

Energy Utility Suppliers - UK - November 2013

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“For energy suppliers it is important to continue to compete for market share but there is also scope to continue to expand into related markets such as home maintenance, home security or telecommunications. Related energy markets such as installation or home generation are also a good match with the capabilities of these companies.”

– Jane Westgarth – Senior Market Analyst

This report looks at the following areas:

- Are consumers interested in greener energy?
- To what extent are energy price rises putting pressure on consumer spending?
- Are consumers taking measures to change their energy habits at home?
- What can energy companies do to grow share of the market?
- Is competition improving things for consumers?

Gas and electricity supply was opened up to competition in the 1990s and today there are the ‘big six’ energy companies that dominate supply in the UK. These vertically integrated companies generate power but also buy energy on the wholesale market and sell it on via a supply subsidiary to customers. Governments and consumer groups have been critical about the industry, especially in recent years when prices for gas and electricity have risen much faster than inflation. Indeed, there is anger and lack of trust among consumers and the feeling that the big suppliers are employing unfair pricing tactics to make more money from them.

The regulator, Ofgem, has been granted new powers in 2013 to improve this situation yet consumers are faced with further price rises in 2013/14. Ofgem wants simpler and fairer tariffs and the government wants every home to have a smart meter which will give consumers more information about the amount and cost of energy they are using, helping them to make informed decisions about ways to save energy.

This report looks at energy utility suppliers and finds out what consumers think about their utility bills and the service they get from their suppliers.

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