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POWER TO THE PEOPLE:
**Direct Energy, Whirlpool Corporation, Best Buy, Lennox, OpenPeak
Launch “Home Energy Manager” Prototype for Consumers**

***Easy-to-Use Home Energy Management Solution Promises to Change
Consumption Behavior and Save Consumers Up to 25 Percent on Energy Bills***

LAS VEGAS, Nevada (January 6, 2010) – Energy consumption is a hot topic but, despite the hype around being more efficient and “going green,” the market has yet to deliver a one-stop, cost-saving, home energy management solution that’s easy for consumers to understand and use.

Direct Energy, Whirlpool Corporation (NYSE: WHR), Best Buy (NYSE: BBY), Lennox International (NYSE: LII) and OpenPeak – all leaders in their respective industries – are hoping to change that on Thursday when they unveil a prototype of the *Home Energy Manager (HEM)* at the 2010 Consumer Electronics Show (CES).

The result of an unprecedented, cross-industry collaboration, the HEM runs on OpenPeak’s OpenFrame device and is the world’s first truly consumer-friendly, end-to-end, coordinated home energy-management solution. Future plans for the prototype include a 12-month pilot in consumers’ homes in Houston later this year. The objective of the pilot is to learn how the HEM impacts consumer behavior in the real world, how much money each household using the HEM saves on its utility bills, and how the solution can be improved before it goes to market.

Developed with consumers at all income levels in mind, the HEM will demystify energy management, enable consumers to easily control their home energy use and costs, and receive the necessary information to change consumption behavior in a long-term and meaningful way.

The HEM is also designed to serve as an information and entertainment center in the home, providing access to news, weather, health, social networking, music and movie applications. In addition, there will be an online application store where consumers can build on the platform by downloading other applications that interest them.

“The *Home Energy Manager* has the potential to do for home energy management what the iPhone did for communication,” says David Dollihite, vice president of product development at Direct Energy. “We believe the *Home Energy Manager* will become the de facto platform that empowers consumers to look at energy use in a fresh, new way and modify their consumption behavior.”

According to preliminary data, the HEM prototype could save consumers up to 25 percent per month on their energy bill.

“The *Home Energy Manager* is the first solution that will make the energy-cost connection real for consumers, helping them convert kilowatts on their energy bill into dollars in their pocket,” said Dollihite.

The HEM leverages the opportunity created by the deployment of smart meters to residential homes, allowing consumers to track and control their energy use and costs on an easy-to-use, touch-screen device with an intuitive, graphic user interface. The solution works on an open platform and integrates easily and seamlessly with energy-connected home appliances, such as dishwashers, washers and dryers, water heaters, thermostats and heating and air conditioning units.

With the HEM, consumers will be able to manage their energy spending proactively by setting pre-determined budget limits and ensuring that appliances operate within specific parameters. Alerts will warn consumers when they are close to reaching their budget threshold for the month and offer personalized recommendations about how to reduce costs for the rest of the billing period. Consumers will also be able to program the system directly or remotely to avoid energy consumption during peak periods.

Each of the participating companies will provide the following support for the pilot:

- **Direct Energy** - pilot project management, consumer research with pilot participants, energy and home services support and OpenPeak OpenFrame devices
- **Whirlpool** – smart (connected) major appliances including, but not limited to, clothes dryers, water heaters, etc.
- **Best Buy** – OpenFrame device installation and integration associated with the pilot homes in the Houston market with first-line customer service through Geek Squad
- **Lennox** - wireless connected thermostats and full zone control High Efficiency HVAC in new construction homes
- **OpenPeak** – OpenFrame devices and application and hardware development, including application development of the HEM solution

“We have come a long way in making home appliances more and more energy efficient during the past 30 years,” said Warwick Stirling, global director of energy and sustainability, Whirlpool Corporation. “Connecting smart appliances to a smart grid will tap into a whole new level of energy efficiency. Tools such as the *Home Energy Manager*, which is easy to use and keeps control in the hands of the consumer, are paramount to the overall success of the system.”

“Our goal with the *Home Energy Manager* is to put the power of knowledge in the hands of consumers while removing the burden so often associated with energy management,” said Dan Gittleman, CEO, OpenPeak. “By giving people the right information in real time and in an easy-to-understand format, we will be able to help them put their energy dollars to work more efficiently and cost-effectively. Ultimately, this will translate to more responsible energy consumption, happier customers and more loyal consumers of energy-related products and services.”

Demos of the *Home Energy Manager* will be conducted in the Whirlpool booth at CES, The Las Vegas Convention Center, South Hall #36185MP, on January 7th and 8th.

For additional information, including HEM screenshots and use cases, please visit:

<http://pocolabs.com/CES2010>.

About Direct Energy

Direct Energy is a part of the Centrica group of companies, one of the largest multi-state providers of retail energy services in North America operating in 18 U.S. states plus the District of Columbia, and 10 Canadian provinces. The North American operations have grown to more than 5 million residential and commercial customer relationships. Through its Direct Energy, CPL and WTU brands, the company is the third-largest retail energy provider in Texas, and owns three natural gas-fired power generation facilities and a series of energy-related services companies. Globally, the Centrica group of companies is a leading provider of energy and other essential services with approximately 32 million customer relationships. For more information, visit www.directenergy.com

About OpenPeak Inc.

OpenPeak Inc. creates, designs, and develops innovative communication systems and devices that enable simple user control of home energy consumption, VoIP telephony, digital media, Internet content, messaging applications, and consumer electronics to provide an all-in-one voice, data and multi-media communications command center with an easy-to-use touch screen interface. OpenPeak's portable architecture, hardware reference designs, and turnkey solutions allow quick and cost-effective integration of advanced communication and control technology and applications with a high degree of customization. More information is available at www.openpeak.com *OpenPeak and OpenFrame are trademarks of OpenPeak Inc. All other trade brands, names, logos, and marks are the property of their respective owners.*

About Whirlpool Corporation

Whirlpool Corporation is the world's leading manufacturer and marketer of major home appliances, with annual sales of approximately \$19 billion in 2008, 70,000 employees, and 67 manufacturing and technology research centers around the world. The company markets Whirlpool, Maytag, KitchenAid, Jenn-Air, Amana, Brastemp, Consul, Bauknecht and other major brand names to consumers in nearly every country around the world. Additional information about the company can be found at <http://www.whirlpoolcorp.com>

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