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## The Age of IoT and Renewable Energy: A New Revolution

Recently I stumbled across a video of a Jeremy Rifkin lecture and discussion with college students regarding the Third Industrial Revolution. Jeremy Rifkin is an American economic and social theorist, writer, public speaker, political advisor, and activist. Rifkin is the author of 20 bestselling books about the impact of scientific and technological changes on the economy, the workforce, society, and the environment. In one of his most recent books, Rifkin explores how Internet technology and renewable energy are merging to create a powerful “Third Industrial Revolution.” He asks us to imagine hundreds of millions of people producing their own green energy in their homes, offices, and factories, and sharing it with each other in an “energy internet,” just like how we now create and share information online.

His predictions and projections are that we are about to experience a true revolution with this convergence of the internet of things (IoT) and Renewable Energy, creating the need for a connected grid established solely to manage the distribution of energy net metered from independently/privately held renewable sources. He offered up many interesting thought provoking ideas. Much of his work has been with European nations who appear to be further along this spectrum than the U.S. It became relevant for me as he talked about the shift away from fossil fuel—it relates to what is happening in New York State.

While the U.S. is not prepared for this shift today, it doesn't mean we aren't working on it. New York State is taking a lead under Reforming the Energy Vision (REV). It may be coming sooner than we think. What can we do as business owners and consumers to prepare, take advantage, and leverage the opportunities this industrial revolution brings?

Several things come to mind.

1. Are renewable energy sources a viable consideration for your company?
2. Are you one of the companies benefiting from Federal tax cuts? One of the purposes was to encourage companies to reinvest in their companies. Do you have plans to purchase new equipment?
3. Are you growing your business? Making more product, thereby increasing your energy consumption?
4. As energy costs increase, are you considering how to better manage this necessary cost? Perhaps implementing a strategic energy plan, or installing an energy management system?
5. If you are not able to re-invest right now, are there still ways to reduce your energy costs?

As MACNY members, you have access to options that can assist with your energy plans.

1. You have direct access to energy suppliers who are your fellow MACNY members. If you are buying your energy through a broker, you are likely paying more than you need to be right from the start. If you have not considered a longer-term contract that balances fixed costs with variable costs designed specifically for your usage, then you are likely paying more than you need to be.
2. As a NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research and Development Agency) outreach partner, MACNY can facilitate access to several NYSERDA programs designed to help you accomplish energy efficiency goals.

To help you see how either of these options could be a fit, please contact me at [coehmigen@macny.org](mailto:coehmigen@macny.org) and please join us at MACNY for an Industrial Energy Programs Breakfast Meeting on March 13, 2018 from 7:30-10:00 am. We will be featuring NYSERDA experts and representatives from your utility providers (National Grid and NYSEG) that will present case studies and explain the various programs available to you. To register for this event visit: <https://www.macny.org/event/industrial-energy-programs-breakfast-meeting/>

For more about Jeremy Rifkin see <https://www.foet.org/about/jeremy-rifkin/>