

**Oranjestad, August 12, 2013** - U.S. solar companies are borrowing sales techniques from online retailers to make paying for power as easy as buying an airplane ticket.

The \$3.5 billion U.S. residential solar industry is seeking to automate a sales process that often requires representatives to visit prospective customers' homes. Websites now predict how much power a rooftop system will produce and let homeowners compare prices from multiple installers.

Simplifying the sales process will boost orders and drive down the cost of landing new customers, said David Field, chief executive officer of OneRoof Energy Inc. Prices for solar panels have plunged 39 percent in the past two years. Other expenses such as marketing and permitting may now make up more than half the cost of residential units.

"The market is absolutely huge," said Field. "The industry has to get past this idea of canvassing and use technology and networks in order to sell."

Solar-system installers including SolarCity Corp. (SCTY) and Sungevity Inc. are enjoying a boom in sales as customers take advantage of falling panel prices that hurt manufacturers led by Yingli Green Energy Holding (YGE) Co. and Suntech Power Holdings Co. SolarCity shares have more than tripled this year while Suntech's main unit was dragged into bankruptcy in March.

OneRoof owns rooftop solar panels that are leased to homeowners at little to no upfront cost and says its customers on average save 5 percent to 25 percent a month on their electricity bill. The San Diego-based company is backed by Hanwha Group and Black Coral Capital.

Source/read more:

[www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-07-24/solar-sales-moving-from-sofa-to-websites-to-speed-orders.html](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-07-24/solar-sales-moving-from-sofa-to-websites-to-speed-orders.html)