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## Interview with Peter Porteous, CEO, PowerCost Monitor, Blue Line Innovations

**SGU: In a nutshell, tell us what your company does? Can you tell us a little bit about the projects that you're working on currently? What are your current aims for the next 6 months?**

**Peter:** Blue Line Innovations is in the business of real time energy feedback. We have been pioneering this space since 2003. We were founded by 2 brothers who wanted to develop a "speedometer for electricity" to help people better understand this big personal budget item and to use information to change behaviour. In 2003 this was a great concept but clearly ahead of its time. It's really encouraging to see energy conservation move into the mainstream and to have giants such as Google, Microsoft, Intel, GE, etc validate the opportunity and to help fuel even further innovation. *(Google will be joining Peter at the upcoming **Smart Grid Technology Conference (2-3 June, San Diego)** to discuss the home energy management market in more detail. Click here to [download the brochure](#) and view the complete agenda)*

At Blue Line we have 2 parallel strategies, first to continue to offer a very family friendly product range under our brand the PowerCost Monitor. The PowerCost Monitor caters to the first layer of the onion, basic real time electricity use information presented in a simple, portable dashboard. The PowerCost Monitor is designed to be engaging for the entire family with a feature set to help drill down and better understand current uses, expenses and to encourage behaviour change. At the same time we are committed to work with others who are pursuing deeper layers of the onion – deeper, trendable data; connecting and controlling devices in the home through a personal network. Our role in these collaboration relationships is to allow our partners to expand their market reach beyond active AMI applications and offer their robust solutions to all homes through Blue Line's universal passive patented optical sensor.

**SGU: How do you differentiate your offerings from your competitors? What according to you is your USP?**

**Peter:** There are only 3 ways to access residential electricity data today, through the utility, CT technology inside the breaker panel, or Blue Line's patented optical sensing technology. The Blue Line technology is consumer friendly and retail friendly with no electricians required. The genius in the product design is this one sensor has addressed the complexity of different meter brands, analogue, digital, AMI, AMR and is compatible with approximately 90% of all North American homes. Thanks in large part to years of work with the utilities in research pilots and market offerings we are broadly accepted by utilities. With a purchase price of \$109 US with no added complexity or cost associated with an electrician payback for a homeowner can be 4-6 months. Broad acceptance and availability of the PowerCost Monitor by retailers is moving the energy monitoring category from niche early adopters to the mainstream.

**SGU:** What partnerships are you looking at, or who would you like to work with? Who has come up with the most exciting innovation that you've seen recently and why? Or which trend will impact the industry the most in the coming years and why?

**Peter:** Clearly the exciting innovations are the deeper layers of the onion where a homeowner can use this real time electricity information to control their in home devices and electricity consumption. Simple plug and play solutions will succeed. We intend to collaborate with such companies in a "powered by Blue Line" relationship where we enable and propel their offering by providing universal, real time access to the electricity data. We announced our first such collaboration relationship on December 22nd with Intwine Connect. Intwine has developed a very robust and user friendly in home network with remote visibility and control....it's the shape of things to come.

**SGU:** What are your three biggest challenges currently? How do you see the industry changing over the next decade?

**Peter:** Our 3 biggest challenges are the moment are;

1. Staying focused. The category is incredibly attractive at the moment and opportunities seem to be at every turn. We have been at this a while, we do have a very clear strategy, we just need to stay true to the path and not get tempted by the flavour or phone call of the day.
2. Managing high growth. Significant growth is terrific and it's what we all shoot for.... but it's tripped up many smart businesses and smart business people. We have to stay very sharp on our people and cash choices as we execute this growth
3. Staying focused....back to rule number 1