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**Title- Utility Distribution Grid: Platform for Innovation, Integration and Market Animation**

The utility distribution grid provides tremendous value to society through the supply of reliable, affordable and ubiquitous electric energy. Some would say the ultimate example of plug and play in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Electricity today plays a much more important part of our lives than just 10 years ago with the proliferation of voice/data enabled personal devices coupled with expanded delivery bandwidth of the internet. Electrification of industrial processes and emerging growth in the transport sectors continues to increase our economy's reliance on electric energy such that electricity powers 65% of US GDP. Furthermore, the power outages associated with the destructive forces of super storm Sandy and Hurricane Katrina, has led to increased concern over the resilience of the system upon which so many have come to rely for so much.

The utility industry has been built around the principles of affordability, reliability and resiliency. The industry understands the responsibility associated with owning, maintaining and operating a system upon which so many rely on for their standard of living. We also understand that resiliency means adaptation to changes in our operating, political and social environments. The industry is approaching a turning point, driven by technology advances, changing customer expectations and by the industry's more visible and pronounced role on center court.

The industry is well-positioned to once again adapt to meet the challenges ahead by transforming its distribution grid into a platform that, among other things, engages customers, integrates distributed energy resources and drives innovation in energy usage. This will require a platform that provides integrated solutions to customers that address their individual situations and value systems. While that may seem far away from where we are today, the present roll-out of smart infrastructure is enabling capabilities to allow us to move toward the platform for the future. At OGE Energy, based on our smart meter deployment alone, the customer experience has been materially enhanced with even more significant improvements on the horizon. Our goal is simple: keep the grid relevant in the lives of our customers!