

Managerial and economic barriers and incentives to the commercialization of solar energy technologies.

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Abstract

This paper considers the emerging solar industry with emphasis on the active solar systems industry. Active solar systems use thermal collectors, pumps, storage devices and associated equipment to provide hot water and space-heating. Solar systems can provide an important portion of the nation's energy in the future. However, diffusion of these technologies will require several years or decades depending upon the innovation characteristics of the systems. The innovation characteristics of active solar systems are measured, in part, by economic measures, reliability, and communicability of the qualities of the system among others. The active solar systems industry is characterized as emerging, struggling, underfinanced and diverse. A questionnaire and interview survey of 97 solar industry firms was accomplished. Based on the survey results it is recommended that while the government continue incentive tax credits, the industry develop itself as a

strong, high-quality industry through the emergence of industry leaders dependent upon improved manufacturing process innovation.



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