

Best Practice description

REScoop: Som Energia

Country: Spain

Name of Measure: InfoEnergia

Third party involved: Beedata

Description of measure

InfoEnergia is a service for all the customers of an energy supplying cooperatives or companies. It is a personalized energy awareness service. It provides information to consumers through two channels:

- Monthly report with benchmarking against yourself and similar customers and has useful tips. Customers receive this report once a month as e-mail attached PDF.
- Customer portal where the monthly reports and extended information is available (i.e. smart metering measurements).

Description of actions

Som Energia started with InfoEnergia as an extra service for their members. Instead of just sending invoices Som Energia also sends reports on the energy use of their customers. In this report customers are compared with similar household benchmarks, with previous periods. They also get personalized energy saving tips.

The service desk of Som Energia is trained to know how the system works and how the reports are created. This way they can handle any questions from customers concerning the report.

The cooperative does not handle the data and the system themselves. They buy this service from a third party Beedata. BeeData is the Building Energy and Environment Group. Which is an autonomous department of the International Center for Numerical Methods in Engineering (CIMNE) involving over 20 researchers. The system was built in a European project called Empowering. The cost of development was 1.5 M€. They implemented it in six countries with twelve partners on four pilot sites. In the project they serviced 344.000 users.

Cost of implementation:

The tool is developed in a European research project therefore most of the development cost are socialized. New cooperatives or energy suppliers only pay in the implementation costs of the tool. These include their own cost of IT employees for implementing the system in their invoice system. And a yearly service cost for BeeData. This amounts for Som Energia (45.000 customers) to roughly €1,- per customer but is reduced when more customers are introduced. Different REScoops can join in the same system and add more customers and in this way can share the discount.

Criteria	Som Energia :Infoenergia	Score	Explanation of Score
<i>Effectiveness:</i> The effectiveness of energy saving measures exists of different parts			
	<i>Impact:</i> Is there a clear impact on the energy savings of households where the measures were targeted or implemented. The researchers aim to find meaningful correlations between the measures and the variables that determine energy saving in households.	++	Based on the results from the statistical analysis, this particular measure has no significant impacts in energy savings in general, for all customer groups. However when tested on a small sample of a specific contract type (Contract B), significant reductions (almost 50%) have been demonstrated.
	<i>Outreach efficiency:</i> This criterion looks at the reach in relation to impact. How easy is it to reach a large group of consumers and have an impact on energy saving in that group. Or the other way around, when the measure was implemented in a small group did it had a substantial impact to justify this reach.	+++	Once the program is installed it is easy to reach a lot of people. Som Energia started with 1000 customers in the testing phase and reached 40.000 half year later.
	<i>Time Efficiency:</i> This criterion looks at how much time does it takes to implement the measure and the duration between implementation and first results. An example of a best practice would be a short time span (months rather than years) between the implementation of a measure and the first measurable results.	-/+	Implementation depends on the strength of your IT personnel. However once it is installed customers receive the information directly and are urged to take action. Also once installed there is some effort and time needed by the cooperative itself. Advice is automated, but questions from customers and talking about their actions and help them takes some time. (About 10 questions a week)
<i>Pre-investments and share of costs:</i> Who bears the pre-investments of implementing the measures and who benefits? How long does it take to cover the pre-investments?		+++	The development of the service was developed by the EU project Empowering. Now the data service is done by a (University) start-up company using the technology developed. SomEnergia pays Bee Data for the service. It is free for the customer.
<i>Implementation:</i> This criterion looks at the complexity of implementing the measure. This includes the above criteria of cost, but also administrative burdens, training of employees or volunteers and integration into existing systems.			
	<i>Administrative burdens:</i> Here we will look at the administrative burden that is created with the implementation of the measures, and if it is possible to reduce them with automatization, for example with a basic administrative system. This criterion will always be applied in relation to the impact and reach.	-	The implementation takes time in your organisation. Especially for the IT personnel to implement it. However once it is installed into your system the reach can be big (all customers) and reports are automated. A service desk is needed to help people with questions and their proposed actions in the reports.

	<p><i>Training of employees or volunteers:</i> Here we will look at how much time it costs to train volunteers or employees that help with implementing the measures. Also, the level of education is considered.</p>	-	Depending on your service organisation. In the case of Som Energia, all service employees are suppose to be able to answer all questions in order to give a direct and good service. So employees that deal with these questions need to be trained in the program and understand its reports.
	<p><i>Integration into existing systems:</i> Here we will look at the ease by which the implementation of a measure can be transferred to another cooperative somewhere else. When adoption of a measure implies the adoption of a complex support system, this is likely to form a barrier for transfer of this practice to other cooperatives.</p>	+	You need to be a supplier and have the data of your members. Data received from smart meters give better results but is not entirely necessary. Taking the implementation issue into account, the system works on all kinds of data systems and can be adapted by BeeData
<p><i>Market up take:</i> This criterion evaluates the possibility of replication with workable alterations in different cooperatives.</p>			
	<p>Regulatory context: Important here is to look whether the measures can only be used when certain regulatory measures are in place or that they can be implemented in any regulatory context.</p>	++	Suppliers have to comply to personal data protection regulation set for all companies dealing with this kind of data.
	<p>Organisational context: Another important aspect is to analyse whether the measures are linked to any specific organisational structures of the cooperative. For example, when a measure only works when the cooperative is the owner of the electrical grid it will get a low score on the market up take criteria.</p>	+	The system works for every energy supplying company.
<p><i>Ethical performance:</i> This criterion looks at whether there are ethical procedures in place concerning control of end-user, transparency and data management.</p>	<p>Degree of control by end-user: In what terms can end users exercise control of the measures or organisation that implement the measures.</p>	+++	The cooperative has control on how the report looks like and what information is sent. Also the customer has its own customer portal where it can access its data.
	<p>Transparency: Is it clear how governance structures or cash flows are organised</p>	++	Roles between Beedata and the cooperative are clear. Beedata is service provider to the cooperative.
	<p>Data management: How is data of the tools managed. Is there for example a privacy policy in place?</p>	+++	Data is owned by the cooperative. There is an agreement with Beedata that this data is only used for InfoEnergia system. Customers themselves can choose not to have these analysis done by their own customer portal

Expert involved



Marc has been involved in the creation of the cooperative since its inception Som Energia (2010).

Degree in technical industrial engineering completed in Escola Tècnica d'Enginyeria Industrial (EUETIB-UPC). Master degree in Management and Design of Renewable Energies at Technological Catalan Institute (ICT-UB).

Expertise on the development of rural electrification projects with photovoltaic and mini-hydro (2006-2007) and in the design of photovoltaic solar installations in Spain (2007-2008).

He is the energy efficiency consultant at Som Energia as a member of InfoEnergia's team. He can help other REScoops to implement InfoEnergia.