

# Smart Study: Comet





## Comet Slashes Energy bill by 14% with Bglobal Smart Meters

Bglobal, the leading provider of smart metering solutions to the energy market, has helped Comet cut its energy bills by 14% per year.

The high street electrical goods retailer was frustrated with the inaccuracy of 'guesstimated' energy bills and wanted to find a way of taking control of its energy usage and improving its overall energy efficiency. By installing innovative 'smart meter technology', Comet has been able not only to slash its costs, but also accurately budget energy billing for its 260 stores.

Bglobal won a competitive tender for the business to manage the data collection and analysis for Comet and delivered the programme of works in conjunction with Npower and Western Power. In essence, the smart meter system continuously records the amount of energy being used, sends this information via SMS or GPRS to a data collector and provides accurate reports of energy usage when required. Comet receives details on its energy usage half hourly, which has enabled the company to track peaks and troughs and pinpoint times when savings can be made.

Ordinarily, meters are checked manually approximately every six months with an engineer having to visit the stores to do the readings. This not only meant that bills were based on calculated guesswork, but also that it was impossible to budget accurately.

Greg Robinson, energy manager at Comet, comments: "The smart meters have revolutionised the way we think about energy and have allowed us to budget properly – no more estimated bills! The data accumulated have also increased our understanding of our energy usage and allowed us to monitor each and every store and create a benchmark against which to measure their individual performances.

"Store managers have also been made responsible for improving their store's energy efficiency in a bid to cut bills even further, which is not only great news for Comet, but also for the environment, as we are constantly looking at ways in which we can further reduce our energy usage."

To help managers improve their store's performance, they all received training on how to tackle energy wastage. This included simple measures such as not lighting entire stores until opening time, and leaving signage switched off during the night.

Greg adds: "We're absolutely delighted with the outcome of the smart meter installation programme and would recommend any organisation to invest in them. It's a complete 'no-brainer' – especially in light of global warming on the one hand, and increasing fuel bills on the other. Our target before the installation of the smart meters was to cut our energy bills by 3% - we've smashed that figure with a 14% reduction - this is a truly 'win/win' situation."

Bglobal has been working alongside organisations such as The Carbon Trust to establish a model for smart meters in the UK. Studies indicate that providing users with information about their energy expenditure not only helps them understand where it is being spent, but also encourages them to use energy more cleverly. All of a sudden, people can see that leaving computers or lighting on all night costs a lot of money, and changes in behaviour follow.