About Me

- Senior Project Leader in the National Renewable Energy Laboratory’s (NREL’s) Communications & Public Affairs Office
- 15 years of communications experience
- NREL communications lead for the DOE Office of Indian Energy since 2011
How New Ideas Reach a Tipping Point

Crisis or need
↓
Innovation
↓
Critical mass

In every crisis lies the seed of opportunity
“Agents of Change”

• The Law of the Few
  – Connectors
  – Mavens
  – Salespeople

• Stickiness Factor

• Power of Context
Why Outreach Matters

Communications...

• Is a powerful tool that can help pave the way toward meeting goals

• Should be an integral part of any project plan

• Helps break down barriers and secure community buy-in
Importance of Developing a Plan

A stakeholder education and engagement plan can help you...

• Assess the **current communications** situation
• Define **key audiences** and identify project champions
• Identify and address **barriers**
• Build **awareness and support** and get community buy-in

Success doesn’t just happen. It’s planned for.

—Anonymous
Hawaii: 70% Clean Energy by 2030

Hawaii is on track to meet its original goal ... In May 2015, the state legislature adopted a renewable portfolio standard of 100% by 2045!
USVI: Reduce Fossil Fuel 60% by 2025

USVI Makes Headway Toward Goal to Reduce Fossil Fuel 60% by 2025

- Oil prices spike to over $145/barrel and price of electricity exceeds $0.50/kWh in US Virgin Islands (USVI)
- Act 7075 establishes net metering and calls for 30% peak power from renewables by 2025
- USVI announces goal to reduce fossil fuel use
- WAPA begins developing Vlerengize Services Network to assist customers in implementing energy efficiency
- WAPA signs agreement to move from diesel to propane, lowering fuel costs by an estimated 30% and greenhouse gas emissions by 15%

First utility-scale solar project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Diesel Usage (million barrels of oil per year)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>0.97</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Energy Development in Island Nations (EDIN) partnership launched

Vlerengize partnership launched to advance the 60x25 goal

USVI signs memorandum of understanding with U.S. Departments of Energy and the Interior to reduce fossil fuel use

Streamlined interconnection and net metering processes lead to nearly 10 MW of new, distributed solar and wind

USVI provides leadership to Carbon War Room’s 10 Island Challenge
The Outreach Challenge

• Get the community on board
  – Support for the overall goal
  – Support for projects
  – Participation in projects

• Communicate goals with:
  – A unified voice
  – Clear, consistent messaging
  – A compelling call to action
Laying the Foundation

First steps to building a stakeholder education and engagement plan:

• Schedule a planning session

• Get the right people in the room

• Assign a facilitator
Building the Plan

• Define key audiences
  – Who?
  – Why?
  – What?

• Identify key elements of the “about” statement
  – Essence of the project
  – Goals

• Develop the “so what” message
  – Needs
  – Solution
  – Benefits
Executing the Plan

• Form a working group
• Identify champions
• Meet regularly
• Map out strategies/tactics
• Establish a timeline; assign tasks
• Track metrics
• Communicate successes

“Ultimately, we can gain all the information and technical assistance and even the funding needed with the greatest amount of effort, but if we don’t have enough momentum and tenacity to stay the course, the mission will be futile.”

—Retha Herne, Executive Director, Akwesasne Housing Authority
Island Communications Plan: USVI

Goals

• Gain community buy-in and support for the 60% by 2025 goal
• Develop a brand, campaign theme, and messages that resonate with community
• Develop a diverse set of outreach tools/products
• Raise awareness
• Build and nurture partnerships with local clean energy champions
• Support the development of a grassroots movement

Tactics

• Brand identity package
• Strategy and messaging decks
• Vlenergize campaign jingle
• Community events
• Exhibit and posters
• EE tips postcard
• Quarterly newsletter
• Road Map brochure
• Technical reports
• Case studies. Fact sheets
• Website, blog
• Facebook
## Oneida Communications Plan Snapshot

### Communications Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 1</th>
<th>Goal 2</th>
<th>Goal 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educate and inform key audiences about the solar project.</td>
<td>Instill a sense of community pride and ownership in the solar project.</td>
<td>Inspire key audiences to embrace the tribe’s broader energy vision and goals to generate support for future investments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Internal Audiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audiences</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tribal leadership and staff</td>
<td>Create opportunities for audiences to learn about the project and solar technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned citizens/Oneida advocates</td>
<td>Communicate project benefits to key audiences where they work and live.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal Elders</td>
<td>Alleviate concerns about perceived project risks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal youth</td>
<td>Create opportunities for engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal partners</td>
<td>Get key audiences actively involved in the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility – Wisconsin Public Service</td>
<td>Share project successes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunters and sportsmen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environ. groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest Tribal Energy Resource Association</td>
<td></td>
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### Goal 1 Tactics

- Post DOE “Energy 101” video and solar basics curriculum to website and Facebook.
- Include solar technology factoids on a regular basis in the tribal and school newspapers.
- Hold a town-hall meeting to introduce the project; invite the developer to explain the project and solar technology to attendees.
- Host a community energy fair.

### Goal 2 Tactics

- Host a solar project groundbreaking at the Turtle School.
- Organize a poster contest to encourage creativity and involvement in the project.
- Engage graphics design department and/or journalism departments in developing a logo and outreach campaign for the project.

### Goal 3 Tactics

- Track solar generation and cost savings and communicate results widely (e.g., create results posters and display them in tribal buildings with solar arrays).
- Write and distribute success story articles/blogs/videos through various community outreach vehicles (e.g., “This Week in Oneida” video project).
- Host 1-year anniversary party to celebrate achievements.
What Makes Outreach Efforts Effective?

• The right people are involved
• Effort is guided by transparency, accuracy, and openness
• Solution meets a perceived need; messaging communicates tangible benefits
• Campaign feels grassroots and local
• Messages are clear, consistent, and compelling
• Messages reach key audiences where they work and live
• Messages break down resistance and barriers
• Successes are communicated early and often
Tribal Communications Plan: St. Regis Mohawk

- Tribe is part of NY solar initiative
- Tribe launched campaign to make solar more accessible, affordable for community members
- Solarize Akwesasne! campaign tactics:
  - Tagline and logo
  - Community reception
  - Solar fair and walking tour
  - Akwesasne’s Wellness Day
  - Outreach via website, tribal newspaper
  - Social media presence
DOE Office of Indian Energy’s Call to Action

• Apply for technical assistance (TA): energy.gov/indianenergy/technical-assistance

• Consider including stakeholder education and engagement in your TA request

• Share your success stories with us!