

6 3 4 7 5

people are pledging to save

1 7 2 2 4 1

tons of CO₂/yr - [Count Me In](#)

** Equals turning off the electricity to houses in Los Angeles for about 3 days

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Current renewable energy sharing ready for prime time



By John Barrie | Posted Tue Nov 6, 2007 11:32am PST

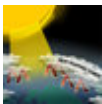
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is the winner of the 500,000 Euro Picnic Green sustainable technology challenge. Their technology is a decentralized renewable energy network.

Here is how it works: A group of houses or businesses work cooperatively to generate renewable energy. One house may have a wind turbine, another solar panels, and another may have both.

The group exchanges energy locally to maximize efficiency.

Rather than sending your surplus electrons through the grid, where up to 30% are lost, you share first with your neighbors in a Local Energy Network.

"*Current* has in fact developed computer controlled energy management for entire streets, through which the available energy can be optimized between all houses. That's a breakthrough.+

Sir Richard Branson, 01.10.07

The *Current* design for a Local Energy Network is basically a mini-grid that is connected to the utility grid through just one connection. Surplus renewable electricity is first exchanged within the network members before being sold back to the grid.

If the network as a whole isn't producing enough energy, then additional energy is brought in through the grid.

One cool feature of the Current system is the Qbox, a network interface device that knows energy rates and your particular energy needs. The Qbox can autonomously switch on your washing machine when it is most efficient, either when there is surplus energy in your Local Energy Network or when electric demand on the grid is low.

With prototype models already proven and a boost of 500,000 Euros, [Current](#) is ready for prime time, at least in Europe.



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