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Control My Energy Usage? There's an App for That

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Because it's Earth Day and resource conservation messaging abounds, I'm reminded of Tenrehte (pronounced Ten-rate), an organization that's hoping to positively influence the way the world manages its energy use. This Earth Day marks the one-year anniversary of when Tenrehte shipped the first prototype units of the innovative the PICOWatt Smart Plug, a Wi-Fi-enabled electrical outlet.

The PICOWatt [👉](#) took the award for the Best of CES in the Green Technology category when it was introduced in 2010 at the International Consumer Electronics Show (CES), the world's largest technology trade show. A retrofit device, the PICOWatt fits into any standard outlet and allows users to control and monitor appliances and electronics remotely. Just as easy as flicking a switch on and off at home, PICOWatt allows users to control home devices with the Internet or a smartphone app. Although it's not yet available to the general public, Tenrehte is currently making sales to corporate customers, governments, and institutions.

Devices like this offer utility customers (with or without a smart meter) a simple and convenient way to control their electrical demand from anywhere. Maybe a utility could include a PICOWatt upon enrollment into one of the variety of residential rate designs that energy providers offer such as peak-time rebates, time-of-use rates, and peak-time pricing.

In its business plan, Tenrehte lists Alert Me, Enistic, and Kill-A-Watt, among others, as potential competitors. So what makes PICOWatt stand out? The Wi-Fi communicator, built-in mesh network, and power monitor and control features, are just a few of the features that make it special. Because PICOWatt is Internet-enabled, it can give a real-time alert of an outage or peak power usage. Now I'm not necessarily endorsing this product (how can I since it's not publicly available), but I think it's a product worth following because of its potential to offer energy control functions not yet seen in the market.

So what's on the horizon for Tenrehte? New developments include more advanced PICOWatt products such as a smart thermostat, indoor/outdoor smart plug devices, and a monitor designed for mounting on a distribution line transformer.

A little trivia: what is the meaning behind the Tenrehte name?

You can find the answer in an [interview](#) [👉](#) with Tenrehte president and CEO Jennifer Indovina about her experiences leading up to and beyond the development of the PICOWatt on a blog on TED, a nonprofit dedicated to promoting innovation in technology, entertainment, and design.

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