



## Middle East Energy (MEE) Conference Impressions

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The Middle East Energy (MEE) conference & trade fair in Dubai, which took place from 7th to 9th March, was a prime meeting place for professionals from all over the energy and power grid industry. The conference provided a platform for key equipment manufacturers from the power grid industry to exhibit their products and services. Furthermore, the strategic conference stage facilitated discussions on some of the key challenges faced by the industry and how the energy transition can be realized in the Middle East.

One of the highlights of the event was a panel discussion moderated by PTR, which focused on the digitalization of power grids. The panelists discussed the importance of digitalized assets in power grids to ensure a smooth energy transition, be it the integration of renewables or the usage of grid-edge technologies such as EV charging infrastructure. They emphasized that grid digitalization is not a nice-to-have but an absolute necessity if the grid needs to become an enabler of the energy transition.



The interviews conducted by PTR's analysts on the exhibition floor revealed several interesting findings about the power grid industry. Firstly, there has been a surge in demand for electrical power grid equipment post-covid due to the rebound from covid and the rise of renewables around the globe. As a result, all major suppliers of electrical equipment are busy fulfilling the orders, with some transformer manufacturers being fully occupied for the next few years and switchgear manufacturers also experiencing high demand. This demand surge is expected to sustain for the next couple of years.

Despite the high demand, manufacturers do not plan to build new manufacturing facilities, fearing that this demand rise could be short-lived. Instead, they are focusing on getting more out of their existing manufacturing capacities by going for multiple shifts in a day, adding assembly lines to the existing manufacturing facilities, and overall working on increasing the efficiency of their current manufacturing processes. The Saudi market remains the biggest market in the GCC region for electrical power grid equipment. However, the supply landscape has changed significantly as international companies are finding it very difficult to do business in KSA due to the localization requirements which favor local suppliers. However, this is not true for all international players, as Korean, Turkish, and some Chinese players are able to serve the market due to their price-competitive solutions. PTR expects that European companies will be able to operate in KSA only through local partnerships in the coming years. Finally, digitalization in the power grid is slowly increasing in the region as some countries in the region are gradually moving towards replacing the current infrastructure with digitally enabled equipment.

In conclusion, Middle East Energy (MEE) was a great success, bringing together professionals from across the power grid industry to discuss key issues and share insights. The surge in demand for electrical power grid equipment, driven by the rebound from covid and the rise of renewables, presents both opportunities and challenges for manufacturers in the region. However, the focus on digitalization is a positive development and is likely to continue as the region moves towards a more sustainable energy future.

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