



## Frequently Asked Questions

### WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY

1. What is [Better Data Better Design](#)<sup>SM</sup>?

[Better Data Better Design](#) is a collaborative, cost-shared service offered by D&R International that focuses on collecting high-quality empirical data to address energy efficiency challenges in the marketplace identified by utility and program administrator subscribers. The aim is to support the design of high-performing energy efficiency programs that realize more claimed energy savings.

2. Why is D&R International launching this service?

D&R sees a need for utilities and program administrators to quickly collect, analyze, and translate better data into energy efficiency programs to produce highly defensible energy savings.

3. Who can participate?

With a fully paid subscription, utilities, administrators of energy efficiency programs, and government agencies may participate in setting the research priorities. Other market stakeholders, such as manufacturers, retailers, and program implementers, may subscribe to receive the data insights and provide input on program design frameworks, but may not help select research projects.

4. What is the format of the service?

The essential element of the service is the facilitated workshop. Participants meet twice a year to determine research priorities and translate the results of that research into logic model-driven program designs that reflect retailer, manufacturer, and evaluator input.

5. Why should our organization subscribe to [Better Data Better Design](#)?

[Better Data Better Design](#) is a powerful supplement for energy efficiency program sponsors interested in research and high-quality data leading to more robust program designs. It delivers a greater volume of higher quality data and research through pooled resources, and it allows an organization to have direct input into the research and market insights with a minimum investment of time. It shortens program design cycle times, provides comparisons of the merits of different program designs, and strengthens a program sponsor's case for adopting a particular program design or proving it has been effective.

6. What makes the data gathered for [Better Data Better Design](#) superior?

[Self-reported data has proven to be consistently](#) inaccurate and has been the source of many mistaken program and business decisions. Therefore, [Better Data Better Design](#)'s data sources will consist exclusively of high-quality empirical data such as full category sales data, data from on-site inventories, data from direct measurement of household or device energy use, and data from controlled field tests. Data based on self-reporting of past behavior, motivations, likely future behavior, willingness to pay, and similar sources generally will not be used. One can rarely learn from what people say, but one can learn a great deal from what they do.

7. Hasn't this type of program been tried before?

While there have been other attempts to coordinate utility research and program design, the processes have been slow and cumbersome, requiring consensus or deliberation from already

overburdened program managers. In addition, the sponsoring organizations lacked experience in executing the necessary elements and did not have well-established relationships and non-disclosure agreements with the major industry players. [Better Data Better Design](#) eliminates the need for consensus. Projects attracting sufficient financial support move forward regardless of the breadth of interest. D&R, through its long history with ENERGY STAR, the Weatherization Assistance Program, and numerous other programs, has well-established relationships with stakeholders from all the relevant industries and non-disclosure agreements with many of them, especially retailers and manufacturers.

8. When will [Better Data Better Design](#) begin?

D&R is inviting prospective participants to learn about this new service in a webinar scheduled for June 28, 2011. We are also scheduling individual consultation calls for interested participants. The first workshop is planned for September 20-21, 2011, in Seattle, Washington.

## HOW

1. How does our organization subscribe to the program?

Contact D&R International at 301/588-9387 or [BetterDataBetterDesign@drintl.com](mailto:BetterDataBetterDesign@drintl.com) for a consultation and pricing package.

2. How much does a subscription cost?

Pricing packages for utilities and program administrators are based on the size of the organization. An annual subscription fee covers basic market research, market insights briefings, research results, two workshop registrations, and administrative management. Program sponsor and utility subscribers must also purchase a minimum number of project credits, which determines how much an organization can allocate to research projects. Additional project credits are available for purchase as desired.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS' ROLES

1. Can any organization subscribe?

Yes, but only program sponsors and government agencies can participate in priority-setting and co-fund projects.

2. Which organizations qualify as program sponsors?

Utilities and local, state, and regional organizations that implement energy efficiency programs are considered program sponsors and must purchase project credits. These organizations are eligible to participate in priority-setting and may co-fund research initiatives. If they do not sponsor energy efficiency programs, they have the option of purchasing project credits to participate in priority-setting and co-fund research initiatives, but are not obligated to do so.

3. Can my organization change its subscription level?

Subscribers may increase their subscription level by purchasing additional project credits at any time. Credits must be used within one year of purchase.

4. What are the roles for organizations that don't participate in priority-setting and what benefits do they receive?

ORGANIZATIONS	ROLES	BENEFITS
Implementation Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represent utilities in priority-setting if designated by the utility.</li> <li>• Provide feedback on logic models and reporting templates</li> <li>• Collaborate with program sponsors to design, test, and implement programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to provide input into logic models (i.e., utility program designs)</li> <li>• Access to exclusive research through market profiles</li> <li>• Notification of emerging market trends through bi-monthly insight briefs</li> <li>• Information on the effectiveness of alternative program designs through comparative analysis of field tests</li> </ul>
Evaluation and Research Firms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide feedback on research results</li> <li>• Provide feedback on logic models, particularly on baselines, measurement, and attribution issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> <li>• Program designs that produce data needed for accurate evaluation</li> </ul>
Consumer Advocates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide feedback on logic models</li> <li>• Provide input on program designs when requested by program sponsors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> <li>• Program designs that protect consumer interests</li> </ul>
Trade Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide data for market profiles</li> <li>• Provide feedback on logic models</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> <li>• Program designs that are compatible with their business models</li> <li>• Advance intelligence on utility program priorities</li> </ul>
Manufacturers and Retailers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide data for market profiles</li> <li>• Provide feedback on logic models</li> <li>• Participate in field tests and program roll-out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of the above</li> <li>• Opportunity to participate in field tests and gain first-mover advantage</li> </ul>

## PROJECT SELECTION

1. How are projects chosen?

D&R will present a summary of priorities and issues gathered from program administrator subscribers before the workshop. Subscribers will be invited to introduce additional projects. Through a facilitated process at each workshop, utilities and program administrators that have purchased subscriptions and project credits will prioritize and select (via credit allocations) the projects to fund. The subscribers will work collaboratively through priority-setting with a trained facilitator to choose the projects and scopes of work. D&R will propose overall project budgets based on the defined work scopes. Each program sponsor will have complete control of its project credit allocations, but must allocate credits within one year of purchase. Projects that attract enough credits to meet the budget will proceed.

2. Will a minimum number of program sponsor subscribers need to commit credits to a project for it to move to the research phase?

No. As long as a project receives enough credits to fund the project, it is eligible to move forward. We don't anticipate that many projects will be funded by a single source.

3. Who is responsible for allocating project credits?

The subscribing organization is responsible for allocating project credits and may designate how it wishes to do that according to its own priorities and organizational goals.

4. Do manufacturers and retailers play a role in selecting the projects?

No. They are only eligible to receive the results of the research, but they will play a crucial role in providing the empirical data that goes into the projects.

## DATA QUALITY AND QUANTITY

1. How will D&R obtain data from retailers and manufacturers?

D&R has a long history of handling sensitive data for retailers and manufacturers. D&R has non-disclosure agreements with many major companies, and the confidence of market sources that it will not reveal important market share information.

2. What types of data will D&R gather?

D&R will gather whatever data is essential for truly understanding market dynamics, energy use, and savings potential, including:

- a. Retail sales data
- b. Manufacturer shipment data
- c. US Department of Commerce data
- d. Physical test data
- e. Field test data
- f. On-site inventory data
- g. Electricity and gas use data
- h. Demographic data
- i. House characteristics data
- j. Shelf/stocking inventory data
- k. Estimated energy savings calculated from reliable empirical data
- l. Vetted savings potential and evaluation data
- m. Direct measurement/observations of product usage
- n. Observed consumer behavior
- o. Other sources of directly observed or measured data
- p. Lists of critical data gaps

## RESEARCH, DOCUMENTS, AND REPORTS

1. How will D&R staff the research projects?

D&R's project teams will manage the selected research projects. When the research requires skills that D&R does not have in house, D&R will subcontract to other companies with the requisite expertise.

2. Will [Better Data Better Design](#) research cover only products, or will it also cover services and practices?

[Better Data Better Design](#) research will cover whatever program administrator sponsors wish to understand and are willing to allocate project credits to perform.

3. What are examples of [Better Data Better Design](#) research project prospects?

Examples include (but are not limited to) determining how consumers actually use a product, forecasting supply and demand of rare elements required to manufacture a product, and assessing successful methods for closing commercial lighting retrofit sales. Program sponsors we have spoken with mentioned residential lighting, home appliances, windows, whole home retrofits, consumer electronics, and commercial and industrial products as areas of interest.

4. What is the timeframe for conducting the research and releasing the results?

Most of the research projects are likely to take 4 to 12 months. Some projects may be shorter and others may be longer. The timeframe depends on the scope and depth of the research needed to conduct a robust study.

5. Can non-subscribers purchase reports prepared for subscribers?

Yes. Prices will be determined on conclusion of the research. Some of the research results may be published for general consumption, but subscribers will be apprised of what results will be shared before publication.

6. What are the market insight briefs and how often are they published?

Market insight briefs are 4- to 6-page snapshots of products, issues, and policies relevant to energy efficiency. Produced six times a year, they will present recently released data, events, or decisions with important implications for program sponsors.

7. What is a market profile?

Grounded in empirical data, D&R's market profiles describe the critical dimensions of the market for a product or service with energy efficiency and/or demand response opportunities. A typical market profile is 20-35 pages.

8. Are there any examples of market profiles?

D&R has produced market profiles on solid-state lighting, CFLs, water heaters, and refrigerators. Find samples at [www.drintl.com/publications.aspx](http://www.drintl.com/publications.aspx).

9. What other types of research projects might be conducted through this program?

D&R will conduct whatever research is necessary to understand a subject subscribers have commissioned for research. If data critical to gaining that understanding is not available, D&R will find research approaches that could fill this data gap. Program administrator subscribers will then decide which approach they prefer and assess whether there are sufficient resources to meet the project credit budget the research requires.

## WORKSHOPS

1. What happens during the workshops?

Assisted by professional facilitators, program administrator subscribers will identify and select research priorities for the next six months. All attendees will learn the results of recent market profiles and comparative field tests of alternative program designs. Market research data will be presented about the state of the energy efficiency market and specific research projects. Project budgets and scopes of work will be created, and project credits will be allocated to determine what research will be funded and pursued by the collaborative.

Only utility and program administrator representatives will be allowed to participate in priority-setting and project credit allocation discussions. Other stakeholders will be invited to hear about the state of the market and project results and can provide feedback, but cannot determine the priorities or co-fund projects. All participants will have the opportunity for networking.

2. Why hold workshops instead of teleconferences to determine research priorities?

Facilitated, face-to-face interaction provides for much more effective communication and will enable rapid selection of research initiatives, refinement of logic models, and assimilation of retailer, manufacturer, and evaluator feedback.

3. Will I have to pay for the workshops separately from our subscription?

The annual subscription covers fees and meals for one attendee to each of the semiannual workshops. Attendee will cover their own hotel and travel costs. Additional registrations may be purchased separately.

4. When are the workshops?

The first workshop is scheduled for September 20-21, 2011. Subsequent workshops will occur approximately every March and September thereafter.

5. Where will the workshops take place?

The first workshop will take place in Seattle, Washington. For subsequent workshops, we plan to alternate coasts and distances to account for travel costs and time, but we welcome subscriber input on locations.

## LOGIC MODELS AND PROGRAM DESIGNS

1. What is a logic model?

A logic model is a map of the key elements of a project plan. It includes assumptions, expected inputs, expected outputs, and desired outcomes. For efficiency programs, logic models also ideally specify the metrics and methods by which outcomes will be assessed and how that data will be acquired.

2. What is the difference between a logic model and a program design?

A logic model is a framework for a program design. It identifies critical features that the program should possess. A program design is a detailed program plan—a complete roadmap for program rollout that someone could replicate without substantial explanation. It specifies exactly who, what, when, where, and how.

## FIELD TESTS

1. Are field tests included in this program?

Field test implementation is not included. Subscribers can use project credits to purchase other services such as data collection and comparative analysis of alternative program designs built on the same logic model.

2. Must a minimum number of subscribers commit to participating before a project can move to the field test phase?

No. All subscribers are free to develop program designs and field test them. Those that wish to can retain D&R to coordinate collaborative program designs and/or serve as a data warehouse and analysis provider to track their projects.

## SUBSCRIPTION LEVELS AND PROJECT CREDITS

1. Can non-program-sponsor subscribers purchase project credits to expand projects selected by program sponsors?

No, but they may retain D&R to conduct independent research individually or collectively.

2. What is the cost of a project credit?

Each credit costs \$1,000.

3. How long do project credits last?

Project credits last one year.

4. Why do we have to purchase a minimum number of project credits?

The minimum number of project credits eliminates the potential problem of free-ridership. It also allows D&R to assess with accuracy the likely volume of research to ensure adequate staffing levels.

5. Can we purchase more than the required allocation?

Yes. Each subscriber can purchase as many additional credits as it desires.

6. Are the workshops included in the subscription?

Yes. A subscription covers workshop registration for one person. Additional registrations may be purchased separately.

7. Do we have to use the project credits just for joint projects or can we request customized research?

Required minimum project credits must be used for joint research projects. Customized individual projects may be paid for with additional project credits purchased.

## FULL PROGRAM ROLLOUT

1. Will D&R be involved in implementing programs through [Better Data Better Design](#)?  
No. D&R will not offer program implementation services through [Better Data Better Design](#).
2. Can my organization receive consulting services as part of the [Better Data Better Design](#) subscription?

Additional project credits above the minimum can be used to pay for consulting services other than program implementation. For example, an organization could retain D&R to provide strategic consulting or to manage, analyze, and report on program activity.