



Kentucky's
Touchstone Energy
Cooperatives®

Press Release

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Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives Receive International Award For Economic Development

Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives have earned international acclaim for their success in using innovative technology to bring jobs and investment to Kentucky.

The cooperatives were awarded the Excellence In Economic Development Award for New Media on Tuesday at the International Economic Development Council's annual conference in Toronto.

"We compete every day against economic development professionals around the globe, so it is truly an honor to be recognized for innovation by the world's premier economic development organization," said Rodney Hitch, Manager of Economic Development for Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives.

To better gain attention for communities located primarily in rural Kentucky, the co-ops have developed groundbreaking tools to showcase Kentucky's resources to industries looking to expand or relocate.

In particular, the IEDC award singled out PowerMap featuring StateBook and PowerVision, a project that combines GPS mapping with StateBook's economic development database and drone-captured video and data to make Kentucky's sites highly visible and accessible around the globe. And it's all contained in applications for handheld devices.

"Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives have been on the cutting edge of using technology to spur economic development and it has dramatically increased our activity," said Brad Thomas, Associate Manager of Economic Development for the co-ops.

Since the beginning of 2015, Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives have been involved in economic development projects that resulted in 7,000 jobs and over \$2 billion in investment for Kentucky.

"Those jobs and investment are making a positive difference for many communities across Kentucky," Hitch said.

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In addition, developing the online tools has involved two Kentucky-based firms, Interapt and Qk4.

Interapt developed the PowerMap application and even used computer coders from its Eastern Kentucky training program, which Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives helped to start.

Qk4 applied its unique abilities in combining engineering and drone technologies to help develop the PowerVision application.

Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives include 17 not-for-profit, member-owned electric cooperatives that serve more than 1 million Kentucky residents across 87 Kentucky counties. They include:

- Big Sandy RECC, Paintsville, Ky.
- Blue Grass Energy, Nicholasville, Ky.
- Clark Energy Cooperative, Winchester, Ky.
- Cumberland Valley Electric, Gray, Ky.
- Farmers RECC, Glasgow, Ky.
- Fleming-Mason Energy, Flemingsburg, Ky.
- Grayson RECC, Grayson, Ky.
- Inter-County Energy Cooperative, Danville, Ky.
- Jackson Energy Cooperative, McKee, Ky.
- Licking Valley RECC, West Liberty, Ky.
- Nolin RECC, Elizabethtown, Ky.
- Owen Electric Cooperative, Owenton, Ky.
- Salt River Electric, Bardstown, Ky.
- Shelby Energy Cooperative, Shelbyville, Ky.
- South Kentucky RECC, Somerset Ky.
- Taylor County RECC, Campbellsville, Ky.
- East Kentucky Power Cooperative, Winchester, Ky.

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