



# Business customer interest in energy-related products and services

## Results from the Small and Midsize Business and Large Business Customer Satisfaction Studies

By Lane Ginsbern, Daniel Doutre

---

### Contents

[What are best practices for marketing products and services to SMB customers?](#)

[What are best practices for marketing products and services to large business customers?](#)

[Which business sector is the best bet for revenue-generating products and services?](#)

[What's the bottom line?](#)

Businesses in today's marketplace want to create a top-notch customer experience, streamline their operations, and provide broader value through environmental stewardship. Utilities, as businesses' most trusted resource for energy-efficiency advice, are poised to help these customers meet their goals through a variety of energy-related products and services. We analyzed data from the 2017 [Small and Midsize Business and Large Business Customer Satisfaction Studies](#) to show you:

- The top five energy-related products and services that small and midsize business (SMB) and large business customers are interested in
- Which business stakeholders to contact about new offerings
- What messaging to use when marketing new offerings to various sectors

We house all data from these benchmark studies in the E Source [Business Customer Insights Center](#), an interactive online dashboard that provides information about the energy management needs and attitudes of specific business sectors.

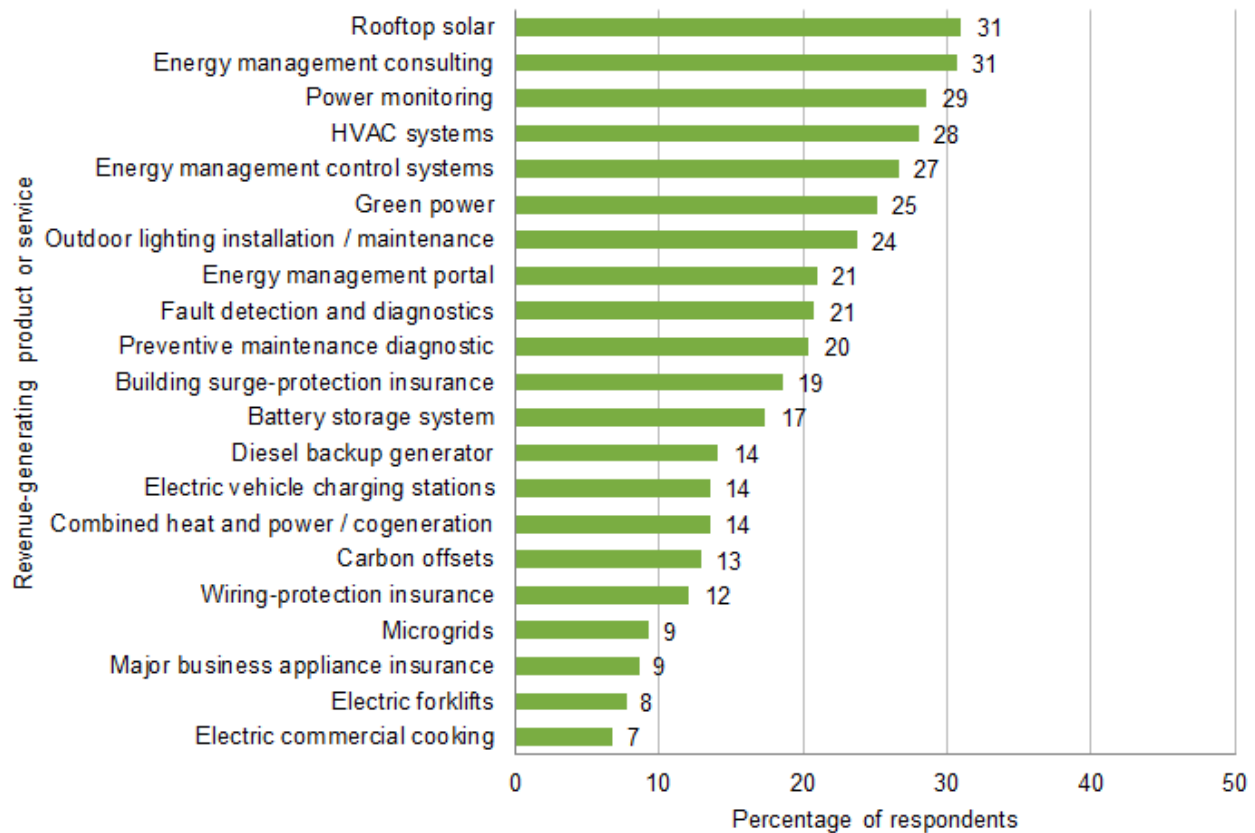
## What are best practices for marketing products and services to SMB customers?

Our survey asked about interest in utility-provided products and services (**figure 1**). Overall, SMB respondents expressed the most interest in:

- Rooftop solar
- Energy management consulting
- Power monitoring
- HVAC systems
- Energy management control systems

### **Figure 1: Small and midsize business customer interest in utility-provided products and services**

According to the 2017 E Source Small and Midsize Business Customer Satisfaction Study, more than 30% of respondents expressed interest in participating in rooftop solar.



**Base:** Small and midsize business customers included in the 2017 benchmark who answered this question (n varies from 1,486 to 1,645). **Question S6\_1\_Int:** Please tell us how interested your business is in purchasing or participating in each of the following utility-provided products or services.

© E Source (Small and Midsize Business Gap and Priority Benchmark 2017)

Of the products and services we asked about, SMB customers reported the highest level of interest in rooftop solar. Historically, SMBs have had relatively low adoption rates for rooftop solar compared to their large commercial counterparts, but that doesn't mean you should stop promoting this offering to SMB customers. Be sure to emphasize the potential energy savings in ways that are relevant to their businesses. For instance, when talking to property managers, talk about savings in terms of reduced maintenance requests.

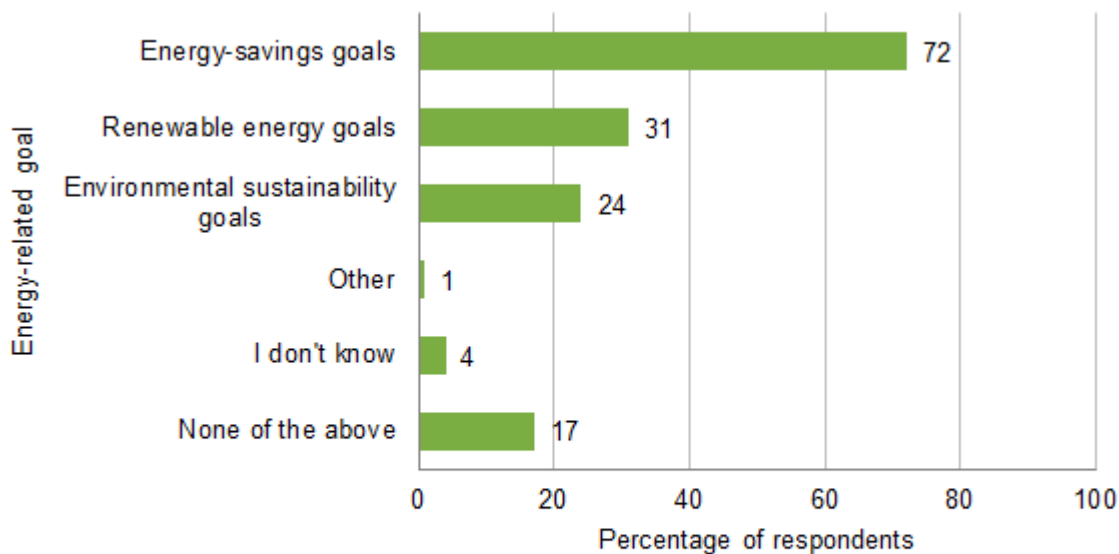
We asked SMB respondents who indicated interest in rooftop solar about their energy-related goals (**figure 2**). The top three were:

- Energy-savings goals
- Renewable energy goals
- Environmental sustainability goals

**Figure 2: Energy-related goals of small and midsize business customers who are interested in rooftop solar**

Nearly 80% of small and midsize business customers who are interested in rooftop solar have energy-

related goals in place at their organizations. Those concerning energy savings are overwhelmingly the most common.



**Base:** Small and midsize business customers who indicated interest in rooftop solar included in the 2017 benchmark who answered this question (n = 503). **Question S5\_7:** Which of the following energy-related goals, if any, does your business currently have in place?

© E Source (Small and Midsize Business Gap and Priority Benchmark 2017)

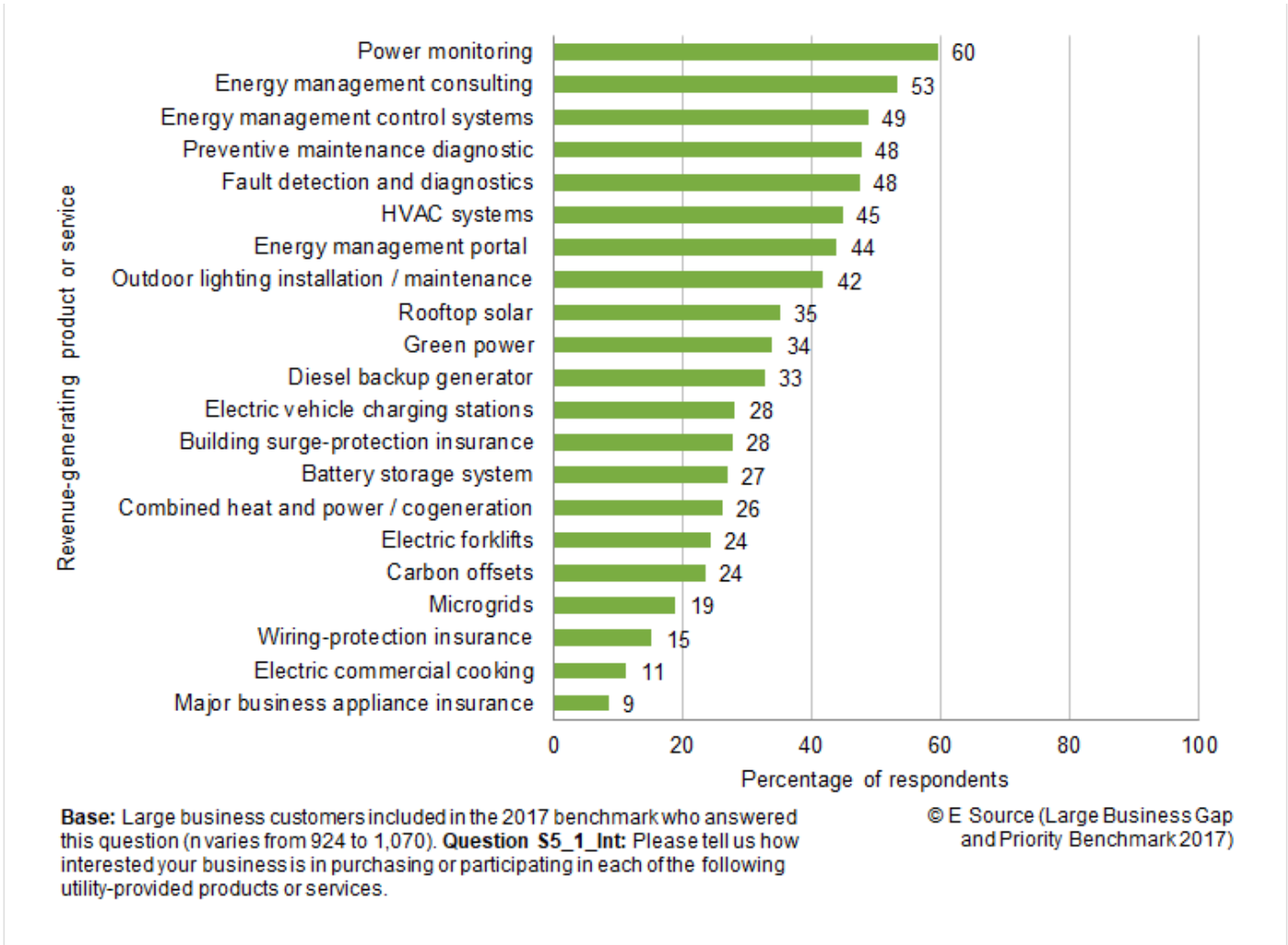
## What are best practices for marketing products and services to large business customers?

We also asked large business customers about their interest in utility-provided products and services (**figure 3**). These respondents expressed the most interest in:

- Power monitoring
- Energy management consulting
- Energy management control systems
- Preventive maintenance diagnostics
- Fault detection and diagnostics

### Figure 3: Large business customer interest in utility-provided products and services

According to the 2017 E Source Large Business Customer Satisfaction Study, more than 50% of large business customers are interested in purchasing or participating in utility-provided power-monitoring services.



Power monitoring is the top product large business customers expressed interest in. This offering is especially important for large businesses because it helps them reduce their costs and become more energy efficient. Power monitoring also offers a fast return on investment—an imperative for large business customers.

## Which business sector is the best bet for revenue-generating products and services?

We identified industrial and manufacturing as the SMB and large business sector most interested in utility-provided products and services. This sector relies heavily on facility management and engineering departments when making energy-related decisions. As such, we recommend targeting employees in these departments—in addition to business owners and company executives—to successfully launch a new product or service.

The best way to contact these stakeholders is via email. However, we also recommend posting product and service information on your website. Industrial and manufacturing customers are willing to self-serve, and so it's important to tailor your information to them and deliver it in an easily accessible way.

## What's the bottom line?

Businesses want better control over their energy expenses and you want to boost profits, so take advantage of the trusted relationship you have with your business customers and move beyond traditional utility offerings. Use data from our [Business Customer Insights Center](#) to build a winning business case and get buy-in for a new revenue-generating product or service at your utility.

---

© 2008 - 2024 E Source Companies LLC. All rights reserved.  
Distribution outside subscribing organizations limited by [license](#).