

ENERGY SOLUTIONS CENTER

Strategic Plan 2008-2012

Mission Statement

Building Energy Value and Customer Loyalty with Innovative Natural Gas Solutions

Critical Success Factors

Strengthen the Ability of Energy Utilities to Achieve Excellence in Serving All Customer Segments

Accelerate the Introduction & Deployment of New Gas Solutions that Improve Customer Productivity, Reliability, Competitiveness, and Comfort

Enable Energy Customers to Achieve Efficiency, Conservation, and Environmental Goals Through the Use of Natural Gas

Ensure the Organizational and Financial Sustainability of the Energy Solutions Center

The *Energy Solutions Center Inc.* is the only organization in North America exclusively dedicated to the marketing, sales, and customer support needs of energy utilities that distribute natural gas.

As a member-driven, market development organization of utilities and equipment manufacturers, ESC brings improved, energy-efficient gas solutions to residential, commercial, and industrial customers.

These solutions help to maintain the competitiveness, efficiency,

productivity, and profitability of an array of North American businesses and industries, and save energy, enhance reliability, and improve comfort for all energy users.

The Center develops tools, materials, and resources to enhance the success of utility marketing, sales, and customer support staff in delivering more satisfactory solutions to their natural gas customers.

ESC assists its members in partnering with customers, government, the non-profit sector, building managers, architects and engineers, and other energy

stakeholders that seek to use our natural gas resources more wisely and efficiently.

ESC's primary education and training venue, the Technology and Market Assessment Forum, attracts participants from throughout North America seeking better ways to bring new gas solutions and energy efficiency to their customers.

The Energy Solutions Center is a 501(c) 6 non-profit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C., and governed by its Board of Directors.



Critical Success Factor #1:

Strengthen the Ability of Energy Utilities to Achieve Excellence in Serving All Customer Segments

Strategy

Implementation

Increase the competency of utility staff to address customer needs through the application of conventional, emerging, and new gas equipment and systems.

Continually improve the quality of Technology and Market Assessment Forums and similar venues for educating and training members

Promote professional networking to help members learn of successes in other service territories and to prevent members from “reinventing the wheel”

Improve quality of ESC website, ESC software, and other venues for conveying operating and performance, cost, environmental, and efficiency considerations to utility reps and customers

Increase member understanding of the regulatory needs of their customers

Identify and develop successful marketing, sales, and customer relationship strategies and approaches that can be adopted by member utilities.

Increase the ability of utility reps to make the business case to customers regarding the use of natural gas

Ensure that consortia tools and products incorporate and simplify financial and contractual considerations relative to a customer’s needs for reliable, cost effective gas service

Introduce state-of-the-art customer relationship strategies and methodologies used by leading businesses

Offer opportunities to seek greater insights into customer strategies and decision-making

Enhance the professionalism and stature of marketing, sales, and customer support staff within the utility and amongst customers.

Help members articulate within their organizations the importance of marketing and customer support

Provide members with the skills to assess return-on-marketing investment

Reinforce positive customer perceptions of the utility rep as an unbiased and credible resource

Equip utility marketing and sales staff to play a more significant role within their company

Form strategic alliances with equip manuf, A/E’s, trade associations and government to more effectively address customer questions and needs

Identify synergies of working with other natural gas, energy and governmental organizations at the national, regional, state, and local level

Create innovative partnerships with equipment manufacturers, architects, and engineers and their professional associations to accelerate the delivery of new gas solutions to customers

Establish relationships with organizations representing energy users to communicate the efficiency and environmental benefits of natural gas solutions

Critical Success Factor #2:

Accelerate the Introduction and Deployment of New Gas Solutions that Improve Customer Productivity, Competitiveness, Reliability, Efficiency, and Comfort

Strategy

Implementation

Expand efforts to study and assess market needs to increase ultimate success of commercialization activities

Increase capability of ESC and its partners to conduct market assessments

Acquire and utilize third party research and market assessments relative to gas solutions for residential, commercial, and industrial customers

Emphasize the value of market research in consortia activities

Identify more effective means of hastening development of new equipment & systems from R&D organizations, universities, & entrepreneurs

Use ESC venues to strengthen linkages between member tech support staff and marketing/customer relationship staff

Expand ESC's role in catalyzing synergies between research organizations, equipment manufacturers, utilities, and endusers

Communicate progress of gas-related R&D at universities, government labs, and non-profit organizations

Increase support for technology demonstrations at customer locations

Create innovative marketing partnerships with equipment manufacturers to accelerate the introduction of market ready equipment and solutions to diverse customer segments.

Improve upon ESC's model of leveraging funds and building partnerships to accelerate market introduction of new technologies

Maintain an effective Equipment Manufacturers Council to attract and retain equipment manufacturer members

Seek alliances with trade associations representing customers interested in new energy solutions

Examine and support public policy that may accelerate the development and use of new gas equipment and systems

Enhance ESC's role as the knowledge center for new gas equipment and solutions from around the world.

Identify appropriate mechanisms for collecting and distributing knowledge on new gas systems that ultimately increase the value of the utility rep to the customer and provide the customer with the best solution

Innovate with new communication vehicles and new audiences to more broadly convey the benefits of natural gas

Increase ESC technical staff presence at professional conferences and meetings

Critical Success Factor #3:

Enable Energy Customers to Achieve Conservation, Efficiency, and Environmental Goals through the Use of Natural Gas

Strategy

Implementation

Increase customer and public understanding and support for the role natural gas plays in addressing climate change and global warming

Communicate the positive impact of natural gas use on the carbon footprint

Partner with gas industry stakeholders to educate public audiences about benefits of increased gas use to reduce global warming

Stress role of natural gas in reducing pressures on electricity grid capacities during peak usage period

Enhance the recognition and role of natural gas in green “portfolios.”

Quantify environmental benefits of gas use

Secure position for natural gas in green building/LEED and related guidelines and standards

Expand the use of site vs. source arguments to explain the superior efficiency of natural gas

Examine and promote market and government policies that reward gas technology use such as emissions trading and carbon credit programs

Develop resources and tools to foster the design, implementation, and evaluation of utility conservation and efficiency programs

Educate members and customers about new energy efficient gas equipment and solutions

Build alliances with energy efficiency organizations

Ensure that ESC products and services offer greater information on conservation and efficiency strategies

Identify appropriate metrics to measure the success of utility conservation, efficiency and demand side management initiatives

Critical Success Factor #4:
Ensure the Organizational and Financial Sustainability of the Energy Solutions Center

Strategy

Implementation

Maintain ESC as a member-driven, market focused organization that provides value, benefit, and a positive return on investment to its members

- Encourage members to take ownership of ESC to create a vibrant and robust organization
- Reassess the direction, goals, and tactics of ESC as necessary to ensure relevancy to the membership
- Help members to determine and articulate the value, benefits, and ROI received from ESC participation
- Seek innovative methods for encouraging, receiving, and acting on membership feedback and needs

Ensure the Center's financial integrity

- Emphasize the obligations of the board to ensure the Center's financial integrity
- Adhere to a board-approved investment policy for funds in ESC accounts
- Maintain a dues structure that is fair and equitable, while keeping annual dues as low as possible to enhance membership retention and growth
- Strive to ensure that revenues equal expenditures on an annual basis
- Continue to establish consortia and other initiatives that allow members to fund programmatic activities, products and deliverables outside the Center's annual operating budget
- Encourage existing members to take an active role in new membership recruitment

Ensure an equitable and effective system of governance and membership participation

- Educate members about the functions and roles of an effective board of directors. Encourage the designation of board members that have strategic and financial organizational experience.
- Encourage member companies to increase the number of individuals participating in ESC initiatives and to strengthen efforts to transmit ESC products and services to all their employees