

Engaging the Public in Electrical Energy Decision Making through an Interactive Online Games

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The public has an ever increasing interest in the economic, environmental, and social impacts of global energy production. To support informed decision making, the scientific community has a responsibility to communicate reliable and straight-forward information to the general public, in an engaging way, regarding energy systems and how choices made at different stages of an energy technology life cycle can impact the cost, amount of materials used, and waste produced. Our objective is to enhance public engagement via an interactive electrical energy game, *Energize!*, through which users can interact with one another in their quest to develop an electrical energy portfolio that optimizes economic (e.g., company profit), environmental (e.g., reduced CO₂ emissions), and social (e.g., public opinion) impacts. The goal is for users to gain an understanding of the complex electrical energy landscape from a consumer and business standpoint, while quickly realizing that there is no “silver bullet” for meeting increasing electrical energy demands; rather, a “silver buckshot” (or diverse portfolio) approach is necessary for successfully navigating a pathway to an affordable, accessible, sustainable, and low-carbon energy future. In this presentation, we will highlight the need for engagement through tools, such as games, and detail some of the key game mechanics and back end models of *Energize!*.