

## CASE STUDY

# SMART LOCAL ENERGY SYSTEMS, SMPnet's ROUTE TO MARKET

## REFINING THE VALUE PROPOSITION FOR A SOPHISTICATED CONTROL SOLUTION

Smart Power Networks (SMPnet Ltd) is a technology start-up company that developed a smart controller to help Distribution Networks Operators control and optimise their energy assets.

Following a Digital and Data: Innovator Challenge call, the Energy Launchpad team worked with SMPnet across a range of challenges:

- Understanding the value of smart network controllers to two key user groups: Engineering Procurement Contactors and Industrial users
- For the most attractive use cases, determining their commercial business model and validating any assumptions.
- Evaluating the competitor landscape and determining an appropriate route to market by developing the services value stack for the SMPnet controller.
- Identifying partnership opportunities and developing a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) Software as a Service (SaaS) offering and pricing model.
- Supporting SMPnet in raising investor finance.

### The Innovation

Smart Power Network (SMPnet) is a technology start-up company that developed a smart network controller to help energy network stakeholders' control and optimise their energy network assets.

SMPnet offer one of the few solutions on the market that can provide real-time dynamic control of multiple different assets on a milli-second basis in a coordinated manner, providing data insights to these stakeholders from its integrated AI technology.

Since assets essentially operate in isolation, there is little communication between them making informed decisions challenging. The SMPnet controller allows personnel to execute decisions across different assets based on other assets activities which allow them to achieve an optimal solution.



**CATAPULT**  
Energy Systems

### ABOUT US

Energy Systems Catapult was set up to accelerate the transformation of the UK's energy system and ensure UK businesses and consumers capture the opportunities of clean growth.

The catapult is an independent, not-for-profit centre of excellence that bridges the gap between industry, government, academia and research.

We take a whole system view of the energy sector, helping us to identify and address innovation priorities and market barriers to decarbonise the energy system at least cost.

"We deeply believe the work we have been doing with ESC team has added lots of value to our business and its effects will be seen across 2021 as we delve into commercial engagements.

The various activities have been an eye-opener, as we got the chance to expand on aspects unknown to us, including business model, customer journey, and many more!"

**Anastasios Oulis Rousis, Smart Power Networks CEO and Co-Founder**

**SMP · Net**  
Smart Power Networks



## The Challenge

SLES is an emerging market, however Network Operators are already exploring system architectures to provide optimisation of multiple and sophisticated assets, SMPnet's controller is a key component in providing these Network Operators with the control required to enable the SLES market to develop.

ESC team's aim in gaining insights of the needs of these Network Operators is to help understand the problems they face and their priorities. These insights will position SMPnet's solution to help build customer confidence and encourage greater adoption.

This consumer insight work will support the development of the design blueprints for our MVP SaaS product, and understand the value being created.

## Impact

- Spoke to over 40 stakeholders to build a clear picture of the value SMPnet could offer.
- Framed SMPnet's key offerings to ensure they were delivering the right messaging to the right people.
- Identified potential routes to market and highlighted key benefits to overcome the challenge of selling a sophisticated real time controller.
- Provided forward recommendations such as creating a common data repository and exposing a well-documented REST API.
- Validated the energy SaaS business model to achieve a more favourable balance between risk and reward.
- Unlocked potential business opportunities and built SMP's new business pipeline.
- Introduced SMPnet to Investors to fund the SaaS development.

## Get in touch

To find out how we can help you, get in touch via email: [energylaunchpad@es.catapult.org.uk](mailto:energylaunchpad@es.catapult.org.uk).

For more information about Energy Launchpad, [click here](#).



## The Solution

We started this project by hosting a workshop with SMP to identify use cases. Initially, two use cases were identified: Engineering and Procurement Contractors (EPCs) and industrial energy users.

ESC then engaged in comprehensive desk, market and user research to stress test the business models. The market research involved comprehensive semi-structured surveys to understand target groups' needs, current procurement methods and factors they consider valuable from a controller.

After the initial research, we hosted another workshop with SMPnet to identify assumptions within their business model. We then conducted additional market research to validate these assumptions before presenting a revised business model, value proposition and developing the MVP SaaS digital service.

## Next Steps

- Follow on recommendations have been provided for additional research; for example, into customers' willingness to pay the new pricing model.
- Continuing to refine the value proposition and test assumptions through additional interviews.
- Follow-on meetings between potential customers and SMPnet Ltd.
- Support to raise capital to fund the development of the SaaS model.

