

Dentons Global Smart Cities & Connected Communities Think Tank Virtual Roundtable

Co-hosted with Keystone Policy Center

Grow | Protect | Operate | Finance



The Role of Energy Storage in Meeting the Needs of the Electric Grid

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

11:30am-1:00pm ET



Opening Remarks: **Clint Vince**, Chair of the US Energy practice, co-chair of the Global Transportation & Infrastructure sector for the US Region, and co-chair of the Global Smart Cities & Connected Communities Think Tank, Dentons



Welcome: **Emma Hand**, Co-chair of the Global Energy sector for the US Region, and co-chair of the Global Smart Cities & Connected Communities Think Tank, Dentons



David K. Owens
Board of Directors, ESPX

Panelist

After 36 years of service, Owens retired in mid-2017 as executive vice president of the Edison Electric Institute (EEI). He was the first African-American to hold an officer title with the organization. The Institute represents all US investor-owned electric companies. He spearheaded efforts to invest in the nation's electric infrastructure with new technology enhancing energy efficiency with smart buildings, smart meters and smart grids. Instrumental behind the founding of the American Association of Blacks in Energy, he has mentored generations of young men and women pursuing careers in energy.

Professional activities

- US Energy Industry, *Who is Who*
- Electric Utility Issues, Industry Restructuring, and Transformation
- Utility Mergers, Electric Integration Issues, and Utility Financial Disclosure
- Grid Modernization & Digital Transformation
- Former Board Member, Xcel Energy
- Former Vice Chairman, Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority
- Retired COO & EVP, Edison Electric Institute
- Chief Engineer for Division of Rates and Corporate Regulation, Security Exchange Commission



Dr. Todd Strauss
Chief Analytics Officer,
ESPX
Panelist

Todd has more than 30 years of experience in the electricity industry. With his unique blend of quantitative expertise, strong communication skills, and sharp business acumen, Todd has led analytic teams at utilities, consulting, and academia. Todd has deep hands-on knowledge and experience at the intersection of public policy and commercial activity. Todd held various leadership roles at Pacific Gas and Electric Company, culminating as Senior Director of Analytics, Innovation, and Strategy. Todd earned his PhD in Industrial Engineering and Operations Research at the University of California at Berkeley, and SB majoring in mathematics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Professional activities

- Analytics for energy and finance
- Electricity policy and regulation
- Strategic planning
- Stakeholder negotiations
- Senior Director, Analytics, Innovation, and Strategy, PG&E
- Principal, PHB Hagler Bailly
- Assistant Professor, Yale School of Management
- Gilbert White Fellow, Resources for the Future
- Regulatory Fellow, California Public Utilities Commission



Jeff Weiss
Executive Chairman,
Distributed Sun and
truCurrent
Panelist

Jeff cofounded Distributed Sun in 2009 and truCurrent in 2023, and he is executive chairman of both firms. Distributed Sun develops solar power at scale, and truCurrent is a mobility and microgrid business helping enterprises create virtual power plants. An early digital media and commerce entrepreneur and investor, Jeff led companies in media licensing, renewable energy, cyber and physical security, intelligence and corporate fraud mitigation, mission preparedness and training, software development, and transformational management.

In addition to Distributed Sun, he has worked for Picture Network International, CDx, Geoffrey's Malibu, Vista, TSG, Verisign, ASAP Ventures, AVM Financial Group, and Strategic Planning Associates. Jeff has served on the boards of software and software services companies.

Jeff's expertise includes guiding enterprises through strategic change, including transitioning from conventional to renewable power; integrating supply chains to focus on environmental attributes; adopting and investing with environmental, social, and governance impact; integrating cyber and digital security to organizational structures; and building teams for social impact.

Jeff graduated from Cornell University and the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. He serves on the trustee council of Cornell, on the boards of the Cornell Program in Infrastructure Policy and the Washington Hebrew Congregation, and on the council of the American Council on Renewable Energy Leadership. He has also held leadership positions with the Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future, Business Executives for National Security, the Solar Energy Finance Advisory Council's Council for the Solar Energy Industry Association, the Aspen Institute's Socrates Program, the Cornell Center for Technology Enterprise and Commercialization, the Shenandoah National Park Trust, and the Washington National Opera.



**Joanna Martin
Ziegenfuss**

General Manager Energy
Storage Strategic Market
Development, AMER,
Wärtsilä Energy Storage &
Optimisation

Panelist

Joanna Martin Ziegenfuss is the market development general manager for North America at Wärtsilä Energy Storage and Optimisation (ES&O), focused on driving strategic growth across markets in the United States and Canada. Joanna has worked as an energy market analyst and commercial advisor to clients in global energy markets for almost two decades. She is accomplished in energy market analytics, infrastructure project, economics, commercial strategy, and project due diligence. Her expertise across energy commodities and power generation has led her to advise industry and financial sector clients on energy infrastructure development and feasibility across the world. Prior to Wärtsilä, Joanna worked at the Berkeley Research Group, Siemens, and Mott MacDonald.

She holds a BSc in marine biology from the University of Wales, a post-graduate certificate in project finance from Middlesex University, UK and an MBA from Cranfield School of Management, UK.



Dennis Duffy

General Counsel and Vice
President,
Energy Management, Inc.

Panelist

Dennis is General Counsel and Vice President of Energy Management, Inc. (EMI), a privately held developer of more than US\$3 billion of traditional and renewable energy projects, including natural gas, biomass, and solar generation, as well as a portfolio of utility scale battery projects. Prior to joining EMI, Dennis represented a wide range of energy clients, including interstate gas pipelines, electric, gas and water utilities, and independent power projects. He has testified on energy policy issues before committees of the United States Senate and House of Representatives. Dennis was a member of the Northeast Roundtable of the NEPA Task Force convened by the United States Council on Environmental Quality and has served as the chair of the generation information system (GIS) committee of the New England Power Pool. He is a graduate of Columbia Law School and an adjunct professor of energy law at Boston College Law School.