with Hillenbrand; Peter Honebein, founder of the Customer Performance Group; Jon Lanning, senior manager of the home management platform for Best Buy; and Judith Schwartz, president of To the Point.

“We’re at the beginning of a sea change in the electric power sector,” said IEE’s Wood in closing the conference. “Innovation and technology powered by electricity are driving that change. From electric transportation to new applications and new technologies for consumers, businesses, and our military, the electric utility industry and its technology partners are fostering change and innovation across all sectors of the economy. We really are on the verge of a second electric revolution.” ♦