

## PROFILE OF POTENTIAL ADOPTERS OF GEOTHERMAL ENERGY

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In a society characterized by abundant resources the resource crisis of recent years poses tremendous adjustment problems for American business. Of particular concern is the more immediate energy issue. Shortages of supply, legal restrictions and lagging technology have caused policy-makers to draft programs to stimulate development of fundamental forms of energy: solar, wind and geothermal. However, decades of artificially cheap energy have created substantial barriers to the commercialization of these sources. Commercialization programs have been drafted with but meager acceptance. Little is known about business' decisions to adopt energy. Before commercialization programs can be effective, the energy decision process of business must be investigated.

A study of that decision process has been undertaken at the New Mexico Energy Institute. The study sought to profile potential adopters of geothermal energy. A literature review and focus group interviews were used to draft a final questionnaire that was administered by personal interview to 105 respondents. The respondents were top energy decision makers among businesses located contiguous to known reserves of geothermal energy. The sample was of a systematic design.

The basic research issue was the adoption of an alternative source of energy. The theoretical framework for the study was diffusion of innovation. Adapter categories were identified by probability of adoption given a set of product attributes and a time period for adoption. Several statistical analysis techniques were used to test the significance of adopter categories.