

### Top 10 tips for trial installations in customers' homes

At EA Technology, we are keen to share our wealth of experience and expertise with you – and so we have collated a 'Top 10 tips for trial installations'.

#### 1. Learn from other projects

Speak with other projects about their experience using similar techniques and approaches; the highs and the lows, what approaches work and what don't.

#### 2. Maximise pre-trial test-runs

Walk, before you run. Take small steps to bridge the gap from lab testing to field testing. Consider mini-trials or testing the technology on home ground to help shape your approach and technique. Have you learned as much as you can from early field testing? Can your project collaborate with technology test-beds elsewhere?

#### 3. Identify 'trip hazards'

Carry out 'what-if' planning, and have a plan for each possible outcome. Identifying potential pitfalls and best practice before large scale roll-out can bring huge benefits. Engage with others outside the project team for a wider perspective; perhaps a partner who can advise on appropriate checks to make on site in a certain locality.

#### 4. Have a Master Plan

Keep partners and suppliers in the loop and send regular updates of progress against the schedule. Keep a close eye on stock control, for new trial technology lead times can be brutal and can impact on installation schedules. Have a priority list of installations, to allow effective planning, but be aware these may need to flex in line with project needs.

#### 5. Approve before you move

Make sure all necessary method statements and equipment are signed off and approved by the relevant parties before scheduling on-site work; keep the process smooth and efficient and avoid unnecessary delays or cancellation of works.

#### 6. Plan communications and approach

Know who you need to have on site, and when, well in advance. Tell customers too, so they know who to expect and when they'll be there. Having a clear idea of who needs to be involved, planned dates and times helps to streamline the installation and gives customers confidence in the project.

Project leads



Project partners



My Electric Avenue has received support from Ofgem through the Low Carbon Networks (LCN) Fund.

### 7. Manage customer expectations

Have a solid customer engagement strategy, agreed with all partners, from the outset. It is vital to agree key project messages and approach in order to effectively engage customers during installations, and to make sure that the messages are clear, consistent and above all, enticing.

If customers are likely to be impacted, give them notice – and as much as you can manage. Be honest! Plans can change, and if they do keep customers updated and stay positive. Offer as much information on progress and timescales where possible and adapt messages where relevant.

### 8. On the day

Keep a register of tools/items taken to site and log these on return. It's easy to lose things in the back of a van or at a depot. Do you know who will represent you on site, or on customers' doorsteps? Make sure those who are expected on site have a named contact, and direct phone numbers for shared in case of delays etc. If necessary brief them on the project and their role in the wider process.

### 9. Tailor solutions

Remember that every project and every customer is different. Each home installation, and substation can differ widely too. One size is unlikely to fit all; be willing to flex and adapt. Be willing to 'think outside of the box' and find solutions to suit particular customer needs, within project constraints of resource, time and budget.

### 10. Follow up

Remember that customers are testing out trial technology, and some may need reassurance. As with many other projects, ongoing contact with the customer is key to a project's successful delivery. A follow up call or email can go a long way in building up customers' trust in the project and technology itself.

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