



Working Group 4: Customer and Community Participation

Meeting No. 2

May 2, 2018

MEETING SUMMARY

[Note: descriptions of comments and discussion are condensed summaries and paraphrases]

Agenda Item I: Opening, NextGrid Background, Purpose, Process

Working Group Leader Marty Cohen welcomed participants and said that the current agenda for WG4 could be described as addressing four Es: Engagement, Education, Empowerment and Equity. He noted that the meeting would include three presentations -- by Ameren Illinois, ComEd, and Elevate Energy. The next meeting would include perspectives from the attorney general's office, Citizens Utility Board and others to represent communities and customers, including low and moderate income communities and other customers. He described the three core issues facing NextGrid as how to address the changes brought about by the availability of new data, including granular AMI interval data, the proliferation of Distributed Energy Resources and related technologies, and the movement toward electrification or transportation and other applications. He said that there were four meetings scheduled and he was tentatively planning for the final meeting to focus on policy, programs and pilots that might be appropriate responses to impending changes in the electricity landscape. He further stated that there would not be time in four sessions for all points of view to be the subject of presentations, but documents and perspectives posted to the shared drive by WG4 members would be part of the source materials for drafting the WG report.

Agenda Item II: Participant Introductions

WG4 Members in attendance introduced themselves and identified organizations they represent.

Agenda Item III: Presentations on Consumer Engagement and Education Strategies

[Note: The following summaries of presentations are condensed and paraphrased. Presentation decks are available on the working group shared drive and will be publicly available on the commission NextGrid website.]

Presentation #1: "Ameren Illinois -- Choices and Options for Utility Customers," presented by Ryan Ellen (Director, Advanced Metering Strategy and Implementation), Colleen Ewell (Director, Customer Engagement), and Tucker Kennedy (Director, Community and Public Relations).

In summary:

Ameren regularly studies the needs and desires of its customers so it can adjust and expand its consumer information offerings to meet them as customer expectations rise. Customers want it to be easy to do business with the utility; they want a personalized experience that meets their preferences, choice and control to manage costs, and timely responsiveness from the utility.

The company commissioned a customer study that identified five residential energy demand segments into which customers could be divided to better understand them and how to engage with them. Using internal and third-party studies, surveys, focus groups, tracking of marketing campaigns and other techniques, Ameren continually gathers intelligence to use in updating its engagement and education methods and offerings.

All electric and gas customers will have smart meters by the end of 2019 and access to personalized energy data. This will support Demand Response and Real Time Pricing programs and speed outage restoration, improve reliability, reduce estimated bills and provide other benefits to customers. The online customer portal will allow online access to customized unique information including billing history, usage data, analysis, weekly summaries, management tools, energy efficiency programs and consumption reduction tips, and other information. Updated bill statements now include monthly usage comparisons, average daily usage and other messages in addition to detailed delivery and supply charges.

Also available will be Green Button functionalities allowing download of data and provision of data to customer-authorized third parties who may provide new services and products and “prosumer” opportunities. All these functionalities will help create seamless connectivity and ease of use for tomorrow’s customer. Data analytics can be applied to support new applications, network planning, increase operational efficiency, improve maintenance, prevent public safety hazards, and engage customers.

Questions and discussion among members and presenters:

- Ameren has some ability to disaggregate data to provide consumption estimates at appliance level. Online portal will be the vehicle for presenting this type of information. Data is generally retained for four years and available to be analyzed by third parties, either customer-authorized or anonymously as per ICC rules. Green Button AMI data functionalities presently available to residential customers, with C&I functionality expansion planned.
- Rules on data authorization and privacy are subject to ongoing ICC proceedings. Green Button functionalities are residential only at this time.
- Utilities file annual publicly available AIPR reports with the ICC detailing AMI deployment, functionalities, investment, outcomes and other information.

Presentation #2: “ComEd Customer Engagement,” presented by Erica Borggren, Vice President of Customer Channels

In summary:

In a digitized world, customers have high expectations for their interactions with utilities and ComEd is changing to meet them and provide a personalized customer experience. The new mode of customer interaction is very different than in the past and is designed to be Personalized, Simple, Transparent, Flexible, Proactive and Responsive. It uses a range of tools, data, and applications to provide information

and action to customers. Smart meter-enabled energy management tools include AMI data insights, weekly usage reports, high usage alerts and other detailed information based on interval data.

ComEd's Message Preference Center allows customers to opt in to choose which, if any, messages to receive via text, phone, emails and app push. More than 2.1 million total enrollments have been received and 9.5 million messages were sent in 2017. The recently redesigned ComEd mobile app averages 350,000 sessions per month, is growing in downloads and use, and has a range of functionalities including bill payment, usage analyses, outage alerts, program enrollment, and others.

New programs include Peak Time Savings, an opt-in demand response opportunity that compensates customers for reducing usage in peak periods. 237,000 customer have enrolled. Also hourly pricing, managed by Elevate Energy, allows residential customers to access wholesale market variable prices, saving 15% on average (\$18M total so far), with 21,500 enrolled.

ComEd is one of the first utilities to enable the If This Then That ("IFTTT") platform. Allows residential participants in demand response and dynamic pricing programs to customize how and when their connected home devices respond during events, using customizable applets. Can automate response such as automatically pre-cooling before a curtailment event, or shutting off lighting and appliances when electricity prices reach a pre-configured threshold. Over 950 customers signed up to use the ComEd PTS IFTTT applets in 2017, and more than 1800 transactions were completed between the IFTTT service and ComEd PTS customers. 450 Hourly Pricing customers use ComEd IFTTT applets, with 68,000 Hourly Pricing applet transactions in 2017.

Green Button Connect allows customers to authorize 3rd party access to AMI data, with 2000 downloads and 17 participating 3rd parties through 2017. Smart meter connected devices service allows residential customers near real-time usage data for home energy management; may also have great potential for commercial customers.

Low-income customer assistance programs – "ComEd Care" – now provide \$10M /year to assist those with hardship, veterans, active military, and those under critical care. ComEd Marketplace provides opportunity for customers to find latest efficient products and purchase at prices w/rebates included. In first year of operation had 700,000 visitors and issued \$2M in rebates.

Premier Solar Customer Experience provides digital tools to educate customers on solar potential costs and benefits for their installation and to assist both customers and developers interacting with utility to install solar.

ComEd files Annual Implementation Progress Report (AIPR) with the ICC, a publicly available detailed summary of smart grid activities, progress, and investments.

Further questions and discussion among members and presenters:

- Clarification that most described programs presently available to residential customers. Bill presentment no longer impediment to data because all programs and info available online. Need in-home smart devices to respond to data automatically.
- IFTTT potential use to respond to carbon level of PJM output in near real time.
- Low-income programs include LIHEAP, PIPP; Part 280 credit collections mechanisms modified.

Presentation #3: "Dynamic Pricing Programs," presented by Sarah Gulezian, Senior Manager, Dynamic Pricing Programs, Elevate Energy.

In summary:

Elevate Energy is a Chicago-based non-profit organization that administers ComEd Hourly Pricing and Ameren Power Smart Pricing programs and Ameren peak time savings program, using a dedicated call center, marketing and outreach, education and enrollment. Website provides online information to hourly pricing participants showing how they perform relative to standard default utility supply rates. Ongoing communication with participants helps improve savings, including high price alerts and tips, annual individual performance reports, personalized savings portal with all historical and current data; mobile app is key element.

Pricing pilots in 2003-06 and 2010; law passed in 2007 mandating dynamic pricing options for ComEd/Ameren customers. ComEd program uses current PJM hour prices, Ameren uses day ahead MISO hourlies. 24,000 ComEd and 12,000 Ameren residential customers have participated - overall 22% savings for ComEd customers and 16% savings for Ameren (which includes \$2.25/month fee).

Benefits are financial for participants, also enviro and conservation social benefits, load shape improvement. Average customer would save \$86 annually without usage changes, more if price responsive. CUB/EDF analysis shows 97% of residential customers would have saved on hourly pricing programs in 2016 even without any usage changes in response to prices, including low-income customers.

Have found that easy enrollment has made programs more attractive. Need simple messages tailored to what different customers care about; engagement based on tell-me-don't-sell-me works best. Partnership with trusted messengers such as CUB works, including conceptual chart showing hourly price fluctuation vs. flat rate. Big jump in enrollment last 12 months due to increasing interest, messages testing and refinement, greater AMI deployment footprint, changed opt-out rules, customer referrals and bonuses, growth of EV (as EV owners save substantially by charging overnight). But actual program performance is responsible for high participant satisfaction: total 97% satisfied.

Further questions and discussion among members and presenters on all subjects raised:

- Clarification that hourly programs are supply-only and standard distribution rates apply. Net-metering customers can end up with very low or zero capacity charges, raising question of cross subsidies (being addressed in other working groups and future ICC rate design proceedings).
- Illinois has one retail marketer that has offered a dynamic price; that may change with full AMI deployment (ARES invited to present to WG4 at next meeting).
- Wholesale market prices have spiked only in brief periods in recent years, but there is risk associated with hourly pricing, as demonstrated in "polar vortex" winter of 2014. However, if prices were to stay high for a lengthy period, that would likely be eventually reflected in higher flat rate default service bids by suppliers in IPA auctions. Points made that the flat rate provides price certainty and must include risk premium and margin for suppliers.
- Discussion of how to define value for customers – cost/dollar not only way; customer satisfaction based on many factors – markets, rebates, reliability, transactions, engagement, etc. Some question value of ComEd marketplace; cost recovery was contested and approved by ICC.
- Offer accepted by WGL to upload to shared drive the Accenture multi-year international survey of customer value, for consideration by WG4 members.
- Point made that FEJA includes 25 cent/month average residential bill net impact limit, and program spending can be reduced if cap exceeded. Discussion of measuring value of past investments and cost/benefit analyses prior to future investment. Counterpoint that utility investments have been subject to extensive publicly available analyses prior to and after deployment.

- Point made that large commercial/industrial customer voice needs to be heard in WG4.
- Point made that affordability remains key problem for low and moderate income customers. Reality for consumers includes higher living costs, property taxes, many other costs, and displacement through gentrification. Utility service is essential and must be affordable/available to all; need to consider what it means to offer a public service, not a luxury, to struggling people.
- Latino community is largest user of mobile devices and they should be used to help make energy more affordable and programs more accessible. Also, when measuring value, look at workforce development, returns to community, energy related jobs from new investment, training and programs.

Agenda Item IV: Next Steps

Cohen stated that the next meeting would begin focusing on the customer and community perspective and would include presentations by the Attorney General's office and Citizen Utility Board and other representatives who had not yet committed. He further stated that while the limited meeting time available might not allow all viewpoints to be the subject of formal presentations to the group, all material posted by members to the shared drive would be considered as sources of information for the draft report, the deliverable by WG4 to the NextGrid process facilitator. As part of this collaborative effort, members may propose additional issues and topics to be addressed by the group and will have input into the draft report. The final WG4 issues meeting prior to report drafting could include an opportunity for all WG4 members to present specific policy, program and pilot ideas.

Cohen thanked attendees for their participation in the meeting and said he would take all comments and recommendations under advisement.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 PM.