

Commercial microgrids honiara

It's not just institutions and communities that are getting involved in microgrid projects. Businesses and big corporations are also taking notice of the advantages of deploying microgrids, both to increase resilience against potential outages and to reduce their energy costs. This segment is known as the Commercial and Industrial (C& I) microgrid sector, and as with other microgrid segments, it is growing rapidly.

Currently, the C& I segment is growing faster than any other segment deploying microgrids, according to data being collected by Navigant Research. By 2026, Navigant Research has predicted, the C& I microgrid market will be worth \$18 billion globally, representing over 35 percent of the overall microgrid market.

In April 2019 for example, Carlyle Group and Schneider Electric formed a partnership called AlphaStruxure, the aim being to take on large projects, such as modernization of JFK International Airport, "utilizing microgrids to enable it to transition from utility power to 100 percent on-site generated renewable energy." AlphaStruxure will also offer modular energy-as-a-service solutions to microgrid customers.

Retail chains are also getting involved. In 2019, summer storms and a heatwave resulted in outages in the New York power supply. However, the big home improvement retailer Home Depot managed to keep their stores in operation, thanks to power sourced from microgrids operated by Bloom Energy based on fuel cells.

Another advantage is that microgrids can be constructed relatively quickly, which means that companies don't have to wait until a new power plant connected to the grid is built. Also, as the Home Depot experience shows, they can be more resilient in the face of threats to the grid such as those posed by extreme weather events.

In the UK, potential implementation of Balancing Use of System (BSUoS) charges on the grid, which increase the risk of power prices doubling, have also acted to stimulate growth in the microgrid segment, as companies seek to avoid extra power costs.



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