INTERVIEW DEVELCO PRODUCTS, DEVICE SPONSOR, OSGP ALLIANCE - EUW 2018 PAVILION 2018

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1. What do you see as the biggest smart grid industry challenge and how does Develco Products contribute to the solutions?
One of the biggest challenges is the balance between production and consumption. The more renewable energy we produce, the more challenging it will become to match the production with the actual consumption. Our aim is to produce equipment that is capable of checking the balance and then switching load on and off in order to match consumption with production. Develco Products provides load controls, which make some electric devices turn off during peak hours and turn on again outside peak hours, and we offer interfaces for meters that communicate the grid status directly to a smart home, for example.

2. Could you provide some background information on the current utility projects Develco Products is involved in and what is Develco Products’ contribution to the projects?
The largest project is a meter rollout in Poland at Tauron. We have a pilot of around 2,000 meters, and Develco Products provides the communication from the meter to the smart home system or in-home display.

In addition, Develco Products is involved in load control projects, in which we are aiming to match energy consumption with the production. One of the projects concerns vacation houses in Ireland. Often, many people go to the vacation houses on the weekend, and then they turn on the electrical heating, they start charging their electrical vehicle, and they start cooking—all at the same time. Everyone starts consuming large amounts of electricity simultaneously, which the grid is not capable of supporting. Develco Products offers hardware for technology that will turn off slowly reacting electrical devices such as electrical heaters, when the electricity is needed for activities that require electricity for a short period, such as cooking. Then, when the user is done cooking, the electrical heater will automatically turn on again. By using a load control, the user can avoid that the accumulated amount of electricity used exceeds the capacity of the grid. Develco Products has provided gateways, meter interfaces and load controls for this project, which has proven to be very successful.

Develco Products has also provided gateways, meter interfaces and load controls to smart grid projects in South Africa, which focused on creating a maximum load at the individual installations, ensuring that the maximum energy required for a single household is below a certain limit. By automatically turning off some devices while others are in use, the load control makes energy
consumption flatter, which reduces the energy consumption peak. By bringing down the maximum demand for electricity significantly, the load control enables large savings on electricity as well as money.

3. What is your view related to the Open Smart Grid Protocol (OSGP) to promote and advance the capabilities of innovative solutions for utilities?
Develco Products is only working with open standards, and OSGP is a good example of an open standard. Having multiple vendors providing a system for the same platform makes competition better, and it makes it easier for utilities to decide on an OSGP rollout, because they are not stuck with one supplier. The open system enables utilities to change their supplier if that is necessary. If they choose a proprietary system, they have to continue working with the same supplier.

In addition, we are taking advantage of the meter expansion port, which makes it possible to connect almost anything to the meter and extract data. This makes it a good match with our smart home activities.

4. What will Develco Products be showcasing at the EUW2018 - OSGP Alliance Pavilion and how does this contribute to the Energy transition?
We will be showing our meter interfaces. We will show a Wireless M-Bus interface which is built into the new generation 4 NES meters. We also have products for meter expansion ports with wireless M-Bus and Zigbee, which can be used with any NES meter with a MEP card. The meter will be connected to the Squid.link Gateway, which can demonstrate the capability of sending the meter data and showing the energy consumption. The MEP card is capable of collecting meter data from water meters, gas meters and heat meters. We will demonstrate this by collecting meter data from a water meter.

Finally, we will present a new tool, which makes it easy to install water meters connected to the NES meter. The purpose of connecting the water meter to the NES meter is to be able to collect water meter data through the OSGP based system. We will also demonstrate the use of smart plugs as a part of load control and balancing.

5. Who should be visiting the stand and why?
One group of people that should visit our stand is the value-added resellers (VAR) of meters and the installers, who are our main customers. Another group is the utilities because they are the end-customers of the meters and meter interfaces, which support their customers.

Develco Products offers these groups new business opportunities. By adding a gateway to your system, you can enable the end-users to see their energy consumption, and the users can then start saving energy themselves. You can also add a smart plug and enable the system to save energy itself through load control. You can sell extra services, such as an alarm service or a service that enables people to turn on the electrical heating in their vacation house before arriving. You can go from merely selling electricity to selling services.