DEMYSTIFYING FLEX

The Association for Decentralised Energy

ade Research

INTRODUCTION

In an era marked by the rapid evolution of the flexibility sector and the emergence of regulations for flexible energy providers, the need to understand public perception, discourse, and stakeholder engagement has never been more critical. As the adoption of energy-smart appliances and demand-side technologies accelerates, so does the necessity for clear and consistent communication. However, studies have shown that a significant barrier to consumer engagement lies in the complex and often opaque language used within the sector. For example, comprehension tests have revealed that 40% of participants misunderstood or incorrectly interpreted information about innovative energy services[1], while a lack of familiarity and trust stemming from unclear communication has been identified as a key obstacle to consumer participation in residential demand response initiatives.[2]

The challenge of fostering trust and engagement in the flexibility sector is further highlighted by findings from the Smart and Fair Neighbourhood trial conducted by Local Energy Oxfordshire. This study emphasised that while technical language may suffice for communication within the energy industry, it can alienate other stakeholders, including communities and consumers unfamiliar with energy markets or flexibility concepts. To address this, it is essential to develop communication strategies that are accessible to a wider audience, ensuring transparency and encouraging participation from consumers who wish to transition into "prosumers" (individuals who both consume and produce energy).

Given these insights, this report aims to explore the complex terminology used in the flexibility sector and its implications for effective communication. Recognising the inconsistent and technical language prevalent across flexibility publications, this research seeks to identify ways to make this terminology more accessible, fostering greater consumer understanding and market participation. By addressing these barriers, the flexibility sector can better support adopting innovative technologies and empower consumers to actively engage in energy markets.

[1] Powering up or facing resistance? How people understand the benefits of smart appliances - Citizens Advice

[2] A systematic review of motivations, enablers and barriers for consumer engagement with residential demand response: 1-s2.0-S0301421519308031-main.pdf

Jargon: A Double-Edged Sword

The use of jargon, defined as specialised language tailored to a specific professional, cultural, or social group, is a prominent feature of the flexibility sector. While jargon can facilitate efficient communication among experts by condensing complex ideas into shorthand terms, it often becomes a barrier when used outside of its intended audience. Individuals who use jargon frequently overestimate how well others comprehend it, leading to miscommunication as it is less often used or understood by individuals outside these groups. Over time, this reliance on specialised language can hinder the communication it enhances.

Dual Process Theory, which explains how the brain processes information through intuition and cognition, offers insight into why jargon can be problematic. Intuition involves quick, automatic reactions, while cognition requires deliberate effort to analyse and process information. When faced with unfamiliar technical terms, individuals must shift from intuitive to cognitive processing, expending significant mental energy. Since the human brain is wired to conserve energy, this additional cognitive load can discourage engagement with the presented information.

Research further supports that clear and accessible communication is key to building trust and fostering engagement. According to "fluency theory," individuals are more likely to trust and accept information that is easy to understand. In contrast, overly complex language, dense visuals, and technical jargon can obscure key messages, reduce comprehension, and hinder acceptance of new concepts. For instance, studies conducted at Ohio State University revealed that jargon impairs the public's ability to process scientific information, increases resistance to persuasion, and diminishes support for emerging technologies.

The Purpose of this Report

This report delves into the challenges of complex terminology within the flexibility sector. Its purpose is to understand the jargon used in the industry, identify who uses it, analyse what terms are employed, and assess how they are communicated to various audiences. The ultimate goal is to bring clarity and consistency to the terminology used in the sector, ensuring that it aligns with the needs of industry professionals and the broader public. Through this effort, the flexibility market can reduce opacity, enhance transparency, and promote greater participation, paving the way for a more inclusive and dynamic energy future.

[3] Cambridge Dictionary (2024): https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/jargon
[4] Sharon and Baram-Tsabari (2014), Measuring mumbo jumbo: A preliminary quantification of the use of jargon in science communication: https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23825277/
[5] Pierre Barrouillet (2011), Dual-Process Theories of Cognitive Development: https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/psychology/dual-process-theory
[6] Liang Rebecca (2014), Website Processing Fluency: Its Impacts on Information Trust, Satisfaction, and Destination Attitude: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262577115_Website_Processing_Fluency_Its_Impacts_on_Information_Trust_Satisfaction_and_Destination_Attitude

Methodology

In a comprehensive review of 81 diverse documents, including journal articles, websites, consultation responses, blogs, and media articles, we identified 524 unique terms related to the energy flexibility market and demand-side response (See the full methodology here: Appendix A, and the complete list of categorised terms here: Appendix B). The literature covered the following audiences: 9 documents were white literature, 37 were industry consumer-facing, 11 were industry-facing, 9 were Media: trade/industry, 7 were Media: mainstream/public-facing, and 8 were Consumer advocacy.

To investigate the terminology and definitions associated with "flexibility" in the energy market, we employed a structured approach that combined web searches, manual reviews, and academic resources to ensure comprehensive coverage. Our search strategy involved targeted web searches using exact matches of "flexibility" alongside the names of relevant organisations, manually reviewing the top 10–30 results for each query to identify pertinent documents. We refined our terms and sources throughout the process, incorporating additional organisations and related terms even when "flexibility" wasn't explicitly mentioned, broadening our scope.

Each relevant document was catalogued with metadata, including media type, author or organisation, date, and a link to the source. We extracted key terminology, focusing on technical jargon, industry-specific language, and branded terms for flexibility services. Cross-document comparisons were conducted to identify commonalities, variations, and gaps among key terms and definitions. This comprehensive methodology allowed us to explore and describe the complexity and inconsistency within the vocabulary, highlighting potential barriers for consumers who wish to become prosumers.

To better understand which terms were classified as jargon, we created this framework:

Framework for Identifying Jargon:

Define Key Evaluation Criteria

1. Complexity
   - Does the term contain technical or industry-specific language?
   - Is the term composed of multiple words or acronyms unfamiliar to the general public?
   - Scale:
     - 1 = Simple, widely used in everyday language
     - 3 = Moderately technical, might require some explanation
     - 5 = Highly complex, requires expert knowledge

2. Familiarity
   - Is the term widely recognised outside the industry?
   - Scale:
     - 1 = Commonly understood by the general public
     - 3 = Understood by those with some exposure to the field
     - 5 = Understood only by industry specialists

3. Audience-Specific Usage:
   - Is the term used predominantly within specific professional groups (e.g., engineers, policymakers)?
   - Scale:
     - 1 = General audience
     - 3 = Mixed audience (e.g., professionals and informed consumers)
     - 5 = Specialised industry audience only

4. Ease of Understanding:
   - Can the term be understood without additional context or explanation?
   - Scale:
     - 1 = Intuitive, meaning is obvious
     - 3 = Requires moderate explanation
     - 5 = Needs extensive explanation or translation

Develop a Scoring System

Assign a score for each criterion (1 to 5) and calculate the total score for each term.

1. Threshold for Jargon:
    - Total score ≤ 8: Not jargon (common language)
    - Total score 9–12: Borderline jargon (requires explanation in specific contexts)
    - Total score ≥ 13: Jargon (specialised language)

Categorisation of Terms

The terms identified could be grouped into several categories to understand better the terminology used in the flexibility discourse. Here is an example of each group's categories and types of terms.

Consumer-focused:

- Branded or descriptive terms: Terms used by flexibility providers describe the unique service offering or their unique way of selling flex or communicating, e.g. **Shape Shifters, Beat the Peak, High Tide Saver events, Octopoints, The Big Dirty turndown, PowerMoveFlex**.
- Consumer-Facing Terms: Terms used when communicating with consumers, focusing on engagement, incentives, behavioural exchanges and when the customer needs to act to take advantage of something, e.g. **Off-peak hours, Energy Shifting, Turn and turn-up prosumers.**

Technical terms:

- Grid Operations and Management: terms related to the electrical grid's operation, management, and stability. e.g. **Grid Stability, Grid balancing, Overloading problems, and grid constraints.**
- Market mechanisms: Terms often technical and related to market mechanisms, trading, and asset management. e.g. **Revenue stacking strategies, Market clearing methods, and Trading platforms.**
- System Operator Specific Terms: Terms specific to System Operators including local market operations and network management, e.g. **Local flexibility market, Network capacity, Regional Development Programmes (RDPs).**
- Financial Terms: Terms related to financial incentives, tariffs, revenue mechanisms, and market participation, e.g. **Capacity Remuneration Mechanism, Single Markets Platform (SMP), Buyback Rate, Feed-in Tariff (FiT), and Standard Variable Tariff (SVT).**

Regulatory terms:

- Policy and Regulatory Terms: Terms related to government policies, regulations, codes, and compliance frameworks, e.g. **Balancing and Settlement Code (BSC), Retail Energy Code (REC), and Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF).**
- Consumer Protection and Advocacy Terms: Terms used by consumer advocacy groups, focusing on consumer rights, accessibility, and inclusive innovation, e.g. **innovation, Accessible consumer experiences.**

Decarbonisation:

- Energy Storage and Technology Terms: Terms related to energy storage technologies, smart devices, and technological advancements in the energy sector e.g., **battery storage, smart heating systems, and thermal energy storage.**
- Environmental and Sustainability Terms: These terms focus on environmental impact, sustainability, and the transition to renewable energy sources e.g, **greener times, zero-carbon grid, energy transition, Renewable energy generation.**

Analysis

The categorisation of energy-related terms into Consumer-Focused, Technical, Regulatory, and Decarbonisation categories reflects the energy landscape's increasingly complex and interconnected nature. Each category highlights the distinct perspectives of stakeholders, from everyday consumers to engineers, regulators, and sustainability advocates, while also revealing the overlapping areas where these groups converge or rely on each other.

Technical terms capture the operational and engineering aspects that keep the energy system functional and reliable. This includes the foundational elements of grid operations and management, such as grid security, balancing, and overloading problems. DSOs and DNOs rely on a shared technical vocabulary to procure flexibility, mitigate network constraints, and distribute power cost-effectively. Market mechanisms, which include revenue stacking strategies, market clearing methods, and trading platforms, express the financial and transactional structures behind energy markets. These intend to help assign economic value to flexibility, balancing services, and other ancillary offerings. Related financial terms, such as the buyback rate, feed-in tariff, and standard variable tariff, reflect how new energy services are monetised and how providers and customers share risks and rewards.

Regulatory terms clarify policy frameworks and codes governing market participation, interoperability standards, and consumer protection. Terms like the Balancing and Settlement Code, Retail Energy Code, and Cyber Assessment Framework codify everything from data protection to market settlement procedures, thereby setting the energy sector's legal and technical ground rules. Consumer protection and advocacy terms, which focus on equitable, safe, and accessible consumer experiences, demonstrate the growing attention to inclusivity, transparency, and fairness for all population segments. Ensuring robust consumer protections and advocacy is essential for maintaining public trust as the energy system evolves toward decentralisation and increased consumer involvement.

Analysis continued

Decarbonisation terms highlight the broader societal shift toward a net-zero future. References to energy storage and technology such as battery storage, smart heating systems, and thermal energy storage underscore new innovations' critical role in mitigating renewables' intermittency. Embracing and developing these technologies helps align energy supply with fluctuating consumer demand. The sector's environmental and sustainability terms, including low-carbon electricity, zero-carbon grid, and the energy transition, address the strategic moves to reduce emissions and minimise climate impacts. Anchoring policy decisions in these sustainability imperatives shapes public perception and directs investment and research priorities, reflecting how environmental goals increasingly drive technological advancements and operational changes.

Combining these categories provides a comprehensive view of the energy domain, from customer-facing incentives to regulatory frameworks and long-term sustainability targets. By examining these specific groupings, stakeholders can understand how diverse elements of the energy system interact and can more effectively collaborate on the challenges and opportunities presented by a rapidly evolving energy environment.

Assessing Jargon

After categorising the terms, it was essential to differentiate between basic flexibility terminology, which is considered fundamental and simply requires explanation or inclusion in a glossary, and more specialised jargon. To facilitate this, a scoring system was developed whereby each term is rated from 1 to 5 across defined criteria. The resulting total score determines the level of complexity or "jargon" status of each term: a total score of 8 or lower indicates common language, scores ranging from 9 to 12 suggest borderline jargon that may need further explanation in specific contexts, and scores of 13 or higher are classified as specialised language that should be clearly defined for most audiences. This approach ensures that necessary technical concepts are retained while promoting clarity and consistency in ongoing discussions. Below is a table which illustrates the number of terms identified as jargon per category.

Group	Sub Group	Number deemed as Jargon	Number deemed Borderline Jargon	Number deemed Not Jargon	Number of terms
Consumer-focused	Branded or descriptive terms	9	17	23	30
	Consumer-Facing Terms	2	42	23	67
Technical terms	Grid Operations and Management	36	32	4	72
	DSO/DNO-Specific Terms	9	3	1	13
	Market mechanisms	85	31	2	118
	Financial Terms	44	10	2	56
Regulatory terms	Policy and Regulatory Terms:	16	1	0	56
	Consumer Protection and Advocacy Terms:	0	4	1	5
Decarbonisation	Energy Storage and Technology Terms:	52	26	3	81
	Environmental and Sustainability Terms:	9	14	3	26
Total		262	180	62	524

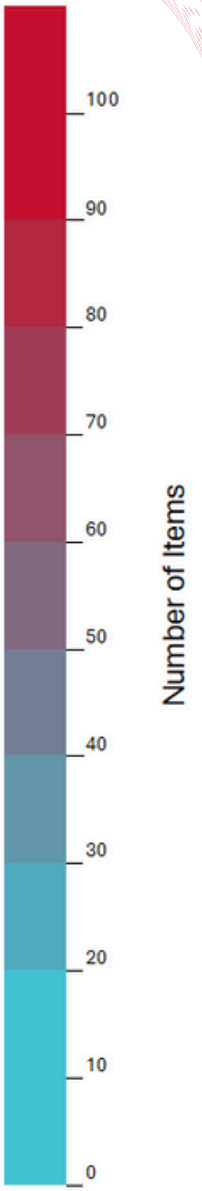

Table 1 Categorising Jargon

Analysis

The categorisation of 524 total terms across four main groups, Consumer-focused, Technical, Regulatory, and Decarbonisation, reveals a stark contrast in how much-specialised language appears in each segment of the energy sector. Consumer-focused subgroups (Branded or Descriptive Terms and Consumer-Facing Terms) contain 97 total terms, with a relatively low proportion marked as jargon (11 terms), suggesting that language aimed at end-users tends to be more approachable. These subgroups also contain a substantial number of “borderline jargon” terms (59), indicating that even consumer-facing language may still need clarification or glossary references in many contexts.

For example, different providers use branded terms like **"Saving Sessions," "Beat the Peak," "KrakenFlex," and "High Tide Saver events"** to create unique identities for their energy-saving programs. While branding can be effective for marketing, it could also lead to confusion when multiple companies offer similar services under different names. For consumers, this means that understanding and comparing these programs becomes more complicated, as they might not realise that these branded terms represent essentially the same concept, reducing energy usage during peak times for rewards.

The proliferation of unique programs and tariff names can make the energy flexibility market appear fragmented and overwhelming. Consumers may need help to grasp the benefits or requirements of each program, potentially leading to hesitation or disengagement. Without standardised terminology or clear explanations, branded terms can obscure the underlying purpose of the services, hindering consumer participation and the overall goal of promoting energy flexibility.

For instance, terms like **"Time-of-use tariffs"** and **"Dynamic tariffs"** suggest varying electricity prices, but they are not accompanied by further explanation, therefore they don't clearly explain how consumers can benefit or what actions they need to take. Similarly, **"Automation and minimal day-to-day interaction"** sounds technical and may leave consumers unsure about how their participation affects energy usage or savings, despite the term actually describing a process which would mean consumer have less to do to participate in flex. **"Voluntarily flexing"** implies consumer action but doesn't specify what "flexing" entails or how it impacts their energy bill. These examples illustrate that even terms designed for consumers could be unclear given their low ranking on ease of understanding, emphasising the need for more straightforward language that directly communicates the benefits and steps involved in energy flexibility programs.

By comparison, the Technical terms category accounts for the largest share of the total, covering 259 terms across Grid Operations and Management, DSO/DNO-Specific Terms, Market Mechanisms, and Financial Terms. Within these subgroups, most terms (174) are explicitly deemed jargon, with Market Mechanisms and Financial Terms standing out as particularly specialised: Market Mechanisms have 118 terms in total, of which 85 are jargon. In contrast, Financial Terms have 44 out of 56. These figures suggest that technical subgroups rely heavily on sector-specific language.

Terms such as **"Ancillary services," "Multiple revenue stacking strategies," and "Automatic Frequency Restoration Reserve (aFRR)"** are laden with industry-specific jargon that is often inaccessible to the general public. For example, "Ancillary services" refer to the support services necessary to maintain grid stability and security, but without context, consumers may not grasp their importance or relevance. **"Multiple revenue stacking strategies"** describes complex financial approaches where energy assets participate in several markets or services to maximise income.

This concept involves intricate knowledge of market operations and is unlikely to be understood by those outside the industry. Such specialised language can alienate consumers, as it doesn't relate to their everyday experiences or communicate how they can participate in or benefit from energy flexibility initiatives.

It is reasonable for firms to use established, industry-wide terms, avoiding a common language altogether would only add confusion. However, the issue arises when these specialised terms are presented to non-industry audiences without the necessary context or explanation. This underscores the importance of offering clear definitions or maintaining a comprehensive glossary to support stakeholders less versed in the complexities of grid management and energy markets.

The Regulatory Terms (Policy and Regulatory Terms, Consumer Protection and Advocacy Terms) contain 61 items, with 16 identified as jargon. Interestingly, Consumer Protection and Advocacy Terms present almost no jargon but lean more toward borderline jargon. This highlights a nuanced domain where plain language and specialised regulatory language intersect.

The Decarbonisation category, which includes 107 terms spanning Energy Storage and Technology Terms and Environmental and Sustainability Terms, shows a high occurrence of jargon (61 total). Over half of the terms dealing with storage and emerging technologies are classified as jargon, underlining the field's ongoing challenge in communicating advanced concepts that resonates with broader audiences.

Many of these terms, from **"Distributed Energy Resources (DERs)" and "Virtual Power Plant (VPP)" to "Grid-Scale Batteries" and "Thermal Energy Storage,"** point toward a rapidly growing ecosystem of interconnected technologies designed to balance supply and demand. Although each label suggests some unique technical capabilities—such as automating load control or enabling bidirectional communications—these nuances can be lost on end-users, who may not realise they are essentially variations on a similar theme: enhancing flexibility and efficiency through intelligent, networked systems. The proliferation of device-specific references **"Home Energy Management System (HEMS)," "Storage Heaters and Heat Batteries," "Hydronic Heat Pumps," and "Vehicle-to-Grid Charging"**, further complicates the landscape. While this diversity of language can help distinguish particular services or hardware, it can also create confusion and make it harder for consumers, and sometimes even industry stakeholders, to compare offerings or identify overlapping functionalities.

The distribution indicates that technical and emerging technology subgroups hold the greatest jargon density. At the same time, consumer-focused language tends to be more accessible yet still contains a significant portion requiring additional explanation.

Multiplicity and Overlap of Terms

While exploring energy-related terminology, it became evident that many phrases describe similar concepts, particularly those related to demand response, grid stability, or time-of-use tariffs. Each term may originate from a different stakeholder group or be used in a distinct context, yet they all point toward the same foundational ideas. Various terms were gathered and grouped under broader themes to highlight these overlaps, illustrating how different labels can still reference the same underlying practices or objectives. The table below reflects this clustering.

Demand side response (Consumer Led flex)	Balancing energy supply and demand	Time-of-Use Tariffs:	Grid Stability	Events
Flexibility	Peak Shaving	Dynamic tariff	Constraints	Opt-in to the event
Flexible behaviour	Demand reduction	Smart Tariffs	Balance the grid,	Live events
Demand changes	Peaks and troughs	Incentive Payments	Power grid balancing	Test events
Demand response programs	Spikes		System Balancing	Collective opt-in or opt-out
Usage behaviour	Peak time		Energy system balancing	The big switch-on
Unlock flexibility	Shift electricity usage		Congestion management	The big dirty turndown
Household flexibility	Non-peak times		Grid Integration	High Tide Saver events
Whole-home flexibility	Cutting down on energy at certain times		Grid Resilience	Non-event days
People-powered flexibility	Peak and off-peak		Reducing stress on the grid	Shorter-notice events
Shifted demand at scale	Off-peak hours		Grid strain	Power Pause
Voluntarily flexing	Energy shifting		Stabilise grid	PowerDOWN events
Energy flexibility	Reduce electricity demand		Supporting the grid	Turn Up events
Flexibility services	Peak periods		Grid is strained	PeakSave Sundays
Energy flexibility models	Shifting electricity usage outside peak hours		Builds resilience	Super Savers
	Consumer electricity demand		Supply congestion	
	Peaks and lows in electricity demand		Demand congestion	
	Morning peaks in demand		Network congestion	
	Evening peaks		Temporary congestion	
	Appliances at optimum times		Power grid balancing	
	Beat the Peak			
	Energy Demand			
	Low demand			
	Demand Events			

Analysis

The extensive list of terms associated with flexibility underscores the multiplicity of language used, even when referring to similar concepts. Many of these expressions revolve around shifting or reducing demand during specific times **(“peak shaving,” “peak periods,” “off-peak hours,” “demand congestion”**) and highlight the goal of supporting or stabilising the grid (**“grid stability,” “congestion management,” “reducing stress on the grid,” “build resilience”**). Although the language ranges from more formal technical phrases (e.g. **“demand response programs,” “time-of-use tariffs,” “peak periods”**) to more branded, consumer-friendly terminology (e.g. **“Beat the Peak,” “High Tide Saver events,” “PowerDOWN events,” “Super Savers”**), they frequently describe the same underlying principle: encouraging consumers to alter or reduce energy usage during peak demand to benefit both the grid and end-users

What emerges is a patchwork of overlapping and sometimes redundant labels, which can cause confusion for stakeholders trying to navigate the demand-side response landscape. The repeated references to **“peaks and troughs,” “peaks and lows,” and “peak or off-peak usage”** all point to load shifting but with slight variations in emphasis or context. Likewise, multiple synonyms for flexibility **(“flexibility services,” “household flexibility,” “people-powered flexibility,” “voluntarily flexing”**) reveal a strong emphasis on consumer engagement. Yet, these terms can appear fragmented without clear definitions or a unifying framework. Similarly, the presence of event-based language—such as **“opt-in to the event,” “test events,” “PeakSave Sundays,” and “collective opt-in or opt-out”**, signals an increasingly gamified or segmented approach to demand-side management, wherein participants are nudged to modify consumption at particular intervals or for promotional campaigns.

These multiple terms often describe slight variations on the same theme: controlling or modifying electricity usage in real-time to prevent grid strain and provide cost or environmental benefits. Branding and consumer-facing names can successfully attract public attention and promote participation, but they also contribute to a proliferation of terminology. From a communication standpoint, the challenge becomes articulating these concepts consistently, potentially through clear definitions, unified glossaries, or standardised language, while still allowing for the creativity and marketing strategies that drive consumer engagement. Ultimately, the sheer volume of comparable expressions suggests a growing maturity in the demand-side response sector and a need for careful categorisation so that technical specialists, policymakers, and the public can align on the meaning and impact of these initiatives.

Summary of Findings

The comprehensive review of 81 diverse documents uncovered 524 unique terms related to energy flexibility and demand-side response, highlighting significant variability and inconsistency in how these concepts are presented. A scoring framework developed to classify jargon revealed that nearly half (262) of the 524 total terms identified across Consumer-Focused, Technical, Regulatory, and Decarbonisation categories fall into the “jargon” range, indicating specialised language with limited accessibility. The Technical group had the highest incidence of complex terms, particularly under Market Mechanisms and Financial Terms, while Consumer-Focused terms exhibited fewer instances of outright jargon but still contained many borderline expressions needing further clarification. Overall, the findings underscore how specialised language, proliferation of branded services, and overlapping terminology can obscure core concepts, complicating stakeholder understanding and hindering consumer engagement.

Conclusion

The data affirms that the energy flexibility sector needs more cohesive language. The frequent use of jargon could hamper communication between industry professionals, policymakers, consumer advocates, and the general public. Although consumer-facing subgroups employ more accessible language, even these categories contain many terms requiring clarification, hinting at persisting barriers to trust and participation. Meanwhile, highly technical subgroups rely heavily on specialised jargon, further widening the knowledge gap between experts and non-experts. These linguistic challenges reflect broader issues of inclusivity and transparency that must be addressed to facilitate the widespread adoption of flexible energy programs. Standardisation of key terminology and the development of user-friendly resources are likely to enhance public understanding and foster a more collaborative relationship between consumers, industry stakeholders, and regulatory bodies.

Recommendations

These recommendations speak to a broad audience across the energy ecosystem. They are intended for consumer advocacy groups, policymakers, regulators, energy providers (utilities and suppliers), technology vendors, and end users themselves. By adopting consistent terminology and simplifying communications, each of these stakeholders can help reduce confusion, promote transparent understanding of flexibility services, and foster greater participation in demand-side response initiatives. The ultimate goal is to create a clear, reliable, and inclusive conversation around shifting energy use for the benefit of all.

Recommendations

1. **Develop and Disseminate a Standardised Glossary:** Craft a clear, widely accepted glossary of key flexibility and demand-side response terms. This resource would serve all stakeholder groups, consumers, policymakers, and industry professionals—and reduce confusion stemming from overlapping, branded, or technical language.

2. **Simplify Consumer-Facing Communication:** Translate complex or borderline jargon into plain language. For branded services, incorporate straightforward explanations that emphasise the underlying concepts (such as shifting energy use during peak periods) rather than relying on proprietary names alone.

3. **Adopt Common Terminology Across the Sector:** Encourage energy providers and technology vendors to align on a set of core terms and definitions. This shared vocabulary can reduce market fragmentation, simplify regulatory guidance, and allow consumers to more easily compare programs and tariffs.

4. **Contextualise Technical Jargon:** Provide supplementary guides, quick-reference glossaries, or tooltips in consumer-facing materials. These "micro-education" strategies enable interested users to learn technical details at their own pace without overwhelming them or requiring constant reference to lengthy documents.

5. **Collaborate with Consumer Advocacy Groups:** Leverage the insights and outreach channels of consumer advocacy bodies to ensure messages resonate with different audiences and reflect inclusivity. Involvement of these groups can also reinforce trust, transparency, and fairness in how flexibility services are presented.

Implementing these recommendations can demystify the language of energy flexibility and enhance stakeholder engagement. By adopting consistent terminology and presenting information in more accessible ways, the sector can foster greater public trust, promote consumer participation, and ultimately support the successful integration of flexible, sustainable energy solutions.

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