

SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESS FORUM KEY INSIGHTS

Electrification & the energy transition

As a business customer what do you want Jemena to understand about your electricity needs?

Experiment - EV vs ICE driving from Melb to Syd and back (BMW test?) - ICE vehicle was more cost effective

Is there a way that Jemena could work with customers with a battery and solar set up (using privately owned equipment) to balance the grid?

Cooking with gas is quicker, higher heat, tastes better. Wondering if this will affect our business if we have to move to electricity?

If there are breaks in distribution, it affects everyone. We host other microbusinesses and if the power goes out they will just blame us, not Jemena.

Our gas system is running non-stop, for over 25 years, and it's still working. Can't say the same with electricity. Cooking - will food taste the same when we can't get the same temperatures.

Our systems are all aged in Melb, we're being pushed to use more electricity but can the system handle more.

Timing of outages (with upgrades happening on the street), including road closures.

Human connection is really important - eg after talking to one of the workers they were able to schedule work on a Mon on a day we're usually closed.

When there's no power there's no business.

Pricing, tariffs and equity

As a small business, what is most important to you when it comes to pricing?

I run a micro arts organisation, an arts space (old Coles), energy is a huge cost and out of our control, doubled in the last year, but understand a lot of things are out of Jemena's control

Most important thing for us is how much we can save on our non-negotiables (elec, gas).

Need to see the price change and come down.

Wanting people to advocate on our behalf about reducing our consumption, eg in a giant building,

Does the distribution cost change that much when the costs to businesses increase?

Could bills to business be broken down differently? even a 5% saving can be huge

I'd like to add solar panels but government won't support it because I'm a sole business owner (no employees).

A wholesaler for automotive components, with 2 warehouses. Transporting equipment internationally, all electrified. Have installed a solar array and battery, reduces our consumption on the grid. 2nd generation solar array. Want to ensure our investment will pay off, or whether we need to increase storage. 6-8 staff, all active, using computers, in the store etc.

Our usage of power is limited, 3 staff. Use power for lighting and heating.

What other considerations does Jemena need to consider when it comes to pricing?

Considering changing our fleet to electric vehicles, factoring in the current cost of fuel vs lower cost of running EVs, charging during the day etc. Unsure of whether to make the investment if running costs increase in future.
Hydrogen - will this become part of the mix?

Tariffs and how they work for us as customers

Resilience & reliability

What factors do you want Jemena to consider when it comes to network planned and unplanned outages?

A planned outage with a good forecast (duration) would be great. Longer than 36hrs would cause problems, we'd need to consider putting in another battery.

Prepare the grid for sustainable use by upgrading power lines to handle solar and wind in tegration into the grid and prevent overloading invest in underground powerlines to prevent downed powerlines and fire damage

Good to see the graph showing the trend to less outages over the years, a sign of relief actually that you might be able to handle more (electrification of the system).

I have experienced these, in the middle of a client session (blow wave, colour). You have to improvise. Having notice makes a difference, I can move clients around. But others will just lose business if the power's out.

I've been getting messages about an upcoming outage, we can work around. It's the unplanned that we can't know about, but we've never held Jemena responsible. Positive feedback.

We did run a gig (elec music) and the power went out 10mins before, but it was back on in 40mins

Our appliances need electricity when there is an outage is there an app we can use that can be personalised to notify us personally when power is coming back on to notify our customers when we will be back on the grid also we have transformers that blow up sometimes which affect us also is this take along time to fix and if so how long usually.

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Learned a lot about the structure and how power comes before getting to our shop.

Really informative, a lot of questions posed, been productive overall. Hope Jemena can take these away and think about them.

(Cost vs reliability) - Don't think there needs to be a trade-off. If Jemena can source money from the government instead of chasing small business.

Been so interesting, I've learned a lot about the whole system, thinking more about how we use electricity but also about what's in and out of our control.

One of the reasons we put a battery in is to have uninterrupted supply. Part of the Tesla Powerwall is the capacity to set how much you have in storage, ideally 80/20 split.

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