



NATIONAL ACTION PLAN COALITION

Demand Response and Smart Grid Communications Guide Released by Coalition of Non-Profit Organizations

(Washington, DC – July 7, 2011) The National Action Plan Coalition (NAPC) today announced the availability of a Demand Response and Smart Grid Communications Action Guide. This Guide is intended to meet one of the needs identified by DOE and FERC in the National Action Plan the agencies released in June, 2010. The Communications Guide, available on the NAPC website, synthesizes existing research and best practices to date. It also incorporates new ideas to create concepts, models, and language likely to be effective with consumers in efforts to educate and communicate with them on demand response and smart grid.

The NAP Coalition is a "coalition of coalitions," that includes non-profit organizations in the utility, smart grid, regulatory, energy efficiency, environmental, and consumer advocacy areas. It was formed to help implement the National Action Plan. The development of a National Action Plan was required by Congress in legislation enacted in 2007, and inclusion of a communications component comes directly from the statute.

In developing the National Action Plan, stakeholders from across the DR and smart grid spectrum worked extensively on communications and among the actions recommended was the need to provide a tool-kit, or "communications umbrella" to those who would be educators and communicators. According to the Plan, "The Communications Umbrella, as a national platform, would create and provide a consistent, yet flexible, research-based message framework. This platform would include communications tools, support, and advice that could be adapted for use by interested local demand response implementers."

In implementing the National Action Plan, DOE and FERC have called for the development of "support materials designed to be 'plug and play' so that local entities can either use all available messages and materials or choose which elements to use." The agencies also supported the development of "a message framework with persuasive, adaptable messages aimed at various audience segments, all of which could be tailored by interested local stakeholders."

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According to Dan Delurey, Executive Director of the NAP Coalition, "Stakeholders regularly express concern that the demand response and smart grid community has not done a good job of educating consumers on new technologies and practices, why they are being deployed, and what the benefits are to them. It may be fair to say that we have not provided compelling value propositions. With this work, we are trying to fill this gap."

The Communications Umbrella released today describes which specific messages will resonate with different customer segments and energy worldviews. Judith Schwartz, President of To the Point, the company that worked with the NAP Coalition to produce the document, said "One person's compelling motivator will be another person's turn-off. This is why targeted communication channels and vehicles that permit the consumer to self-select are so important. Utilities, regulators, and consumer advocates need to have the flexibility to respond to regional and local variances."

The Communications Umbrella builds upon published foundational research and meta-analysis that was unavailable when the National Action Plan was first conceived, describes practices tested in the field by innovative utilities, and makes recommendations that go beyond "best practices" to suggest "next practices." It emphasizes the importance of fundamental processes recommended as part of every communications and energy literacy program, such as working with and through trusted community-based organizations.

Delurey indicated that the Communications Umbrella will be presented at the upcoming National Town Meeting on Demand Response and Smart Grid (July 13-14), and integrated into the NAP Dan Pre-Conference Workshop (July 12), both held at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, DC (www.demandresponsetownmeeting.com).

The Communications Umbrella is available on the NAP Coalition Website at www.napcoalition.org

The National Action Plan is available at <http://www.ferc.gov/legal/staff-reports/06-17-10-demand-response.pdf>.

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About the NAP Coalition

The [NAP Coalition](#) was founded to implement the [National Action Plan on Demand Response](#) through a public-private partnership that leverages new and existing work to achieve optimal peak load reductions and energy savings through demand response and other consumer-facing smart grid technologies.

Members of the National Action Plan Coalition Include:

Alliance to Save Energy (ASE), American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE), American Public Power Association (APPA), Association for Demand Response and Smart Grid (ADS), Demand Response and Smart Grid Coalition (DRSG), Digital Energy Solutions Campaign (DESC), Edison Electric Institute (EEI), Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO), National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), OpenADR Alliance, Peak Load Management Alliance (PLMA), Utilimetrics. National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA) participates in an advisory role.

About To the Point

Judith Schwartz is an entrepreneur, marketing strategist, and communications professional on the forefront of sustainability issues, the Smart Grid, alternative energy, and the digital home. She is a Strategic Consultant to the National Action Plan Coalition. Her Silicon Valley-based firm, To the Point, designs human-centered strategies, conducts research and meta-analysis, creates narratives and messaging, facilitates cross-stakeholder conversations, and develops communications and outreach prototypes.

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