

[A Rally for Home Energy Information from Copenhagen](#)

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COPENHAGEN — Copenhagen has [witnessed dozens of rallies](#) and protests this week, but none like the geeked-out call to action that will occur on Tuesday afternoon here at the Bella Center as the climate negotiations move into the second week. A group including Google, General Electric, The Climate Group and the Natural Resources Defense Council plan to hold an event asking international governments to give consumers access to real time home energy information and the tools to cut their energy consumption.

Google, [with its online home energy tool PowerMeter](#), and GE, with its smart meters and [home energy software](#), both have products that they want consumers to use, so the call to action isn't exactly philanthropic. But the companies plan to cite research that shows just how big an impact home energy software could make in fighting global warming: seeing in real-time how much energy a consumer is using could help them save up to 15 percent on their electricity consumption with simple behavioral changes, says Google.

Dan Reicher, Google's Director of Climate Change and Energy Initiatives, said in an interview on Sunday at the Bright Green Expo in Copenhagen that the home energy call to action "simple but fundamental." Information technology has a unique ability to make the issue of climate change personal for consumers, and unleashing home energy data will be a crucial part of that process, he said. Reicher, who will be accompanied by GE's Steve Fludder, Vice President of Ecomagination ([whom we interviewed here](#)), will be showing off demos of PowerMeter to the COP15 attendees at the [kiosk where IT firms have been touting](#) their wares throughout the event.

The group's call to action is the latest move from the information and communication technology (ICT) industry here at Copenhagen, and IT firms have attended the COP15 event in droves. In addition to Google, IT firms including Microsoft, Cisco, AT&T (a T), and IT trade groups like the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), and the GSM Association, have been giving presentations at the kiosk and using the venue to meet partners and policymakers. Arthur Levin, the head of the Telecommunication Standardization Policy division of the ITU, [told me last week that the IT industry is even](#) interested in getting reference to the ability for IT to reduce greenhouse gas emissions into the Copenhagen agreement.

For many of the IT firms the event is just a way to connect with the estimated 45,000 attendees that are roaming around the Bella Center and a good way to reiterate the ways that IT can reduce emissions. According to the widely cited report [Smart2020](#) from The Climate Group, who will be joining in the home energy call to action along with Google, ICT can cut emissions across sectors — like the power grid, buildings, transportation and logistics and dematerialization (replacing physical goods with virtual ones) — by 15 percent compared to business as usual by 2020. That makes ICT potentially the key technology to reducing substantial carbon emissions in the short term on a global scale.

The Climate Group also announced at COP15 that it has relaunched its [Smart2020 web site](#) with more examples of case studies and success stories of IT companies and IT tools that have effectively reduced energy consumption. Other research firms like IDC also took the opportunity to announce ICT sustainability data.