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ENERGY STAR SET-TOP BOX PROGRAM

EPB Fiber Optics Makes the Most of Its ENERGY STAR® Set-Top Box Partnership

Pay-TV service provider participation in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ENERGY STAR Set-Top Box program represents an opportunity to provide competitive television services, reduce subscribers' electric bills, and minimize environmental impact. As an ENERGY STAR service provider partner, EPB Fiber Optics enjoys community-wide recognition for its winning approach to meeting customer entertainment and sustainability needs.



The revitalized riverfront: Downtown Chattanooga, TN.

Established in 1935, EPB is an agency of the City of Chattanooga that provides electric and communication services to the greater Chattanooga region. Serving over 169,000 homes and businesses, EPB currently provides fiber-to-the-home internet, television, and phone services and was the first in the nation (in September 2010) to offer a 1Gbps residential internet connection throughout its entire service area.

In 2008, EPB completed the simple application to become an ENERGY STAR set-top box service provider partner, the third to join after DirecTV and AT&T. While large providers often drive technological research and development for set-top box hardware, small local providers have a significant role to play through partnerships with EPA's ENERGY STAR program.

When EPB first entered the pay TV business, the company searched for a set-top box that was feature-rich and cost-effective with substantial computing power. The set-top box that best fit the EPB's needs was also ENERGY STAR qualified, proving that energy efficiency need not come at the expense of quality, a large factor in EPB's decision to join the ENERGY STAR program. EPB believes its partnership with EPA increases its brand value, giving it a competitive advantage over its cable competitor by allowing the company to demonstrate its environmental leadership within the community. ENERGY STAR qualification is now a standard requirement in EPB's set-top box purchasing process.

PARTNERING WITH ENERGY STAR

Small, local service providers can make a significant contribution to their communities by partnering with EPA's ENERGY STAR program. Take these steps to take advantage of an ENERGY STAR partnership:

Become a Partner and Select ENERGY STAR qualified set-top boxes:

1. Review the [service provider program requirements](#) for set-top boxes and the [manufacturer partnership application](#); sign the partnership agreement and email it to the EPA.
2. Review the ENERGY STAR qualified products list to find models that meet your needs.
3. When purchasing set-top boxes, include ENERGY STAR qualification and set-top box labeling requirement in the manufacturer contract or purchase order.

Leverage ENERGY STAR program resources to communicate your commitment:

1. Educate employees who work directly with customers about the ENERGY STAR program and its benefits.
2. Ensure that key internal groups like Purchasing, HR, and Marketing are aware of the partnership requirements.
3. Use the ENERGY STAR brand and messaging to advertise the partnership to customers and to the community. Place the ENERGY STAR partner logo on your website.
4. Report the number and configuration of ENERGY STAR qualified set-top boxes purchased or deployed in the field annually.



EPB's set-top boxes are 59% more efficient than most. The organization uses ENERGY STAR logo stickers on each set-top box to promote the program with customers.

EPA periodically revises the ENERGY STAR specifications to ensure that they stay relevant. All stakeholders are welcome to participate in the specification revision process. EPB has been actively involved in providing feedback on the ENERGY STAR Set-Top Box program requirements. EPB has supported challenging yet attainable set-top box efficiency requirements and advocated for maintaining the ENERGY STAR purchasing requirement of at least 50% for service provider partners.

In 2009, at the annual ENERGY STAR Products Partners meeting, the EPA recognized EPB as a “pioneer” company in the set-top box program. Katharine Kaplan, Team Lead for ENERGY STAR Product Development, complimented EPB on its leadership in becoming a set-top box partner and in being “out front” in the municipal provider landscape. “We are so happy to have EPB as an active ENERGY STAR partner. We understand that the pay TV service market is large and diverse and welcome participation by the regional service providers.”

EPB takes advantage of social media by making posts to Twitter and other sites relating to its ENERGY STAR efforts, the qualified products it offers, and potential ways to save money around the house through other energy saving opportunities. In addition, EPB promotes its partnership by placing the ENERGY STAR partner logo prominently on its website and by notifying customers of the qualifying set-top box within its user guide. By operating an information booth at a local farmers market EPB creates awareness about how it is saving energy through ENERGY STAR program participation and educates subscribers about how they can save energy through a variety of measures, including switching to more efficient lighting technologies. Customers have responded positively to EPB’s active presence in social media and community event participation.

NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY EPB IN ITS PARTNERSHIP WITH ENERGY STAR:

- A typical EPB set-top box and digital video recorder combination saves a typical household about \$90 over its lifetime compared to the average equivalent set-top box.¹
- EPB’s set-top boxes are 59% more efficient on average when compared to the average of comparable set-top boxes.
- EPB Fiber Optics households saved roughly \$594,175 or 6,092,230 kWh in 2011.
- This amount of electricity saved is equivalent to the annual greenhouse gas emissions from over 800 cars.²
- EPB surpasses ENERGY STAR’s partnership requirement of distributing 50% ENERGY STAR qualified devices. All of EPB’s set-top boxes are ENERGY STAR qualified.

As the ENERGY STAR Set-Top Box Partnership program continues to mature, new opportunities present themselves. EPB’s participation in and promotion of the ENERGY STAR program illustrate how a small service provider can effectively leverage the ENERGY STAR partnership to both reduce its customers’ energy consumption and gain a competitive market advantage without sacrificing quality of service.

“As an electric power distributor, energy efficiency is very important to us. That’s why we are committed to seeking energy efficient opportunities in our advanced communications company wherever possible,” says Katie Espeseth, Vice President of EPB Fiber Optics. “Having the most energy efficient set-top boxes made a lot of sense. And it’s just the right thing to do.”

For additional information on the ENERGY STAR Set-Top Box partnership, contact:

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Email: info@epb.net

ENERGY STAR Set-Top Box program
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EPB completed its 100% Fiber Optic network in March 2011, making the most powerful communication network in the world available to customers in its 600-square-mile service area.

¹ All energy savings values based on Ecova (formerly known as Ecos) model for average energy consumption of installed set-top boxes (162 kWh/yr for HD-Receiver, 308 kWh/yr for HD-DVR, 5 year lifetime), the ENERGY STAR Qualified Product List, and the EPB 2011 residential rate of .0973 cents.

² Data was translated using US EPA Equivalencies Calculator (<http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-resources/calculator.html#results>).