

## **China to Deploy 280 Million Smart Meters by 2016, Competing Technologies vie for Position**

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Modernizing the world's electrical grid has been a long time in coming, with many parts of the grid more than 100 years old. Modernizing hasn't been easy or cheap. Not only does the world's electrical system require updates due to age, but as usage increases, and the building of more power plants becomes more difficult, upgrading the smart grid becomes a requirement, not an option. Deploying the smart grid requires hundreds of millions of smart meters. Worldwide, smart meter deployments continue to grow, driven in large part by very large deployments in China where new In-Stat ([www.in-stat.com](http://www.in-stat.com)) research forecasts that the deployment of smart meters will reach 280 million by 2016.

"The smart meter is at the heart of the smart grid transformation, and even though infrastructure and customer education are also important, in these early days it's all about the smart meter," says Allen Noguee, Research Director. "Even without other changes, a smart meter allows a utility to offer a wider range of electric rates and to greatly reduce the cost of meter reading, which alone can eventually pay for the smart meter. With the large numbers of smart meter deployments forecasted, it naturally follows that many technology solutions will evolve, and that is exactly what is occurring."

Recent In-Stat research found:

- Worldwide powerline is the clear leader in smart meter connectivity, connecting the meter back to the utility. However, we are seeing an increasing number of wireless solutions including cellular, whitespace, and proprietary methods that use unlicensed spectrum and operate in a mesh configuration.
- China, the world's biggest energy consumer, is also the biggest smart meter consumer.
- The number of smart meters deployed in the US per year will decrease after peaking in 2011, during which stimulus money drove utilities to update their meters, but worldwide, smart meter deployment will continue to grow.

This Market Alert is drawn from the In-Stat research, [Getting Smart on Worldwide Smart Meter Communication Technology \[1\]](#) (#IN1104731WH), which

contains an in-depth look at the smart grid in general, and the smart meter and communication technology employed and includes:

## Smart meter five-year forecast

- Technology forecast from smart meter into the house o ZigBee o Wi-Fi
- Technology forecast from smart meter back to the utility o Powerline o Proprietary wireless and 802.15.4 o Cellular/licensed spectrum o White space o Other technology
- Examples of current projects: Pacific Gas and Electric, Salt River Project-Arizona, Baltimore Gas and Electric-Maryland, Austin Electric-Texas, Xcel Energy Boulder-Colorado, Sacramento Municipal Utility District-California
- Profiles of smart meter/smart grid manufacturers; Aclara, Echelon, Ember, Elster, GE, Hexing Electric, Holly Smart Meters, Itron, Landis + Gyr, Sensus, and SmartSynch

This research is part of In-Stat's Mobile Devices service, which provides analysis and forecasts of the market for mobile communications and computing devices, including cell phones, smartphones, MIDs, tablets, mini-notes/netbooks, and notebooks.

Related research:

[HomePlug, MoCA, HomePNA, and G.hn: And the Winner Is...](#) [2]

[Cellular Modems, Mobile Hotspots, and Embedded Modems: Wherever We Go, We Want To Be Connected](#) [3]

[Global 802.15.4 and ZigBee](#) [4]

### More Information on this Research

- **Title:** Getting Smart on Worldwide Smart Meter Communication Technology
- **Service:** [Mobile Devices](#) [5]
- **Product Number:** IN1104731WH
- **Publication Date:** August 2011
- **Number of Pages:** 50
- **Price:** \$3,995 USD
- [Abstract, Table of Contents, Figures & Tables](#) [6]
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