



The first edition of The EMA Magazine, published in May 2016, featured a standout article by Kit Oung titled 'Energy Management = SEX'.

Now, as we mark our milestone 50th edition, we're pleased to welcome Kit back with a fresh, equally captivating contribution.

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Ocean's Kilowatts: The Energy Heist

Decades of experience, be it in energy management or even in a cinematic spectacle, have taught us how to find the sweet spots, boost momentum when the timing is right, and cool things down before waste creeps in. And really - what doesn't shine brighter with a sprinkle of Hollywood magic?

So, in honour of The EMA Magazine's big 5-0 issue, let's take a light-hearted stroll through some of the best heist films and series, and use their strategies to inspire your own perfect "energy job".

Picture it: a corporate HQ in the city. Moonlight glints off glass walls and pristine branding. Inside, millions of kilowatt-hours are vanishing into thin air. Computers idle, cooling units fight winter air, corridor lights burn on in empty spaces. To some, that's "business as usual". To us - energy managers, it's a vault full of cash waiting to be recovered. The treasure isn't gold bars or casino chips - it's pure energy cost savings and a lower carbon footprint. And just like a cinematic heist, it takes the right crew to reclaim it.

Let the theme tune begin...

Part 1: Meet the Crew

ROLE	MOVIE INSPIRATION	ENERGY ROLE	DELIVERABLE
Mastermind – Blueprint Architect	Danny Ocean (Ocean's Eleven), The Professor (Money Heist)	Energy Auditor	Full audit report, mapping inefficiencies and saving potential
Hacker – Data Infiltrator	Seth Green (The Italian Job), Rio (Money Heist)	IoT / Data Analyst	Identification of phantom loads and irregular energy use
Safecracker – Technical Specialist	Basher Tarr (Ocean's Eleven), Berlin (Money Heist)	Engineer / Retrofit Specialist	System optimisation, equipment replacements and efficiency gains
Getaway Driver – Timekeeper	Handsome Rob (The Italian Job), Denver (Money Heist)	Project Manager	Timely rollouts, budget adherence and schedule synchronisation
Inside Leader – The Authoriser	Tess Ocean (Ocean's Eleven), Colonel Prieto (Money Heist)	Leadership	Funding secured, organisational buy-in
Social Engineer – Behaviour Strategist	Now You See Me Crew, Tokyo (Money Heist)	HR / Behavioural Economics Specialist	Cultural shift and compliance with efficiency measures
Lookout – Risk and Rebound Manager	Linus Caldwell (Ocean's Eleven), Nairobi (Money Heist)	Risk Manager	Monitoring rebound effects, contingency planning

Part 2: The Job Planning

Like a war room in Money Heist, the crew assembles. Energy use graphs glow red on the screens.

1. Mastermind:

Conducts a complete energy audit, revealing “the vault” - £1.2M in annual waste.

2. Hacker:

Analyses IoT and metered data, identifying top hotspots: lighting, HVAC, phantom loads.

3. Safecracker:

Specifies how to implement the energy projects and further fine-tunes it to unlock efficiency.

4. Getaway Driver:

Keeps timelines tight, fast-tracking lighting deliveries ahead of a supplier strike.

5. Inside Leader:

Signs off on funding and removes organisational obstacles for implementation.

6. Social Engineer:

Launches the Lights Out for Savings staff challenge, aligning behaviour with goals.

7. Lookout:

Prepares a contingency plan to watch for rebound effects and shifting tariffs.

For many organisations, a crew working in sync can recover 20–35% of energy waste in the first year, often delivering ROI in less than 24–36 months.



Part 3: Execution – The Heist

Plans rarely run perfectly. In Money Heist, every disruption triggered a counterplan. Energy projects demand the same resilience.

• Plan Alpha:

Optimise current systems without hardware replacements.

• Plan Beta:

Upgrade with targeted retrofits.

• Plan Gamma:

Implement peak-demand load shedding.

• Plan Delta:

Introduce renewable generation and carbon capture.

Even “negotiation scenes” have their energy equivalent: securing stakeholder approval for operational changes, scheduling heavy machinery downtime or shifting loads away from high-tariff periods without hurting productivity, to name a few.



Part 4: The Payoff

Fade to black - but not because the HQ has shut it down! Lights now dim automatically, cooling runs in step with occupancy and staff are proud to be part of the Energy Crew.

The results? 18% energy reduction, equivalent to £780,000 or 1,250 tonnes of CO₂e - a decent box office triumph.

The perfect job wasn't about stealing - it was stealing back from waste and reinvesting those gains into innovation, staff development and future-proof infrastructure.

Think you can do it solo?

That's like tackling a cinematic vault with no Hacker, no Safecracker, no Getaway Driver - and expecting a clean getaway.

No Lookout?

Rebound effect wipes out first-year gains.

No Social Engineer?

Staff undoes efficiency settings - savings fall 50%.

No Leadership?

Funding evaporates halfway.

"Saving energy and decarbonising energy consumption is a team sport."

Assemble your crew - and pull off the perfect energy job. You might just swap your hard hat for a tux - Brits can be modest, but a little red carpet never hurt anyone. Energy Oscars or BAFTAs ... here we come.

Author's profile:

Kit is widely regarded as one of the world's leading voices in energy, climate governance and sustainable business transformation. He turns bold Net Zero promises into double-digit energy savings, award-winning governance frameworks and compliance strategies built to endure. With 27 years shaping policy, chairing global standards and training leaders in 48 countries, Kit bridges national priorities to boardroom vision and realised benefits.

