

## **Monty Prekeris, Tendril**

**Title:** Party of One: How and Why to Create Personalized Program Designs to Scale BEE Savings

**Abstract:** The biggest gains in behavioral energy efficiency (BEE) frequently come from those with the most to lose -- owners of big, inefficient houses. The unfortunate side effect for utilities prioritizing cost-effective savings is that many customers (low-income, multi-family homes, renters) can lose out on the benefits of BEE. Rather than leave any particular segments out in the cold, personalized program design offers the ability to treat people with the right information via the best channel at the most opportune time. Personalizing content, cadence and channel for end users will lead to higher engagement, satisfaction and ultimately energy efficiency savings by encouraging customers to take actions within their reach. Engagement is strongly correlated with savings, so increasing engagement is one of the best opportunities to scale up savings. Digital channels such as emails, high bill alerts, portals and online challenges all help increase engagement exponentially when sent to right audience. By determining what people care about, understanding their current living situation and catering to their preferred communication channels, utilities open up large swaths of the population for cost-effective behavioral treatment while also being more inclusive of diverse audiences. To put this into action, smart program design takes into consideration things like units that aren't owner occupied and presents low-stake actions more appropriate for renters. Designing personalized content requires more than verbally communicating people's personal situations such as noting when a customer has a family. BEE programs only reap additional savings when they correlate personal demographics to specific actions. For example, families of teenagers are more apt to really long hot showers, and providing tips to parents to talk about their children about their bathing habits will resonate and lead to better savings than generic tips. This session will share several case studies of how utilities have altered their BEE programs to successfully incorporate the right content, cadence and channel, examine the effectiveness of different communication channels, show how tweaks to messaging can create big gains in engagement and the surprising results in how different demographics prefer to communicate.