

Brief History of E Source

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Early Days

E Source had its beginnings under a different name—Competitek—in 1986, as the brainchild of Amory Lovins and his colleagues at Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI). Its mission was to save as much electricity as possible as quickly and cheaply as possible by providing information on electricity-saving technologies and ways to implement them. The audience was utility demand-side management (DSM) programs, corporate energy users, governments, and other interested parties. Operating as a program within the nonprofit RMI, Competitek grew to serve more than 200 client organizations in 15 countries and generated a path-breaking, world-renowned series of documents that defined the state of the art in electric end-use efficiency.

In 1992, with seed capital from the MacArthur Foundation, the enterprise was spun out as a for-profit subsidiary of RMI and moved from the institute's headquarters in Old Snowmass, Colorado, to Boulder, Colorado. The name was changed at that point to E Source, under the executive team of Michael Shepard, Jim Newcomb, and Brad Davids. The business continued to grow, with a primary client base of utility DSM programs.

Corporate Changes

As the prospect of deregulation and competition in retail energy markets emerged in the mid-1990s, funding for traditional utility DSM programs diminished. E Source quickly adapted and began offering a variety of services to help utilities cope with this changing business environment. The company continued to provide information on energy efficiency, but it was provided in the context of the retail energy services offered by utilities and other energy service companies as a profit center, rather than as part of regulated DSM activities. As utilities sought to better understand and meet their customers' needs, E Source developed additional information services focusing on customer service, marketing, and the distinct needs of the utilities' residential, small and midsize business, and large commercial and industrial customer groups. As demand for information on specific topics grew, E Source responded by launching new service lines in such areas as distributed energy, power quality, and green energy, among others. During this period, the company also developed a service specifically designed to meet the needs of corporate energy managers. By working directly with utilities and their large customers, E Source has come to deeply understand the needs of both energy suppliers and energy users.

These information services generally followed a "membership" model—all the employees of a member company were given access to a variety of resources in print, online, and in person that provided objective counsel on how they could meet their business goals.

FT Energy, a division of Pearson PLC (which owns *The Financial Times*), acquired E Source in 1999. FT Energy was itself acquired by the Platts division of The McGraw-Hill Companies inc. in 2001. The long-time senior management of E Source remained with the business throughout this period and eventually led a buyout of the organization from McGraw-Hill in 2006.

Today

More than 60 employees located in Boulder and throughout the United States are still providing fuel-neutral, vendor-neutral advice and research to businesses throughout the world. Almost all of the major utilities in North America, along with large end-users of power looking to reduce their energy spending and environmental impact, federal and state government agencies, and vendors focused on these organizations, continue to rely on E Source for unbiased information and advice.

Many of these organizations have been members since 1986. They renew year after year because there is no better way to cut through the information clutter and hype. They know E Source is still focused on helping its member companies meet and exceed their business goals by highlighting the industry's best practices, providing insightful technology assessments, and delivering reliable market intelligence.

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