



Helping Customers Take Advantage of Time-of-Use Pricing

Oklahoma Gas & Electric (OG&E) embarked on installing its Advanced Metering Infrastructure in 2008, rolled out their Smart Meters in phases, and offered a “SmartHours” program beginning in Norman, Oklahoma in 2010. The company now has completed Smart Meter deployment, installing more than 823,000 Smart Meters throughout its service area.

Each step of the way, OG&E has tested and fine-tuned how it is engaging customers to help them take full advantage of what its “Positive Energy Smart Grid” can offer. Today, an integral part of the utility’s strategy is having tools available on the “myOGEpower” web portal. There, customers can analyze their energy bills, see the energy they are using and its costs, understand dynamic pricing and learn which rate plan is best for them.

It's time ... to take advantage of **SmartHours**.

Utility and Customers Working Together To Reduce Peak Demand

By the end of the 2012 summer cooling season, OG&E had enrolled more than 44,000 customers in the SmartHours program. Collectively, those customers helped OG&E meet its target of 70 megawatts of load reduction; the goal by 2014 is a reduction of 210 megawatts and lowering peak demand.



Easy-to-Digest Content on the Web

OG&E provides information on its website about how each of these programs work and the electricity prices customers in Oklahoma and Arkansas pay based on their involvement. Participating customers can learn how to lower their costs by avoiding peak demand periods where the standard per-kilowatt hour (kWh) price for electricity of about 9 cents can increase to the high-peak tier price of between 22–27 cents per kWh and even to the critical-peak tier of 45–46 cents per kWh (not including taxes and fees).

A robust set of FAQs — 39 at year-end 2012 — can easily be found on the company’s web site. Each provides forthright answers to the myriad questions customers are bound to have and allows them to digest the information at their own pace.

Addressing Skeptics on Their Terms

In order to reduce perceived risk of these new pricing programs, OG&E provides a “best bill” guarantee which ensures customers will not pay more for the first 12 months they are on the SmartHours rate than they would have paid on the standard flat rate. If a customer pays more at the end of the 12 months, OG&E credits their account for the difference. Providing customers with a no-risk option to try these new programs helps them adjust their electricity usage away from the peak hours of 2–7 p.m. weekdays.

To head off questions about the meter accuracy after the installation of Smart Meters, OG&E left the old meter in place for one month and took a picture of its reading as evidence that the new meter was accurate going forward.

Helping Customers Go Beyond 'SmartHours'

OG&E's SmartHours Plus program offers customers a state-of-the-art communicating programmable thermostat coupled with the time-based rates of the SmartHours program. With the technology of the SmartTemp Thermostat customers can take better advantage of time-based pricing.

OG&E is seizing on a trend toward video tutorials to supplement the information in printed manuals. The instructional videos speak in conversational tones using language every customer should find easy to watch and understand.

To boost customer enrollment, OG&E tests and learns from different tactics. Email advertisements for OG&E's online portal included a click-through link to the website that was hugely successful. A time-of-use direct mailing, on the other hand, which included a self-addressed and stamped response card initially elicited only a 1% enrollment rate.



Read What OG&E Customers Have to Say:

John Fagan

"We know we had a huge electrical load in this house ... (it) helped to learn where we could reduce that energy load ... The program for my wife and I is a game: how can we shave another kilowatt hour? ... How do we stay in our comfort zone? ... You can live better in this OG&E program ... You pick up good habits ... We saved a ton of money."



Kris, Kelly and Lilly Glenn

"If we could change our energy habits, that was a smart thing to do ... Now we're both very conscious of what 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. (peak time) means ... I don't think the changes were hard. We just made little changes here and there ... We've been able to save money and put it towards things like baby food ... I've told everybody and their dog: 'Hey, sign up for SmartHours' ... If people make changes across not only the state but the country, it really adds up for her future."



Miranda Kitchen

"We got into the SmartHours program, honestly, to save money ... We made all kinds of changes to adjust to the peak hours ... I'd say on average we saved \$50 to \$75 every month ... I don't think the changes were hard on anyone in my family ... Once you get used to making the changes, it's really easy ... The program has changed how I think about using energy ... It makes you aware of how much energy you're using and how much money you can save."



Matthew McCoy

"SmartHours started to give me some tools. I could see in real time what was going on in my home. I could also look online and see what my trend in usage was. I started to figure how unplugging the computer, changing out the lights started to impact my load and started to impact my savings every month ... In my 2,000-square-foot home, I went from \$191 in the peak of summer to only \$71 in the peak of summer ... It's very easy to do ... You get green for being green."



Video of testimonials about the myOGEpower portal are available in our resource library at smartgridcc.org: <http://smartgridcc.org/category/resource-library/smart-grid-benefits-resource-library/success-stories>