RENTERS CAN NOW GO SOLAR... EVEN IF THEY DON'T HAVE A ROOF

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CloudSolar enables anyone to support solar energy, selling physical panels which can be installed at a remote CloudSolar farm

This is part of a series of articles that looks at entrepreneurs hoping to get their ideas off the ground through crowdfunding. At the time of writing, each of these innovations is currently seeking funding.

So far, apartment dwellers looking to become involved with solar energy have been seriously limited, since they don't own their own roof-space. We have seen services such as Powertree installing solar panelling for apartment block owners — enabling those within the building to benefit — but this still leaves the power in the hands of the landlords. Now, startup CloudSolar makes it easy for renters to support and reap the benefit of green energy, by selling them physical panels which will then be installed at a remote CloudSolar farm.

In an attempt to increase the amount of solar power produced in the country, CloudSolar are enabling anyone with eco-inclinations to get involved, expanding the market significantly. The company is currently crowdfunding on Indiegogo. Those who want to sign up can purchase a physical solar panel from CloudSolar for a reduced price of USD 750. After the campaign, pledgers can either have the panel sent to their own home or add it to CloudSolar's farm, where it will be installed and managed by the company for 25 years.

The energy generated is sold to local transmission lines and 80 percent of the money earnt goes to the owner of the panel — the customer. CloudSolar also handle government rebates and tax credits on the customer's behalf. They estimate that the total economic output of a single panel will be approximately USD 2,250 over 25 years.

CloudSolar opens up solar to a previously excluded market. Could more green energy ownership be crowdsourced in this way to increase involvement?

18th March 2015
Email: sun@cloudsolarenergy.com
Website: www.gocloudsolar.com