

Bill Burke: Revolutionizing the Energy Industry with Real Time Data

By Vidyaarathi Pugalenth

Bill knew from a young age that he wanted to be an engineer but after graduating with a mechanical engineering degree from UK and working for Lexmark, he wasn't so sure if a corporate setting was for him. Bill moved to California in 2003 to work for a startup, while his wife went to school at Berkeley. He began to fall in love with the startup community there but after ten months at his new startup job, the company was sold and he, too, applied to and was accepted to a Berkeley Phd program.

During his time in school, he worked with the Berkeley Energy Commission and continued immersing himself in the energy industry. After graduation, he joined the GE energy management team. His work involved connecting appliances to the internet to collect data which would later inspire his own startup.

After ten years of working in the energy industry, Bill came to the same realization that made him leave Lexington for California in the first place. He didn't like working for other people. "I hated working at GE. The work was great. The people were great. The problem was me." Bill decided to give the startup world another go by creating his own company. After a first attempt at a SaaS platform called Lingua, an attempt to recreate the engineering software MatLab in the cloud, Bill decided to resort back to his roots in energy when he started Virtual Peaker.

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Virtual Peaker is a SaaS that connects home owners to the logistics of their home systems (like their hot water heaters) and recommends settings that would save them money. The information can also help the energy companies have a more predictable supply. The problem with the current model of the energy business is that energy is generated as needed, and demand can be unpredictable. If companies are able to grasp in real time what the needs of the people are, then it's much easier to generate energy proactively versus the reactive system that's in place now. Virtual Peaker provides a platform creating a win-win scenario for both users and providers.

Bill has seen a lot of growth with his platform but still states the difficulties of being an entrepreneur with a family. He says, "It's really scary being a startup founder with kids. Spending time with my family makes me a better person and clears my mind." He asserts that his family is what drives him to work hard and enables him to do what he loves. He gives a lot of praise to his wife by saying, "I can't possibly do this without my wife. She's supported me all along the way. Without her, I couldn't be here doing this."

He looks to young entrepreneurs saying he wishes there was an impactful one-liner that he could give them as though starting a business had a simple code to success, but it's a long process that he explains can be lonely

and really hard. You'll absolutely want to quit, he states, "That's why there are lots of wantrepreneurs and not many entrepreneurs." He thinks it's important to remember that even overnight successes have about 5 years of work that went in on the back end.

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Bill lives in Louisville, KY with his wife Krista and 3 kids, Molly, Penelope and Sydney. He spends most of his free time with his family. Bill runs trails an impressive 6 days a week in order to get time to himself.

Learn more about how Virtual Peaker is increasing the IQ of the power grid by [clicking here](#).