



1) How do you see Elster's role in the current move towards a "smarter" Europe?
Elster plays an active role in engaging with all smart grid stakeholders to help drive smart grid adoption. We recognise that consumer group engagement and awareness plays the most vital role in the success of any smart meter roll-out. I recently took on responsibility for an expert group working for European Commission on data security and privacy to help address the concerns around smart grid data. Without consumer group engagement, or awareness, a smart meter roll-out will fail.

In addition to involvement with the EC group I also hold the position of Vice President in ESMIG (European Smart Meter Industry Group), where I'm responsible for Multi Utility Metering (gas, water, heat metering and electricity) coordination on a European level. Our involvement with industry groups gives us an in-depth understanding of key market issues and helps drive our commitment to ensuring we offer secure and interoperable end-to-end solutions.

2) What would you say are the biggest challenges in the industry? And for Europe in particular?

I touched upon one of the biggest challenges in my last answer - the issue of data privacy and security. Consumers have a heightened awareness and concern around data privacy and the corporations (including utilities) that deal with their data. This is why the Smart Grid Task Force Expert Group 2 defined "personal" and "non-personal" data, and why data encryption is now such a hot topic. The Netherlands has seen consumer privacy concerns actually halt rollouts, but now thanks to better consumer engagement they are now back on track. The UK has definitely benefited from engaging with consumer groups before smart meter roll outs.

Utilities also face a challenge when it comes to managing the volume of data that the smart grid will produce. The industry has never had to deal with data on this scale.

Finally, Europe is a very unique market and is a patchwork of different carriers, technologies, utilities and languages. This presents a challenge when it comes to integration and also gives the US and Chinese markets an advantage over Europe, because they don't face the same level of fragmentation. Each European country seems to be watching its neighbour hoping to learn from their example and I doubt that any two smart grid roll outs will be the same. This is why Elster is committed to ensuring all our solutions are open and interoperable.

3) Huge investments are being made in smart grids - how do you explain to someone who knows nothing about this industry, that this will improve our everyday lives?

It's all about the long term view. If someone lives in a crumbling house in need of urgent repair, it makes sense to fix the house as soon as possible before the house falls down. The

repairs will cost money, however the consumer is safeguarding their future and ensuring a robust and comfortable home for years to come.

We have to update the electricity infrastructure, as it can't cater for the future demands that we will place upon it. It will crumble unless it is upgraded. If we want to continue living the way we are and have unlimited electricity at our fingertips, successfully integrate renewable technologies and drive down carbon emissions, then we must invest in a smart grid.

4) What are you most proud of so far? Any success stories you want to share with us?

We are very proud of our involvement in key stakeholder negotiations and the fact we have played a key part in encouraging smart grid adoption.

5) What is your vision for this industry?

There are bound to be teething problems in the first wave of smart grid adoption. I believe if we successfully educate the consumer on the benefits of the smart grid and win their engagement within the next year the smart grid will prove itself to have been a worthy investment.

6) What do you expect from this year's Metering Europe? What will be the message to the European delegates?

In the same way the issue of privacy and security has echoed throughout these answers, I imagine it will be a central theme of Metering Europe. I expect the event will provide the perfect forum for industry to debate the key challenges we face and I hope these discussions will help accelerate the adoption of smart grid.

7) Anything you would like to add?

The industry is ready for the smart grid. We understand the challenges - from privacy and security of personal data, through to ensuring that solutions today are future-proof in light of emerging standards and functionality - and have developed our technologies specifically with these in mind. Indeed, we believe that the technology solutions available today from Elster can make the smart plans of tomorrow a reality.