

# **Selling End Users Something They Don't Know They Need Without An Incentive**

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## **Purpose**

This evaluation was a process evaluation of the 80 Plus Power supply program which is part of a nationwide program that promotes the development and implementation of efficient power supplies for computers that meet the 80 Plus standards. This program provides rebates to manufacturers and system integrators for systems and servers that incorporate the 80 Plus power supply. They provide \$5 for each desktop with the 80 Plus power supply, \$8 for each desktop that meets the Energy Star 4.0 Standard, and \$10 for each desktop derived server. Manufacturers and system integrators must provide end use customer zip code information to receive the rebate. Ecos Consulting developed testing protocols to test and certify power supplies and has enlisted EPRI to test the power supplies. This ensures that the power supplies will operate correctly and alleviates technology concerns manufacturers and system integrators may have.

## **Research Findings**

This program has come a long way from its inception. Both SCE program management staff and Ecos agree that parts of the program are going well but that it is a slow start. Multiple power supply manufacturers are producing efficient power supplies that have been certified and thus meet the 80 Plus standard. Manufacturers and system integrators have signed onto the program and are producing systems with 80 Plus certified power supplies in them, and more participants are signing on all the time. This research found that the incentive is substantially lower than the incremental cost and that some manufacturers view the rebate as a hassle because it is so low. The incremental cost and lack of end user awareness are significant barriers for this program. Power supplies are something people just do not notice or consider when deciding on a system; however, they do notice the Energy Star logo. Power supply certification has been a key for this program and has been the reason some manufacturers signed up. However, they are reluctant to give out zip code information because they see it as a breach of customer confidentiality. The results of this study will be used to improve the 80 Plus program

## **Research Design and Methodology**

The 80 Plus power supply program was evaluated using an interview methodology which included participant and non-participant manufacturers and system integrators as well as implementation and EPA staff.

## **Problems Encountered During the Evaluation**

The greatest problem encountered during the evaluation was the difficulty in reaching computer manufacturers. Some were relatively easy to contact, whereas others were exceedingly difficult to reach. However, once reached, all were forthcoming with their perspective on the program.