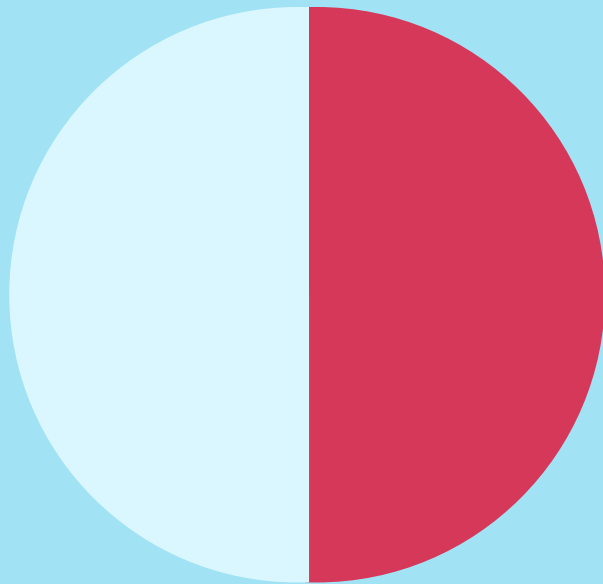


smart ease.

# Power Perspectives

Talking Solar at Smart Energy Expo 2023



[smartease.com.au/learn](https://smartease.com.au/learn)

# About Power Perspectives

Power Perspectives is a new regular report by Smart Ease, a specialist funding solutions provider for the commercial solar industry. It's an analysis of interviews conducted with solar industry professionals – this edition focusses on Smart Energy Expo 2023.

We surveyed solar managers, technicians and sales personnel for their perspective on the Australian renewable energy landscape now, and in the future.

## Objective

To gain insights on the challenges facing the industry, the most exciting opportunities currently available and what participants gained from their attendance at the event.

## Participants

Ten respondents were selected from Expo attendees across both days of the event. Approximately half were known to a member of the Smart Ease team prior to the event. Respondents were from NSW, QLD and Victoria in Australia and New Zealand's North and South Island.

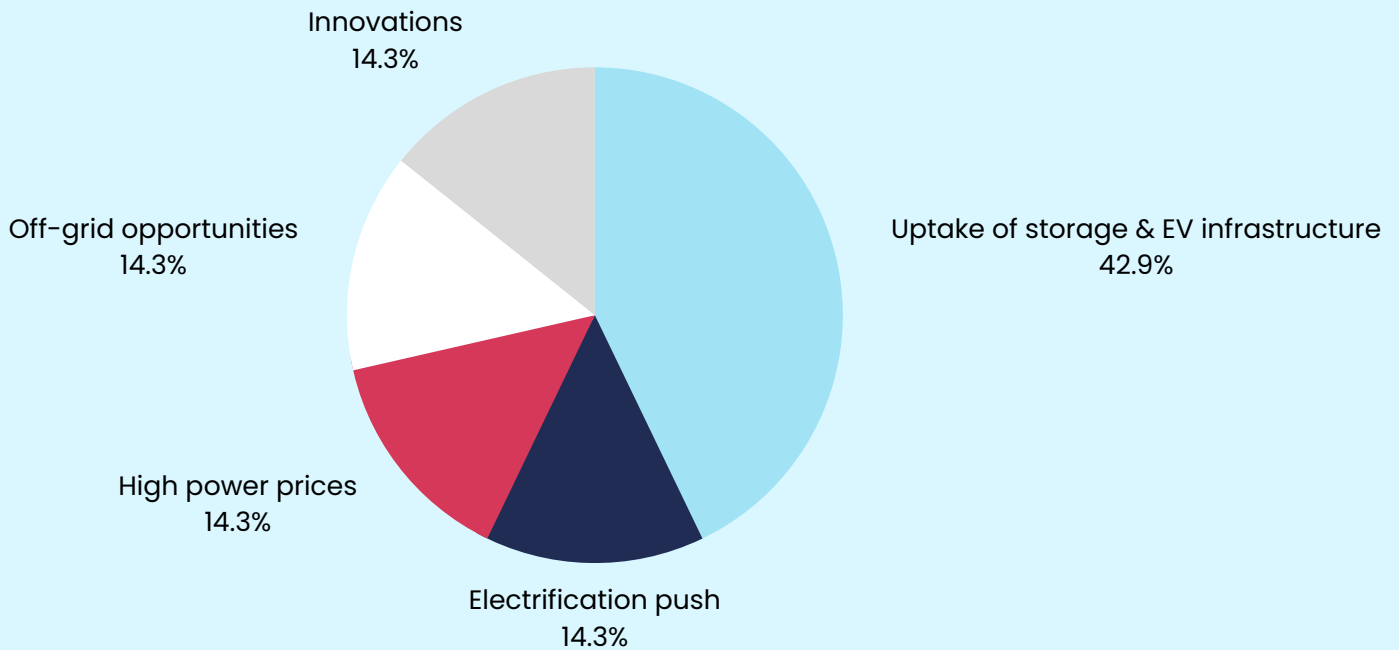
## Format

All participants were asked the same three questions, and their responses were recorded on video.

The questions were:

- What excites you the most about the industry?
- What are the biggest challenges your business faces right now?
- What is your key takeaway from the Expo?

# What excites you the most about the industry?



## Top response

The possibilities represented by the increased interest in storage and EV charging infrastructure.

## Other responses

Increased interest in electrification due to incentives and ESG; ongoing high power prices keeping interest high in renewable energy; the standalone sector (off-grid power); and the launch of innovative new products.

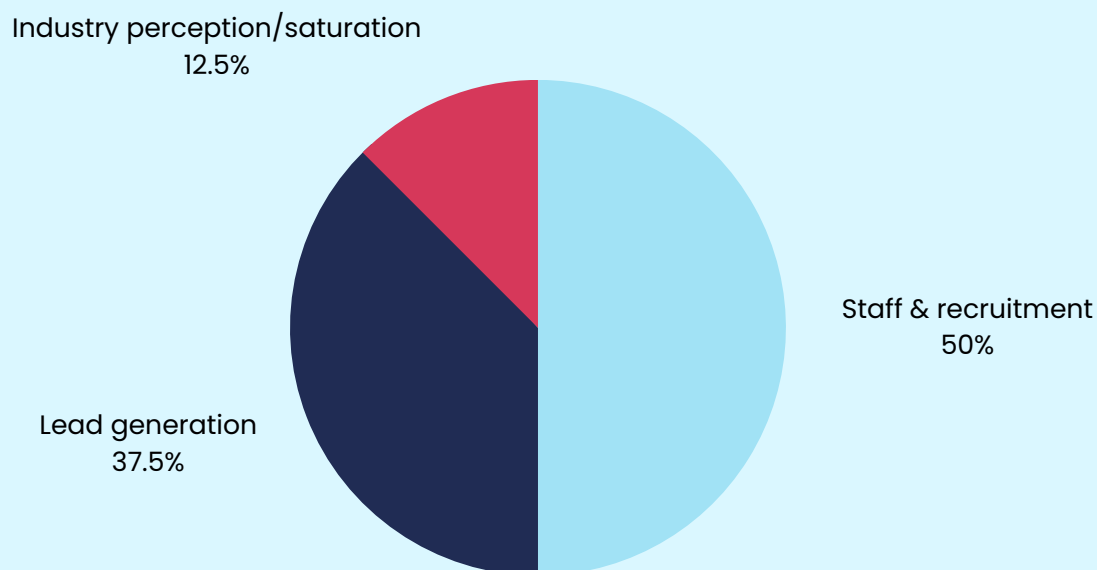
## Top comment

“When I actually look at mapping software going back 10 years ago [and compare it] to today, solar systems are popping up like flowers everywhere. There are a lot of government incentives and large corporations have sustainability targets, so the uptake is getting bigger and bigger. It represents a lot of opportunities for everyone.” Clement Doudet, Kuga Electrical

## Smart Ease perspective

The sector is buzzing with the prospect of a nationwide push towards renewable energy at last. Solar businesses are excited by the chance to broaden their offerings beyond residential PV, and predict growth based on the uptake of EVs and solar storage.

# What are the biggest challenges your business faces right now?



## Top response

Staffing and recruitment is the business challenge that is top of mind.

## Other responses

Generating consistent leads; supply of solar power materials and parts; market saturation and mistrust.

## Top comment

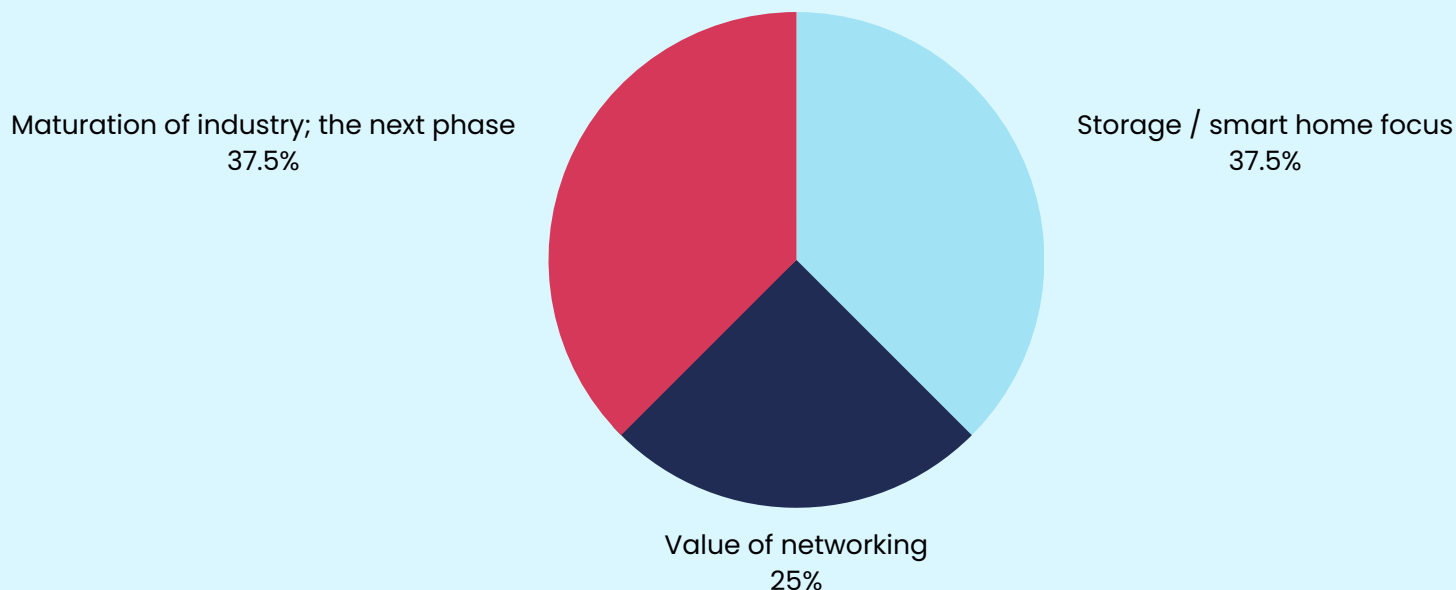
"I think there are two big challenges. One is getting a good consistent volume of leads – the industry is a constant rollercoaster, depending on the time of year. And then staff; finding the right candidates to fill the roles that we have open." Rodrigo Candi, Smart Energy Answers

## Smart Ease perspective

Attracting and retaining high-quality candidates is an issue which dominates in the industry right now. This may be alleviated by increased skill migration in coming years and government apprenticeship incentives, but is something that could benefit from an industry-wide approach.

Could connecting solar businesses directly with retrained coal-industry workers be a solution?

# What is your key takeaway from the Expo?



## Top response

The 'next stage' for the industry as it matures, including encouraging repeat business, maintenance and upgrade needs, customer service.

## Other responses

The value of networking and collaboration; the rise of storage as a 'standard'; the advent of the 'smart home.'

## Top comment

"The biggest takeaway, I would say is just to speak to like-minded businesses that have been in the industry for a number of years. We're all really proud of where it's at. And witnessing that transition from PV-only through to storage, EV charging, achieving repeat business and retaining clients... and understanding and discussing ways to continue that transition for everybody."

Matthew Williamson, GI Energy

## Smart Ease perspective

The industry – and the businesses within it – are undergoing an important transition and are maturing rapidly. Previously, the focus was primarily on homeowners, who were targeted as 'single-use' solar PV customers. Today, areas of focus have broadened to include commercial solar, power storage solutions, upgrades, maintenance, EV chargers and more.

Solar businesses are realising the increased value in creating long-term, repeat customers through excellent service, expanded offerings and smart business strategy.



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