

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S PAGE

*Your sons and your daughters
Are beyond your command
Your old road is
Rapidly agin'
Please get out of the new one
If you can't lend your hand
For your times they are a-changin'*

- Bob Dylan (1964)

First we saw vibrant wholesale competition and natural gas industry restructuring in the U.S. and a host of states. Then came electric industry restructuring at the federal level and in a number of states. The times they were a-changin'. So what's next?

Phone booths. In London.

With headlines as diverse as "London's Phone Booths Find New Lives" (New York Times), "London's Famous Red Phone Booth Goes Green and Solar-Powered" (Scientific American), and "London Phone Booth Converted To Solar-Powered Mobile Charging Station" (Huffington Post)," it was announced in October 2014 that the iconic red phone booths in London are a-changin'.

Two entrepreneurs are transforming decommissioned telephone booths into charging stations for mobile devices. The first one, a pilot, was unveiled recently at Tottenham Court Road in London's main central shopping district and five more are scheduled to operate soon. The booths, renamed named "Solarboxes" and repainted green, reportedly can charge up to 100 phones or tablets. The power comes from a 33-inch solar panel on the roof.

Kirsty Kenney and Harold Craston, two geography graduates from the London School of Economics, are behind the initiative. The project is financed by a Low Carbon Entrepreneur competition they won. And what happens when the sun doesn't shine? The booths have storage batteries that keep them working even in the gray days and London rain.

The mayor of London loved their idea. "In our modern world, where hardly any Londoner is complete without a raft of personal gizmos in hand, it's about time our iconic boxes were updated for the 21st century, to be useful, more sustainable," Mr. Boris Johnson said in a statement.

The times, indeed, are still a-changin'.

As Thomas Jefferson said, “I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past.” If the energy industry continues to clutch to familiar icons and doesn’t adapt nimbly to changed market dynamics, customer preferences, and technologies, we will all suffer the consequences. It is critical that we embrace the future and keep up with the times, as they will never stop a-changin’.

Respectfully,

Bob Fleishman