

Con Edison recently hosted “Expanding the Reach of Connected Devices,” a webinar that explored the future of the smart home market. With consumers taking more control over their energy use and appliances, appliance manufacturers are embracing connected devices, clean energy incubators are helping build the industry, and there are increasing opportunities for connected devices companies to partner with energy companies like Con Edison to reach millions of new users.

This webinar was intended to facilitate a dialogue around the ways in which engaging with appliance manufacturers and emerging connected devices companies — including those in the ACRE and Urban Future Lab pipeline — presents Con Edison and other utilities with an opportunity to broaden their energy efficiency and demand response portfolios.

As we heard from Matt Ketschke, Vice President of Distributed Resource Integration for Con Edison, connected devices present an enormous value to utilities, and are essential to maximizing the output and efficiency of existing grid infrastructure. These devices are contributing to an increase in demand flexibility, and can respond to pricing signals and other information to help utilities reduce demand or increase supply at peak periods. Working with Con Edison, companies can establish a presence in the connected devices market that allows them to scale up operations and expand their customer base.

This collaboration is beneficial to all parties involved, from energy companies to connected devices companies, appliance manufacturers, incubators, and customers.

As Pat Sapinsley, Managing Director of Cleantech Initiatives for ACRE / Urban Future Lab at NYU Tandon, explained, one of the ways in which ACRE helps startups evolve is through establishing partnerships with large organizations. These organizations, including Con Edison, are able to partner with startups, many of which operate in the realm of connected devices, providing them with the support of a large corporation necessary to enter competitive markets. One example is ThinkEco, a green technology company that ACRE helped secure a partnership with Con Edison. As a result, ThinkEco developed a smartAC kit that Con Edison promotes to customers as part of a free offer to upgrade their air conditioning units and participate in smart usage rewards programs.

Joe Jankoski, Global Director of Energy Markets for Intel, discussed the role that large technology developers like Intel play in developing collaborative approaches to demand response. For example, Intel is working alongside energy utilities and connected devices companies alike to promote a smart ecosystem that helps everyone get a piece of the energy savings pie. By working with individual companies to promote shared interoperability standards, building management platforms and gateways, and promoting the integration of information technology systems, Intel is helping connected devices companies and their partners develop new energy management solutions. These new approaches make it easier for connected devices companies to partner with Con Edison and other utilities, putting their devices in front of a broader audience, and generating hundreds of billions of dollars in energy savings for the grid each year.

Appliance manufacturers themselves are also developing and promoting new smart home products and partnerships to offer their customers. Chris McGugan, VP/GM of Innovation & Kenmore at Sears Holding Companies, explained that energy companies like Con Edison are able to provide information and control points that allow Kenmore and other manufacturers to bring smart products to life, and offer a customer experience defined by Kenmore’s three Smart Pillars: Quality, Convenience, and Saving Money.

With the growth of distributed energy resources, in addition to renewable and intermittent energy sources, Con Edison is uniquely positioned to serve as a valuable market partner for connected devices companies.

Con Edison is currently working with connected devices partners to integrate their products and services into Con Edison’s robust portfolio of energy efficiency and smart usage rewards programs and is looking for new partners through an open Request for Information.

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This webinar was moderated by Zach Sussman, Con Edison’s Senior Specialist of Energy Efficiency and Demand Management’s Emerging Technologies, and featured Joe Jankoski, Global Director of Energy Markets for Intel; Pat Sapinsley Managing Director of Cleantech Initiatives, ACRE / Urban Future Lab at NYU Tandon; and Chris McGugan VP/GM of Innovation & Kenmore at Sears Holding Companies.