

# Improving Billing for a Competitive Marketplace

Moderator: Cynthia Johnson, Vice President, MarketPower, Inc

Competition brings unprecedented change to the gas and electric utility industry. One major impact and pressure area is on billing systems and services, which must adapt to accommodate changing market needs, changing business models, and changing operational requirements.

This panel will explore the changing role and makeup of billing systems and services (wholesale and retail) in a competitive marketplace. It will focus on research methodologies that utilities can apply to evaluate and improve billing systems and services.

This panel has tremendous relevance to evaluators and program managers. Adapting and improving billing practices and services for a competitive marketplace is one of the top challenges facing energy utilities today. The panel will be composed of the following participants:

**Panelist: Dianne Green, Ph.D., Senior Consultant, MarketPower, Inc.**

Ms. Green is a business analyst with over 15 years of experience across various industries including energy, telecommunications, information, health care, and high technology. She will discuss:

- Critical issues and trends impacting energy companies
- How energy utilities compare to other competitive industries
- Research approaches for evaluating billing systems and services

**Panelist: Jim Fay, Program Manager, Gas Research Institute**

Mr. Fay is spearheading GRI's research and information activities related to transitioning business processes (including billing) at gas utilities. He will discuss:

- Competition--impacts and implications for gas company business processes
- Case studies from gas companies and beyond—examples that work (or don't)
- Critical implications for billing evaluation in the gas industry

**Panelist: Carl McCullough, Senior CI Analyst, Southern Company**

Southern Company conducts extensive competitive intelligence (CI) research and analysis on competitive energy products and services (including billing). Mr. McCullough will present:

- Retail billing products and services being offered by utilities and others
- How Southern uses CI to track competitors and identify opportunities to improve its offerings
- Billing services: a window on how to succeed in a competitive market

**Panelist: Dave Roper, Market Research Analyst, New Century Energies**

New Century Energies has conducted extensive market research directed at improving billing systems and services. Mr. Roper will present a customer research perspective on billing evaluation, including:

- Research questions and techniques for understanding the customer's point of view
- Applying research findings for maximum competitive advantage
- Building ongoing billing feedback into research and communications channels