

Opus Energy drives business forward with FirstGroup contract

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Britain's largest transport operator, FirstGroup plc, has signed an agreement with Opus Energy, a leading independent supplier of electricity to UK businesses. First's 600 UK sites will benefit from Opus Energy's dynamic approach to energy management which includes access to wholesale energy prices, a cleaner energy supply, and the technology to help keep energy consumption to a minimum. 100% of First's electricity supply for its buildings will be sourced from cleaner low-carbon sources, generated from on-shore wind, small scale hydro and biomass.

From 1st August 2008, First will be able to take full advantage of Opus Energy's cutting-edge energy purchasing product, Opus Evolution. This flexible service empowers customers, providing them with direct access to wholesale energy prices. Using a secure online platform First will be able to purchase electricity at the prevailing market price to suit the company's consumption demand.

Last year, First unveiled its Climate Change Strategy which outlined ambitious targets to reduce carbon emissions in its bus division by 25% and rail division by 20%, both by 2020. As part of this strategy First is looking to use alternative cleaner energy sources and be more energy efficient. Opus Energy will install smart meters across all of First's qualifying business locations in Britain by April 2009. Smart meters bring innovation to energy management, and will enable First to monitor electricity usage more closely, monitor any peaks in performance and reconcile its energy bills, all without the need to take actual meter readings. Forward-thinking First is committed to taking a responsible approach to the environment, working with Opus Energy to ensure its impact on the environment is minimised.

Niall Waters-Fuller, Head of Group Procurement at First said: "We chose to make the switch to Opus Energy as we were impressed with the energy solutions the company had to offer. In particular, its innovative and flexible approach will ultimately help us with our environmental commitments as well as managing price risk. Choosing an energy partner that displays an environmental commitment and could supply a 100% renewable electricity supply was imperative, as we are committed to managing the business in a responsible way."

Steve James, Commercial Director at Opus Energy said: "We are excited to be working with the UK's largest transport company and look forward to a long and successful partnership. We are becoming the supplier of choice in the transport sector with our corporate team demonstrating excellent understanding of specific customer requirements."

"For First, the combination of using smart meters in tandem with the Opus Evolution product is key as this allows the company to directly monitor its usage and then plan and purchase energy accordingly. First is putting itself ahead of the game by choosing a modern energy management solution that will bring benefits both to its bottom line and the environment."

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About Opus Energy

Opus Energy is a leading independent supplier of business electricity offering companies best-price electricity together with tailored customer care. Its flexible, tailor-made solutions suit businesses across the SME and larger corporate market. Opus, with offices in Oxford and Northampton, has over 40,000 customers across the country, including Yell Group, Thorntons, Stagecoach, Reuters, Farmfoods and Deloitte & Touche.

Between April 2006 and March 2007, 66% of the energy supplied by Opus Energy to its customers came from cleaner, low-carbon sources – 47% from renewable generators and 19% from cleaner Combined Heat and Power (CHP) produced by CHP generators.

About Opus Evolution

Launched just six months ago the Opus Evolution flexible purchasing product is a market first. Using new technology, pioneered and offered exclusively by Opus Energy, a secure online platform allows energy buyers direct access to real time, wholesale energy prices. The web site displays the customer's forecast energy consumption against the current energy price. Customers can then purchase bundles of electricity at the current market price according to their company's consumption needs.

For further information visit: www.opusenergy.com

About FirstGroup

FirstGroup plc is the world's leading transport company with annualised revenues of over £5 billion a year. We employ approximately 137,000 staff throughout the UK and North America and transport more than 2.5 billion passengers a year.

UK Bus

- The Group is Britain's largest bus operator running more than one in five of all local bus services. A fleet of nearly 9,000 buses carries approximately 3 million passengers a day in more than 40 major towns and cities.

UK Rail

- The Group operates one quarter of the UK passenger rail network, with a balanced portfolio of intercity, commuter and regional services, carrying almost 275m passengers per annum.

- The Group is the UK's largest rail operator with four passenger franchises - First Capital Connect, First Great Western, First ScotRail and First TransPennine Express - and one open access operator, Hull Trains.

- The Group operates rail freight services through First GBRf and operates the Croydon Tramlink network on behalf of Transport for London carrying over 26 million passengers a year.

North America

- In North America the Group has four operating divisions: Yellow School Buses (First Student), Transit Contracting and Management Services (First Transit), Vehicle Fleet Maintenance and Support Services (First Services) and intercity bus services (Greyhound). Headquartered in Cincinnati, FirstGroup America Inc. operates across the US and Canada.

In mainland Europe we operate some 150 buses in South West Germany and, from January 2009, we will operate, with our partner DSB, the Øresund rail franchise which includes routes in and between Denmark and Sweden.

[You can find this press release here](#)