

SELLING SOLAR 101:

GUIDE TO YOUR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS & SOLAR TERMINOLOGY

Q: How do I sell solar?

A: Selling solar is no different than selling roofing. Talk to your customers, investigate your market for opportunities, learn about the market/industry pain points, find where you can add value and, most importantly, “Make it Easy.” That is the key to selling solar — delivering a solution and making it easy for the customer to complete their work.

Q: Why should roofing contractors get into solar?

A: Homeowners want a single-source solution for all their roofing needs, and a roofing contractor who gets into solar can be that person and get everything they need from their ABC Supply branch. Also, diversifying their service offering can increase their revenue stream and margins. Additionally, a hybrid contractor can offer customers a one-source wrap-around warranty, which is a very compelling value proposition.

Q: What should I tell my customers that are on the fence about diversifying into solar?

A: Change can be difficult, but it’s just another product once a contractor gets into solar. A contractor already has a customer portfolio that allows them to maintain and repair roofs. By diversifying, they can offer another product and increase their revenue stream.

Q: As a salesperson who does well with my current customer base, why would I want to start selling solar or target solar installers?

A: Why wouldn’t you? Being the first to offer solar now affords your branch and your customer the opportunity to get into the renewable energy (RE) market while it’s hot, not after it has passed. It’s a win-win. You make it easy for the customer to diversify and increase their profits, and along the way, you can improve your commissions and the branch’s margin.

Q: When promoting solar to a current ABC Supply customer, who is the ideal candidate?

A: Everyone is the ideal candidate. If the customer wants to grow their business, seize opportunities and increase their profits, they’re a fit for solar.

Q: How do I find potential customers?

A: Targeting a solar contractor is no different than targeting a roofing contractor. In addition to doing online searches and jobsite visits, sales teams can request a prospect list from the marketing department. Contact Jessica Kettle at jessica.kettle@abcsupply.com or 608-368-2430.

Q: Does ABC have access to all the products needed to make a solar system?

A: Yes, ABC Supply has access right now. We’ve partnered with world-class vendors to offer contractors the complete solar system under one vendor and use our footprint to ensure product availability.

Q: Where do I find vendor contact information and pricing?

A: Go to the shared drive under Resources > Solar and click the “Solar Vendor Contacts and Pricing - Shortcut” link. Once there, you’ll find everything you need by vendor, including territory maps, product information and pricing.

Q: What differentiates ABC Supply from other solar distributors?

A: ABC Supply is in the business of making it easy for our customers to get their jobs done. For solar, that means we’ve streamlined how contractors get their solar materials by offering everything— the panels, racking, inverters and storage — under one distributor. By choosing ABC Supply as their supplier, installers no longer need to source multiple distributors to access a complete solar system.

Q: Does ABC Supply have relationships with financing companies to help homeowners purchase solar equipment?

A: Yes, ABC Supply has relationships with [GoodLeap](#) and [Mosaic](#) to offer in-home financing options.

Q: Does ABC Supply offer software to help contractors draft solar proposals?

A: Yes, we've built relationships with [Solo](#) to help contractors with solar proposals. Additionally, EagleView's [Inform™](#) tool allows designers and installers to gather roofing measurement data for solar.

Q: What marketing support is available to help my branch promote our new solar offering?

A: The marketing team has developed several marketing pieces to help branches get the word out about their new solar offering, including postcards, sail flags, solar line cards, a social video, and email signature banners. Go to the shared drive under Resources > Solar > Solar Marketing Resources Guide to see everything available for download or purchase.

If you can't find what you're looking for or want to develop a new marketing piece, contact Jessica Marquis at jessica.marquis@abcsupply.com or 608-368-2256.

Terminology

- **Array:** Multiple solar cells make up a solar panel, and multiple panels are wired together to form a solar array.
- **Authority having jurisdiction (AHJ):** The civic authority for a town or county responsible for permitting and inspecting improvements to property.
- **Balance of system (BOS):** All of the other physical parts that make up a solar system outside of the panels: inverters, wiring, mounting hardware and the monitoring system.
- **Grid:** The grid is the electricity infrastructure run and maintained by the electrical company.
- **Net metering:** When a grid-tied solar system produces more energy than is needed, the excess power is sent to the public-utility grid to be redistributed (known as "back feeding" the grid), allowing customers to offset the cost of energy drawn from the utility.
- **Micro-inverter:** Inverter placed on the back of each solar panel to optimize energy production for each individual solar panel. Allows each panel to perform at its maximum potential. Like a single-string inverter, it converts direct current (DC) electricity to alternating current (AC) electricity.
- **Photovoltaic (PV):** The conversion of light into electricity using semiconducting materials, such as silicon.
- **Permission to operate (PTO):** Local electric utility's written authorization to interconnect the solar system to the local electric utility's electrical grid. Officially allows the solar user to turn on their solar panel system.
- **Single-string inverter:** A device connected to multiple panels aggregating the power output. The inverter takes the DC electricity generated from the solar power system and uses it to create AC electricity to power electronic devices in a home or business.
- **Solar batteries:** Comprised of high-capacity rechargeable batteries that can store excess energy generated by a solar system for use at night, as a backup during outages or when the solar system cannot generate energy in real time.
- **Solar cell:** A single light-capturing unit in a PV solar panel. They are made of silicon-like semiconductors.
- **Solar offset:** Measures the amount of energy a solar system produces compared to the amount of electricity a home consumes.
- **String:** A series of panels connected together.
- **Units of Measure**
 - **Watts (W):** The unit of measure for power.
 - **Kilowatt (kW):** Measure of power. It is the rate at which something uses energy. There are 1,000 watts in a kilowatt.
 - **Kilowatt-hour (kWh):** Measure of energy. kWh is the capacity to do work.
 - **Megawatt (MW):** Measures the output of a power plant or the amount of electricity required by an entire city. One MW equals 1,000 kW or 1,000,000 W.
 - **Gigawatt (GW):** Measures the output of large electric power stations. A gigawatt equals 1 billion watts.