Going shopping with your energy company

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How many tomatoes do I need? How many cartons of milk? Will the kids be eating at home?

When we make the supermarket shopping list for the week, what we are really doing is matching the amount of food we expect to consume with the money we have. Can we apply the same model to manage our energy usage?

Many buildings are already generating energy from solar panels. Adding smart meters and software can help each building make its energy plan for the week. Likewise, this information can be combined with data from nearby power plants to create an energy "shopping list" for an entire city. The result is a more efficient urban system powered by new and interactive relationships between citizens, energy companies and local government.

The iURBAN project aims to create an intelligent "brain" that helps households, businesses and public buildings make their energy shopping lists. As one of the highest rated *Smart City* projects awarded by Europe's *7th Framework Program*, the project has a total budget of 5,6 million €, of which 3,8 million € is funded by the European Commission.

The three-year project kicked-off earlier this month in Plovdiv (Bulgaria), drawing top members from the local utility and city council who expressed their commitment to enhancing local energy management and promoting the adoption of clean energy to improve the city's poor air quality. A wide range of activities are underway in the two participating cities – Plovdiv (Bulgaria) and Rijeka (Croatia). Energy data from over 60 buildings is being analyzed – consumption as well as generation from rooftop solar systems – in order to predict energy supply and demand. New business models are being explored that will drive the local economies and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Efforts will also focus on engaging citizens through workshops, social networks and user-friendly web and mobile apps.

The project brings together the expertise of 9 organizations from 6 different countries – Sensing & Control Systems (Spain), Vitrociset (Italy), Fraunhofer ISE (Germany), University of Freiburg (Germany), IES (Great Britain), Rijeka City Council (Croatia), the Energy Agency of Plovdiv (Bulgaria), together with the cities' respective energy providers: Energo (Croatia) and EVN Bulgaria Toplofikatsia (Bulgaria).

"I am impressed with the motivation and commitment of both the cities as well as their energy providers," states Dr. Narcís Avellana, CEO of Sensing & Control Systems and coordinator of the iURBAN project. "This will be key to the success of the project because without their involvement, our technological efforts would be in vain." Moreover, Dr. Avellana noted that "iURBAN stands out from other *Smart City* projects because it offers the tools to change patterns of energy consumption and production according to the needs of the city. Energy companies will be able to reinvent themselves by offering clean, affordable energy to their customers."

In a Smart City, you don't have to make the shopping list – your energy company can do that for you.

About Sensing & Control Systems S. L.
Sensing & Control Systems S.L., founded in 2006, is dedicated to the development of intelligent software solutions for Energy Management, Security and Smart Homes & Businesses. The company currently leads several European Smart City projects. For more information visit www.sensingcontrol.com.

For more information about iURBAN contact Sensing & Control's Sam Bobbino.