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Consumers Like Smart Grid for More Than Just Saving Money

SGCC Consumer Pulse Study reveals consumer appeal over range of benefits

ATLANTA, GA – January 22, 2012 – Many non-financial benefits of smart grid upgrades are as compelling as those that can save consumers money, according to second-wave findings of the SGCC Consumer Pulse Study, a national survey of U.S. energy consumers conducted for the Smart Grid Consumer Collaborative (SGCC) by Market Strategies International.

The Wave II survey, a follow-up to the initial study begun in August, was conducted with live interviewers by telephone from November 12 to December 6, 2011. A national RDD (random digit dialed) landline and cell phone sample was used. To qualify, a respondent had to be over the age of 18 and a head of household. The sample design included an oversample of key ethnic and age groups to ensure full representation of the population. Data were weighted by age, ethnicity, gender and region to align with the US national population. The margin of error for the total sample size of 1,003 is ± 3.1 percentage points at a confidence level of 95%.

Survey participants were asked to rate the importance of seven potential benefits of smart grid and smart meters, including ease of connecting renewable energy sources to the electric grid, reduced outages, new cost-saving rate plans, fewer new power plant investments, increased quality of power delivery, availability of near real-time energy use information and more accurate billing. Critically, each benefit was found to be important to 80% or more of respondents.

“We found that the most commonly-discussed benefits like cost saving and greater power reliability, while important, represent only a part of a broader spectrum of smart grid and smart meter benefits that are appealing to the average consumer,” said SGCC Executive Director Patty Durand. “To achieve greater impact upon a diverse customer base, utilities should take care to bring these other benefits into their marketing messages.”

Consumer education about smart grid remains vital, results show, as awareness and understanding are still lacking. 51% of consumers, a number unchanged since September 2011, say they have never heard the term smart grid, and another 21% say that they have heard the term but don’t know much about what it means. The majority of consumers who are familiar with smart grid concepts have positive feelings about it. Consumers become increasingly favorable toward the technology after receiving more information about it.

Starting tomorrow, members of the public may access topline findings of the study and members may access the full report at SGCC’s website, www.smartgridcc.org.

About Smart Grid Consumer Collaborative

Smart Grid Consumer Collaborative (SGCC), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, brings together consumer

and environmental advocates, technology vendors, research laboratories and electric utilities to accelerate the adoption of a consumer-safe and consumer-friendly smart grid.

About Market Strategies International

[Market Strategies International](#) is a market research consultancy with deep expertise in the energy industry, among others.

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