

SGIG Consumer Behavior Study

Oklahoma Gas & Electric

Smart Study TOGETHER™

Abstract

Oklahoma Gas & Electric's (OG&E) Smart Study TOGETHER™ is a consumer behavior study evaluating the impacts of different enabling technologies combined with time-based rate programs on energy consumption and peak demand.

Consumer Behavior Study Features

Goals and objectives center on how customers respond to varying combinations of enabling technologies, providing end-use controls and information, and time-based rates. The study is focused on assessing whether customers make use of enabling technologies to actively manage their consumption and bills and reducing OG&E system peak load.

Study design involves two phases, a study sample of approximately 5,000 residential and 1,200 small commercial customers, and a test period from June 2010 to September 2011. The study is conducted using a randomized control trial design. Customers who opt-in to the study are randomly assigned to control and treatment groups among the various time-based rate and technology options. Study participants are provided with 100% bill protection in the first year to familiarize them with the financial implications of time-based rate programs.

Rate treatments include the application of time-based rate programs. OG&E implemented a variable peak pricing (VPP) rate that utilizes a five-hour peak period during the summer season (June to September). Rates during the five-hour peak period vary. The VPP also includes a critical peak price component applicable year-round for events when OG&E requires a reduction in total system load. OG&E provides customers at least two hours notice of critical price events and each event lasts no more than eight hours.

In addition to the VPP rate, OG&E implemented a time-of-use (TOU) rate with a critical peak price (CPP) component during the summer (June to September). The CPP is applied with a minimum two-hour notice to participating customers when forecasted temperatures, system load, or system emergency conditions are anticipated to arise.

Control/information technology treatments include the deployment of in-home displays and programmable communicating thermostats. These devices, in conjunction with customer Web portal access, enable

At-A-Glance

Recipient: Oklahoma Gas & Electric

State: Oklahoma

Timing: June 2010 – September 2011

Interim Evaluation Reporting: January 2011

Final Evaluation Reporting: February 2012

Sample Frame: ~5,000 Residential and 1,200 Small Business Customers

Number of Treatments: 8

Experimental Design: Randomized Control Trial

Rate Treatments

- Variable Peak Pricing (Opt-in)
- Time-of-Use w/ Critical Peak Pricing Overlay (Opt-in)
- Bill Guarantee Applied for First 12 Months Only

Control/Information Technology Treatments

- Programmable Communicating Thermostat
 - In-home Display
 - Web Portal
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customers to better manage their electricity bills through improved understanding of electricity consumption patterns. Study control group customers may also have Web portal access.

Key Milestones

Key Milestones	Target Dates
OG&E Smart Study TOGETHER test period begins	June 2010
OG&E provides Interim Evaluation Report	January 2011
OG&E Smart Study TOGETHER test period ends	September 2011
OG&E provides Final Evaluation Report	February 2012

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