

# Electric Utility Signs BPL Deal To Create Unique 'Smart Grid'

Providers of conventional broadband services who have never taken broadband over power line (BPL) seriously might pause to consider what TXU Electric Delivery and Current Communications are doing.

Late last year Dallas-based TXU Electric Delivery announced an agreement with Current Communications Group to transform the TXU power delivery network into the nation's first broadband-enabled smart grid.

Under terms of the agreement, Current Communications will design, build and operate the BPL network to cover most of the Electric Delivery service area, including approximately 2 million homes and businesses.

While many think of BPL only as an alternative to DSL and cable internet services, the TXU Electric Delivery concept is much broader than that, designed to increase overall network reliability; prevent, detect and restore power outages more quickly; and effectively make automated meter reading more efficient while improving ad-

vanced metering functions that will support enhanced customer services. In addition, it will allow internet access – through a second-party provider – over existing power lines by plugging into any electrical outlet.

"TXU Electric Delivery looks at broadband over power line differently than others in the electric utility industry," says Jim Greer, the company's vice president, asset management. "As a stand-alone transmission and distribution business, Electric Delivery sees BPL as a key enabler of advanced technologies that can improve customer service and service quality, not as a vehicle to deliver retail services on its own. Electric Delivery believes advanced technology will be a key enabler of future improvements in reliability, safety, security and access to new consumer services."

A major step forward came in late October 2006 with the announcement by TXU Electric Delivery that an agreement had been reached to purchase 400,000 advanced automated digital meters with broadband capabilities.

The meters, to be provided by Landis+Gyr, continuously record and report information about the electric system. This steady stream of data helps reduce restoration time when outages occur, pinpoint problems on the system and provide a constant supply of information on the system's overall performance.

## Automation

The Electric Delivery announcement about the purchase agreement for the meters said the company plans to have three million automated meters by 2011, complementing an advanced grid intelligent enough to monitor electric service in real-time. By the end of 2006, Electric Delivery expected to have 370,000 automated meters systemwide, including 10,000 BPL-enabled meters.

Under terms of the previously-announced agreement with Current, TXU Electric Delivery will procure services over 10 years to utilize smart grid capabilities of Current's BPL network.

In addition to the advanced digital communications and computing capabilities BPL will bring to TXU Electric Delivery, services planned for consumers that are projected to include voice and video as well as high-speed internet service which would be provided by Current's BPL network.

"Current's BPL solution is a critical enabler of our mission to dramatically improve the way we deliver electricity," said Tom Baker, TXU Electric Delivery chairman and chief executive officer. "BPL will enable us to respond more quickly and efficiently to outages of all magnitudes, manage our distribution network more proactively and further safeguard our dispersed critical assets in today's heightened security environment."

TXU Electric Delivery, the transmission and distribution subsidiary of TXU Corp., operates the largest distribution and transmission system in Texas, providing power to three million electric delivery points over more than 100,000 miles of distribution and 14,000 miles of transmission lines.

Current Communications Group LLC, is a leading provider of BPL solutions to electric distribution companies worldwide. Its BPL portfolio includes BPL network equipment, software solutions and smart grid services comprised of electric utility applications enabling real-time management of the electric grid.

Landis+Gyr is a leading provider of precision, commercial and industrial, and residential electric meters and innovative metering systems, including the open architecture, communication-neutral, and advanced data infrastructure. ■