

Promoting Energy Efficiency in Your Community: Communications and Social Marketing Case Studies

Case Study #1: City of Lakewood: Greening Lakewood Business Partnership

The city of Lakewood is engaged in a partnership with The Greening Lakewood Business Partnership (GLBP) consisting of several business associations and nonprofit entities that has the goal to engage 1,500 businesses in our community to improve their energy efficiency. Our current initiative called BEEP (Business Energy and Education Program) is starting this goal by engaging the first 180 businesses out of the 1,500.

The GLBP and its associated BEEP program is in its beginning stages. We have signed up the first 70 businesses through existing social connections. However, to reach the broader goal will require a definite marketing strategy.

MARKETING CHALLENGES:

1. What other ways besides social connections and “word of mouth” can be used to reach businesses? The city has publicized this program through all its communication tools but needs to find other ways to succeed in getting 180 businesses into the program.
2. Are there certain kinds of businesses that the city should reach out to or target? And how can we use the BEEP program to draw businesses into the larger and continuing efforts of the Greening Lakewood Business Partnership?
3. How can you get businesses to refer other businesses to the program?

Case Study #2: Denver Residential Retrofits

The City of Denver has the goal of engaging 1000 homes per year to perform retrofits for energy efficiency. While Xcel has many programs and advertisements encouraging energy efficiency, a community based approach may yield superior market penetration. But many questions remain: which residents are the right targets? What techniques can be used to engage communities and neighborhoods? What events can create a catalyst for action?

Also, what are the elements of the overall program that Denver can help with, beyond what Xcel already offers? Are there other incentives or rewards?

Case Study #3: Fort Collins FortZED Community Energy Challenge

FortZED is a community initiative to transform Fort Collins' into a low energy consumption city, and our Downtown area into a Net Zero Energy User. A zero energy district is about using less

energy and producing and managing our energy differently. It's not going to be easy - it's going to be about developing new technology, policy changes and it'll take action from you.

The FortZED *Community Energy Challenge* is a grassroots outreach initiative to engage and empower residents to contribute to the creation of a net-zero energy district (known as FortZED) in the downtown area of Fort Collins, including the main campus of CSU.

To help achieve net-zero in the district, we are asking residents to pledge to reduce their home energy use. We have created a [checklist](#) of actions you can take at home for efficiency, conservation and renewable energy.

MARKETING CHALLENGES:

1. The success of FortZED's outreach depends heavily on volunteers, and those volunteers need to be trained in order to be effective. With nearly 200 volunteers recruited, only about 50 have participated in training. How can we motivate all the volunteers to get trained? (Don't forget to use social norms to get people to participate)
2. The FortZED team needs to get 300 surveys completed. What methods can be used to get those done? (Don't forget to think about rewards.)
3. Develop promotional campaigns to get more residents involved, and get them to report their actions and results back to the FortZED team.

Case Study #4: City of Lone Tree Business Lighting Efficiency

Working with Xcel Energy and Franklin Energy, Lone Tree has developed a program to supplement Xcel Energy's rebate program for conversion of old T12 fluorescent light fixtures to more energy efficient T8s or T5s. The intent is for such conversion to be done at *no cost* to the business owner.

While the City's program is limited to a rebate on T12 retrofits for small businesses, we hope this additional rebate will be an incentive for businesses to ask for a comprehensive lighting audit through which they may make other retrofits and take advantage of additional rebates Xcel has to offer. Our objectives include not only energy conservation, but also helping our small businesses save money. We have received a very positive response in just the last few days. Several businesses have scheduled the lighting audit, which is the first step in the process. We have even had one large corporate chain of restaurants call about the program. Although they wouldn't qualify for Lone Tree's rebate, they would qualify for Xcel's rebate and they have started the process with Franklin Energy to complete an audit at their Lone Tree location.

MARKETING CHALLENGES:

1. What are some of the best ways to reach small businesses? A letter was sent out (attached) but what are other methods that could be fruitful?
2. Are there some businesses that are better than others for participation? Why? Which ones are most likely to leverage this program to do deeper efficiency? (These are the Target Markets).
3. How can you get businesses to refer other businesses to the program?

Case Study #5: SEEconomicSolutions: Energy Efficiency for Faith-Based and Other Community Organizations

SEEconomicSolutions.org is a new non-profit (currently being formed) that will reach out to religious, other communities and their members by providing unbiased information, choices and support to evaluate and complete energy efficiency projects on religious, business and residential properties. SEEconomicSolutions' website (under development) and Energy Volunteers will provide unbiased consumer resources concerning: available banking/financing products, links to websites/lists for identifying audit and contracting professionals, and other pathways for reducing energy waste, saving money and creating local jobs.

MARKETING CHALLENGES:

1. How to educate faith communities about the benefits of energy efficiency/ renewable technology at home, the worship center and the workplace.
2. How to assist faith buildings and congregant-property owners to complete renewable/energy efficiency retrofit projects, in terms of:
 - identifying projects that can be completed to improve energy efficiency,
 - financing the cost of such projects,
 - connecting the property owner to reputable contractors,
 - ensuring that expectations for project are achieved, and
 - ensuring that the property owner had a positive experience (source of future referrals).
3. How to provide time- and cost-effective assistance to property-owners with completing energy efficiency/renewable technology projects (i.e., current time spent with property owners ranges from 16 to 40 hours).

Marketing Exercises

1. Define your Target Audience. Be very specific.
 - a. Instead of “businesses”, think about the following attributes: business size, location, type of business (do they cater to a local clientele, are they upscale, are they green, etc), ownership, type of building, energy needs, financial position, decision-making process, etc.
2. Define the Action you want the Target Audience to make. This should be straightforward/simple to define and explain.
3. Identify the Barriers to Adoption of the change you want them to make. Be detailed; think of all of the issues they face, and hurdles they are needing to overcome. What steps do they need to go through? Where might they drop out?
4. Analyze whether there are program elements that need to be added/changed in order to address the identified Barriers. In particular, are their Incentives/Rewards that can be provided (monetary or non-monetary) that will push people to action?
5. Social and Business Norms: Create a list of Norms that could influence the target audience. Develop ideas for communications that would help use the Norms to influence behavior.
6. Identify the Channels that the target audience is likely to engage with already. By using existing channels, marketing can be faster and cheaper. Who do they trust? Who are their leading voices? Where do they congregate? How do they communicate?
 - a. For each Channel, describe the benefits they can bring to the marketing campaign.
 - b. Determine which Channels are your top ones for partnerships.
7. Develop your top 3 messages/taglines/pitches to sell the program.