

Mizzou Weekly

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MU energy program looks to trim farm costs



ENERGY SAVER Livestock farmer Kenny Roth (left) and Sam Orr, MAESTRO project director, inspect a new light in Roth's farm shop. The MAESTRO program helped identify energy-saving equipment replacements for Roth's Mexico, Mo., farm, which will now save him 30 percent to 50 percent off his old lighting bill. Photo courtesy of Cooperative Media Group

UPGRADING CONSERVATION

With rising rates, farmers look to other solutions

Kenny Roth used to leave the lights on in his shop all the time. The aging metal-halide lights took 20 minutes to get up and running. And time is money in farming.

But that lag is no more.

Thanks to a new University of Missouri energy conservation program dubbed MAESTRO, the livestock producer identified where he could save major money by upgrading aging equipment.

"With these new lights we get a lot better light. We can turn them off and on when we need and there's energy savings," said Roth, who uses the shop to house and repair equipment when he's not caring for his cattle herd. "Your input is the only place you can control your cost, so paying less electric or less for fuel is a big savings."

The process of saving money began with Leon Schumacher, a MU professor of agricultural systems management.

Schumacher is the principal investigator for MAESTRO, the Missouri Agricultural Energy Savings Team: A Revolutionary Opportunity. In partnership with the Missouri Department of Agriculture, Schumacher and his team work to strengthen the financial viability and environmental soundness of the state's livestock producers.

With Schumacher's help, Roth received an on-farm energy audit that identified where he could save the most money and energy. Roth's new lighting will end up trimming 30 percent to 50 percent off electricity costs over his old system.

"The single biggest bill that farmers face every month is for the amount of energy they use, and there are many simple things they can do along the way to reduce that," Schumacher said. "Our goal is to reduce energy use by 15 percent, which can save

from \$150 to \$600 any given month. In the end, that reduces our dependence on things like oil overseas while making sure we have the energy that we need to drive this industry we call agriculture.”

Roth is one of 242 active clients in the three-year venture, which hopes to help many of the 2,400 small livestock producers in Missouri.

The energy-saving program is a joint program of the MU College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (CAFNR), MU Extension, MU College of Engineering, MU College of Human Environmental Sciences (HES), the Missouri Department of Agriculture, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the Missouri Agricultural and Small Business Development Authority.

EnSave Inc., part of the partnership, administers the farm energy audits and HES administers the home energy audits.

Assistance from MAESTRO can come in the form of reduced-cost energy management plans, free technical assistance, loan buy-downs or 75 percent loan guarantees (for the lender) for up to \$50,000. The project also provides 75 percent funding of project costs for up to \$5,000 for installation of equipment.

“MAESTRO, in some operations, could save \$300 to \$600 per month on utility bills because of the wide variety of old energy-hogging equipment that could be switched out to new, efficient models,” said Sam Orr, MAESTRO project director. “We want to help those farmers invest now so they won’t get hit so hard when the cost of energy goes up in the future.”

These savings matter to many livestock producers, who face high feed prices and are struggling in the current economy.

“While diesel costs are out of your control, at least the amount of energy you use in your lighting, your pumps and your chillers is not. And that’s somewhere you can be more efficient and save money,” Orr said. “This is a normal application of the Extension mission — to take a new technology and extend that out to the farmers across the state to help them save money and improve their operations.”

-Roger Meissen

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Gig.U invites Internet providers to hop on high-speed connectivity

HIGH-SPEED HIGHWAY

Collaboration could lead to faster web surfing

Faculty and staff who have become accustomed to the high-speed Internet connectivity on the University of Missouri campus are one step closer to getting a boost at home, too.

Local Internet providers are currently looking to see what it would take to bump their networks up to a one-gigabit connection in areas surrounding the MU campus. If this comes to pass, Internet users in Columbia homes, businesses and campus housing would experience much faster Internet than they currently have.

The possibility of faster Internet locally was facilitated by Gig.U — The University Community Next Generation Innovation Project.

The University of Missouri-Columbia is one of 37 U.S. research universities that have signed on as members of a collaborative effort, which launched nationally July 27, 2011. The universities and their surrounding communities hope to act as “test beds” for ultra high-speed Internet capabilities.

In September, Gig.U released a request for information, which sought to invite the private sector to join in the effort. The next step is vendor responses.

“We want to encourage vendors to think about a completely different broadband model,” said Chip Byers, director on new initiatives for MOREnet, the university’s Internet provider.

Byers said the RFI was to get community Internet providers to articulate what barriers and resources are preventing them from moving to high-speed networks.

“Realistically, not everybody needs one gigabit at this time,” said Elise Kohn, program director of Gig.U. But she explained university communities were safe bets for investors, as they are often the drivers in technology and innovation. “These are the communities that are often related to health care, for instance, and that’s part of the reason they need it.”

Kohn said part of the request for information was to entice private providers to get involved, and convince them to invest in these communities. Most private sectors do not have plans to increase their broadband speed at this time. But she said areas surrounding research universities are safe bets for investors, as many students and faculty in health care and technology fields could benefit from high connectivity at home, as well as on campus.

“We want to demonstrate that there are demands for speeds that high,” Kohn said. “There are a lot of companies that can benefit from higher connectivity.”

Byers agrees that Columbia’s entrepreneurial businesses would enjoy a boost when the project comes to fruition, he said. He added that tech-based companies like Datastorm and CarFax are the types of businesses that originate in Columbia.

“With that kind of history, what kind of businesses could spring up, and what kind of jobs are created when you get a one-gigabit community out there? What whole new industry could arise from that?”

Byers said Gig.U’s RFI has gone out to all local Internet providers, but only one or two would need to get on board to achieve the project’s immediate goals.

“In day-to-day life, more and more of what we’re doing is online now, and increasingly higher speeds will be necessary,” Kohn said. “There are a variety of sectors where we expect the university communities will be leading the way forward.”

Vendor responses to requests for information are due by Nov. 16.

-Megan Cassidy

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Faculty, staff and students collaborate for Homecoming iPad app

YEARS IN PICTURES

App showcases coming home evolution

The University of Missouri Homecoming Centennial celebration is Oct. 15, and thanks to the collaboration of Mizzou faculty, staff and students, a new iPad app allows users to see the last 100 years of Homecoming in a vast array of photos.

“MU Homecoming: 100 years in photos” became available for free download from the iTunes App Store Sept. 27 and contains more than 140 photos, as well as historical tidbits from Homecomings past.

The iPad app project was the culmination of the collaboration between the School of Journalism and [MIZZOU magazine](http://mizzoumag.missouri.edu/) (<http://mizzoumag.missouri.edu/>), published by the Mizzou Alumni Association, said Mike Jenner, Houston Harte endowed chair. The brainstorming began in spring 2011 and grew into a reality last week.

Jenner and Rhonda Prast, MU journalism faculty member, came up with the idea of a photo gallery to show the evolution of Homecoming through an iPad app. They brought Karen Worley, editor of MIZZOU magazine, into the fold, and partnered with The Columbia Missourian’s Vox magazine. Several graduate students also helped, some sifting through hundreds of photographs, others working the technology end.

“It was a good match between the content and the audience,” Jenner said of the collaboration. “We’d never done this before. So there was a lot to discover in that. It was a little bit of nail biting. There were a lot of moving parts to it and we thought it would be a little simpler. But in the end, we got it done.”

Graduate student Caitlin Carter and MIZZOU photographers Nic Benner and Rob Hill found hundreds of photographs for the iPad app before the final ones were selected.

“No matter what year you went to school here, you’re going to find something you’ll like,” Prast said, adding she was most surprised at the abundance of Homecoming photos from 1911 and 1913.

“It’s exciting to see that it’s done,” Prast said. “The students worked really hard on it, and now they have something great for a portfolio.”

The app is available for iPads only, and a live demonstration will be from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Friday, Oct. 14, at Lee Hills Hall Rotunda.

To download the app, go to the iTunes App Store and search for MU Homecoming.

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Accessible knowledge

Gina Ceylan will present a fast-paced, interactive lecture, “Applying Universal Design in the Classroom,” from 1 to 2 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 6, in 2212 MU Student Center on ways professors can make their classes and activities accessible to everyone.

The lecture is in collaboration with MU Celebrates Ability Week, which started Oct. 3 and ends Oct. 7. In correlation with the event, Mizzou After Dark will also present dinner and a movie, “X-Men First Class,” at 7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 7, in Jesse Wrench Auditorium in Memorial Union.

The movie will be a fully accessible version with descriptive video and captions.

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Art, archeology lecture

Jasper Gaunt, curator of Greek and Roman art of the Michael C. Carlos Museum at Emory University in Atlanta, Ga., will present the lecture “Abbot Suger’s ‘Precious Chalice’ and the Agate Bowl from Coptos” at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 6, in 106 Pickard Hall of the Museum of Art and Archeology.

There will be a reception before the lecture at 5 p.m. in the museum’s cast gallery.

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Action in diversity

The second “Diversity in Action” seminar of the Chancellor’s Diversity Initiative of the semester will be from noon to 1 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 12, in S206 Memorial Union. University of Missouri economics professor Peter Mueser will present “Helping Poor Families and Disadvantaged Workers: Toward an Understanding of Available Options.”

“Diversity in Action: Bridging Research and Practice” is a research-based brown bag series for faculty, staff and students.

For more information, please visit diversity.missouri.edu/ or call the Chancellor’s Diversity Initiative office at 573-882-2714.

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