Renewables and electricity market design

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Goal of electricity markets: *Reliable electricity at least cost*

**Short-run efficiency**
- Least-cost operation of existing resources

**Long-run efficiency**
- Right quantity and mix of resources
Challenges of electricity markets

- Must balance supply and demand at every instant
- Physical constraints of network and resources
- Shocks in supply
  - Transmission line or generator outage
  - Intermittent resources: wind and solar
- Absence of demand response
- Climate policy
A successful market design

- Get the spot market right
  - Day ahead
    - Scheduling and unit commitment
  - Real time
    - Bid-based security constrained economic dispatch
- Forward trade to manage risk and support long-run investment
Day-ahead market

Unit commitment and scheduling
- Energy and ancillary services each hour of day
- Prices for energy and reserves; financially binding

Three-part offers from resources
- Startup cost
- Minimum-energy cost
- Energy offer curve

Virtual offers and bids
- Arbitrage day-ahead and real-time markets

Objective: maximize social welfare s.t. transmission and resource constraints
- Co-optimized energy and reserves
- Competitive equilibrium with locational marginal prices
- LMP = marginal value of energy at each location
Day-ahead market

Handling non-convexities, such as startup and minimum energy costs

- If total cost of unit not covered by energy & reserve revenue, then unit gets make-whole payment for shortfall
- Make-whole payments small in practice
- LMPs are approximate supporting prices

Procompetitive

- Allows small generators to optimally schedule
- Allows small participants to hedge real-time risk
### Energy price ERCOT (Texas)

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DA SPP and RT SPP (color) broken down by Hour vs. Date Year and Date Month. The view is filtered on Hour, which keeps 24 of 25 members.
The trends of RT SPP, DA SPP, sum of Number of Records and sum of Number of Records for Time frequency var. For pane Average of Rt Spp: Color shows details about RT SPP and DA SPP. For pane Average of Da Spp: Color shows details about RT SPP and DA SPP. For pane Sum of Number of Records (2): Color shows details about DA SPP spike. For pane Sum of Number of Records: Color shows details about RT SPP spike.
Day-ahead and real-time markets highly liquid

The trends of DA energy, RT load, DA energy to RT load ratio, DA SPP, RT SPP and RT SPP - DA SPP for Time frequency var. Color shows details about DA energy, RT load, DA energy to RT load ratio, DA SPP, RT SPP and RT SPP - DA SPP. The marks are labeled by DA energy, RT load, DA energy to RT load ratio, DA SPP, RT SPP and RT SPP - DA SPP.
- **52 inches** of rainfall in southeast Texas
- Harvey made landfall **multiple times**
  - **Category 4** near Port Aransas, Texas
  - **Tropical storm** in Cameron, Louisiana
- More than **42,000** lightning strikes
- Record number of tornado warnings in southeast Texas

**Transmission Damage**

STP-to-Whitepoint 345-kV transmission structures

Tatton Substation
Operating plan and adjustment period

• Generator submits operating plan for each resource
  – Online/offline, constraints
• Until 60 minutes before operating hour, plan can be adjusted
• System operator may commit additional resources for reliability, but these have a high offer floor ($1500/MWh)
Real-time market

Security constrained economic dispatch

Determines optimal dispatch and prices every five minutes

Financially and physically binding

Allows efficient settlement from forward positions
Ancillary services

Address supply/demand uncertainty:
- Regulation: online, responds in second
  - Reg up, Reg down to maintain frequency of 60 Hz
- Responsive reserve: online, 10min response
- Non-spinning reserve: offline, 30min response

Need for reserves depends on market; products and quantities reviewed periodically
Ancillary Service Costs per MWh of Load

Source: Potomac Economics
Scarcity pricing

- Reserves have value in avoiding load shedding
- Marginal value of reserves depends on
  - Value of Lost Load, e.g. $9000/MWh
  - Probability of Lost Load, e.g. 1 in extreme scarcity
- Load’s implicit preference for reliability given by operating reserve demand curve
Operating reserve demand curve
Forward contracts

• Forward contracts are essential to manage risk
  – California energy crisis 2000-2001
  – Forward provides hedge for load
  – Generator + fuel contract provides physical hedge for supply

• Scarcity pricing motivates forward contracts
• Forward contracting improves bidding incentives
• Congestion revenue rights are forwards in congestion rents
• ERCOT is “energy only”; some others have a capacity market (PJM, ISO-NE, …)
• Good capacity markets rely on scarcity pricing, just like energy only market
• Buy enough in advance
  – Conducted several years in advance, so new entry can compete before costs are sunk
  – Product is ability to deliver energy during scarcity
  – Strong performance obligation
    • Financial obligation to provide energy during scarcity
    • Provides hedge to load from scarcity prices
  – Coordinated investment to ensure adequate resources
Figure 5: Comparison of All-in Prices Across Markets

Source: Potomac Economics
Transformation to renewables
• Last year 60% of new capacity in US is wind and solar
• Coal hasn’t been built in years
• Intermittent supply, zero marginal cost, no inertia
  – More uncertainty, worse price formation, faster response needed
  – Also best sites not where load is; transmission issues
• Today’s design easily handles moderate share of wind
The plots of sum of Awarded Qty and % of Total Awarded Qty for Date Month. Color shows details about Res Type (group). The marks are labeled by Res Type (group). The data is filtered on Date Year, which excludes 2010 and 2017.
Solution looking forward

- But what if >80% renewable
- Core design still works well
- *Battery storage* and more *demand response* (smart homes) will complement wind, solar
  - Flexible, smooth prices

*Need to encourage technology-neutral solutions!*
Enable demand response with good default retail contract

- Each customer has smart meter
- System operator estimates demand of customer
- System operator buys forward estimated demand
- Real-time deviations settled at real-time price
- Customer can opt out of default
Incoherent and unstable climate policy

• Policy built on myriad of changing subsidies and emission restrictions makes planning difficult
• Uncertainty harms investment
• Policy based on carbon price would greatly reduce uncertainty
• Carbon price is a critical input in investment and retirement decision
Conclusion

- Electricity good example of the power of market design
  - Highly efficient spot market
  - Supporting extensive forward contracting
  - Competitive retail market to foster demand response
- Good governance remains important to make sure market design continues to improve and addresses new challenges like the transition to renewables