
July 9, 2015
Call Slides and Discussion Summary
Agenda

- Welcome
- Call Logistics
- Introductions and Opening Poll
- Residential Network and Peer Exchange Call Overview
- Featured Speakers
  - Amy Frykman, Vice President, Resource Media
  - Brenna Reed, Sustainability Educator, CoMo Energy Challenge, Columbia, MO (Network Member)
  - Jonathan Cohen, U.S. Department of Energy
- Discussion
  - What are examples of social media campaigns your program has implemented or considered?
  - What are benefits of using social media over other forms of marketing? What are challenges?
  - What types of messaging and imagery has your program found most effective?
  - How can programs effectively convert social media and other messaging campaigns into program participants, retrofits, and energy savings?
- Closing Poll
Better Buildings Residential Network

- **Better Buildings Residential Network**: Connects energy efficiency programs and partners to share best practices to increase the number of American homes that are energy efficient.
  - **Membership**: Open to organizations committed to accelerating the pace of existing residential upgrades. Commit to providing DOE with annual number of residential upgrades, and information about benefits associated with them.
  - **Benefits**:
    - Peer Exchange Calls
    - Tools, templates, & resources
    - Newsletter updates on trends
    - Recognition: Media, materials
    - Optional benchmarking
    - Residential Solution Center

For more information & to join, email bbresidentialnetwork@ee.doe.gov.

- **Better Buildings Residential Network Group on Home Energy Pros**
  - Join to access:
    - Peer exchange call summaries and calendar
    - Discussion threads with energy efficiency programs and partners
    - Resources and documents for energy efficiency programs and partners

Better Buildings Residential Network
Group on Home Energy Pros Website

Information

The Better Buildings Residential Network connects energy efficiency programs and partners to share best practices and learn from one another to increase the number of American homes that are energy efficient.

Website: http://betterbuildings.energy.gov/bbmn
Latest Activity: 8 hours ago

Join the conversation in the discussion forum below. You can use the ‘Follow’ link at the bottom of the forum to receive an email whenever a new discussion is posted.

Open the table of contents below and follow the links to access topical materials and resources.

Helpful Links
- Table of Contents
- Better Buildings Residential Network
- Better Buildings Neighborhood Program Website
- Home Performance with ENERGY STAR
- Home Energy Score

Table of Contents
- New Discussion
- Better Buildings Call Archive
- Better Buildings Network View
- Tools
- Related Events

Discussion Forum

Attended Today’s Peer Exchange Calls on Program Sustainability and on Workforce

Don’t miss today’s calls: “Collaborating with Utilities on Residential Energy Efficiency” begins at 12:30 p.m. Eastern and “Engaging Efficiency Pilot Chapters and Other Trade Associations in Energy Efficiency Programs” begins at 3:00 p.m. Eastern.

Confirm Tags: Peer Exchange Calls, started by Better Buildings Support 3 hours ago.

Register for Upcoming DOE Webinar About On-Site Financing

Sign up to attend the DOE State and Local Energy Efficiency Action Network (SEE Action) webinar, “Case Studies: Financing Energy Improvements on Utility Bills,” taking place June 11, 2014, from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. Eastern. To learn more on this topic, visit...
Peer Exchange Call Series

- Calls are held the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month at 12:30 and 3:00 ET
- Calls cover a range of topics, including financing & revenue, data & evaluation, business partners, multifamily housing, and marketing & outreach for all stages of program development and implementation
- Upcoming calls:
  - July 23, 12:30 ET: Think Again! A Fresh Look at Home Performance Business Models and Service Offerings
  - July 23, 3:00 ET: Hit the Road: Lessons from Applying National Campaigns to a Local Context
  - August 13, 12:30 ET: Assessments: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly
  - August 13, 3:00 ET: Tailored Marketing for Low-Income and Under-Represented Population Segments
  - August 20, 12:30 ET: Staged Upgrade Initiative Program Design
- Send call topic ideas to peerexchange@rossstrategic.com.
Peer Exchange Call Summaries

How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. A slight shift in perspective goes a long way.

Understanding how EE can solve a financial, public relation, or customer service problem for the utility is the right place to start.

Discussion: Challenges and Solutions

- Overcoming Challenges - Solutions:
  - Access trusted, local messengers
  - Engage your satisfied customers as champions to turn them into "lifetime customers"
  - Invite people to make a pledge with few simple EE activities they can take
  - Connect with the right local partners (Connecticut conducted “community asset mapping”)
  - Directly involve the homeowner through DIY work or as energy efficiency demonstration homes to help them feel engaged (San Diego demonstration homes)
  - Minimize paperwork to make it easier to participate

Poll Results

Participant Poll: Which of the following best describes your program’s experience with energy efficiency behavior change efforts?
- Currently implementing: 31%
- Planning to implement: 31%
- Thinking about it: 19%
- Haven’t thought about it: 0%
- Not applicable: 19%
Web portal of residential EE upgrade program resources, & lessons learned to plan better, avoid reinventing the wheel.

- BB Neighborhood Program, Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Sponsors+

- Provides:
  - Step-by-step guidance
  - Examples
  - Tools
  - Templates
  - Lessons learned
  - Best practices
  - Tips

- Continually add content to support residential EE upgrade programs—member ideas wanted!

https://bbnp.pnnl.gov/
Call Participants

- Arlington County, VA
- Boulder County, CO
- BPI
- Build It Green
- City of Columbia, MO
- City of Plano, TX
- City of Providence, RI
- Civic Works
- Clean Energy Works
- Debra Little Sustainable Design
- Efficiency Maine
- Efficiency Nova Scotia
- Efficient Windows Collaborative
- Elevate Energy
- EnergizeNY
- EnergySmart
- Energy Smart Colorado
- Environmental Finance Center Network
- Focus on Energy
- Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance
- Hagan Associates
- Holland Board of Public Works
- Holy Cross Energy
- ICAST
- Impact Marketing
- Metropolitan Council of Government
- Neil Kelly Company
- Opportunity Council
- Resource Media
- Snohomish County PUD
- Stewards of Affordable Housing for Future (SAHF)
- The Energy Conservatory
- The Environmental Center
- The Oberlin Project
- Town of Blacksburg
- Umatilla Electric Cooperative
- University of Nebraska - Omaha
- Ventura County, CA
- Yolo County Housing
Opening Poll

- Which of the following best describes your organization’s experience with social media campaigns?
  - Some experience/familiarity – 52%
  - Very experienced/familiar – 31%
  - Limited experience/familiarity – 14%
  - No experience/familiarity – 3%
  - Not applicable – 0%
Best Practices: Winning Imagery
Amy Frykman, Vice President
Resource Media
Beyond the CFL: Winning Imagery for Energy Efficiency

Resource Media
Our current visual vocabulary
What works for energy efficiency?

- Resource Media ran a four-day online focus group with homeowners and renters in the Pacific NW and Midwest to test reactions to various energy efficiency images.
- There were 76 participants, with varying political views.
Imagery research project: Day 1
Imagery research project: Day 2
Imagery research project: Day 3
Overall observations

• Mostly non-politicized

• People stayed engaged throughout the study

• People draw on their personal experiences

• People got excited when talking about things they have done/could do to their homes to save energy
Perceptions of energy efficiency

• Positive and personal

• Why? Save money, stop waste & do the right thing

• People see it as a question of personal responsibility, not government mandates or programs

*EE is great, but don’t tell me what to do, and I won’t tell you what to do either.*
People easily relate and engage
But, be careful with the CFL

“This image brings to mind how we as consumers are being treated like a bunch of children. The fact that the standard light bulb has basically been outlawed is something that really infuriates me.”
Waste is impactful, but not motivating

“Fire the building manager!”

“It makes me feel sick to see all of our precious resources going to waste for nothing.”
I want to know more

“Seeing this poster would immediately make me want to know how they are using 41% less energy. It looks like a major office building, which can have massive energy bills. I would want to implement some of their energy saving ways into my home and every day life.”
“I think the little boy wishes he could go out and play in the snow. Makes me feel like when I was young, I liked to play in the snow.”

“If her furnace is not working she should get it fixed. If she is behind on her bills she should try to make payment arrangements with her utility company.”
Strongest photos: relatable & revealing
Big findings

• The role of government is our vulnerability

• EE = virtuous self-interest: save money while stopping waste and doing a good and moral thing

• Images make EE personal for people

• We don’t use imagery enough; what is out there is abstract & technical

• Images help normalize EE as something everyone is doing and should do
Use images of people and businesses embracing energy efficiency as a way to introduce programs and policies that drive energy efficiency improvements.
EE Imagery: Research Highlights

- People relate/engage to simple actions – checking thermostat, caulking windows, etc.
- Authentic images are more impactful than stock photos, and people can tell the difference.
- Imagery needs to have a clear connection to energy efficiency to be understood and relatable – do not make it abstract.
- Avoid framing EE solely in terms of governmental policies/regulations. Many people will react negatively.
Thank you!

Get the full report:
www.resource-media.org/visual-story-lab/energy-efficiency-imagery/#eereport

Download the tipsheet:
Program Experience: CoMo Energy Challenge

Brenna Reed, Sustainability Educator
City of Columbia, Missouri (Network Member)
Social Media: tips & tools for a “boring” brand

Brenna Reed
Sustainability Educator
City of Columbia, MO
Office of Sustainability

comoenergychallenge.com
A boring brand?

• No one thinks their brand is boring
• We are trained to love our brand & make others fall in love too...
• The average person thinks about energy 6 mins/year
• How do you use social media for a service that people aren’t thinking about?
How do we use social media?

- Brand Awareness: 50%
- Content Sharing: 20%
- Contests & Giveaways: 10%
- Paid Advertising: 10%
- Event Marketing: 5%
- Stakeholder Relations: 5%
#savingenergy2win Contest

Pledge to take the #savingenergy2win Challenge

FTC Guideline

Prizes Sponsored by:

*Note: City employees are encouraged to participate, but are not eligible to win prizes.
Lessons Learned

- Keep it Simple!
- Use partners & supporters to help spread the word
- Have an alternative mode of entry for those not on social media
- Timing, timing, timing
HIGH VISIBILITY: Have an e-mail sign-up form at events & a sign saying you’re on social media. Ex: “Follow us on FB and TW”

INTERNAL SUPPORT: Put social media icons in your email signature & create sample posts for partners to share

SHARE STORIES: Create & share content that is related to your mission but also peaks interest in your audience - videos, blog posts, testimonials, etc...

RUSH HOURS: Look into your social media insights. Schedule posts when traffic/engagement is proven to be highest.
CoMoEnergy
CHALLENGE

Brenna Reed
comoenergychallenge.com
Program Experience: CoMo Energy Challenge

- Held #savingenergy2win contest during month of June 2015 – first big contest on social media.
- Participants who shared posts of themselves engaging in energy efficient behavior were entered to win gift certificates from local restaurants.
- 45 submissions received over the month, increased social media following 10-15%.
Lessons Learned: CoMo Energy Challenge

• **Engage program partners** in social media campaigns.
  - Develop sample posts for partners to tailor and use – make it easy for them!

• **Run the contest when target audiences are around** and most likely to engage – not during holidays or major vacation periods.

• **Consider the length of the contest.**
  - Too short and there will not be enough time to advertise/promote; too long and people may find it overbearing.
  - CoMo had most engagement in Weeks 1 and 2 of contest.

  ▪ **Time social media posts** for when your audience is likely to engage. CoMo’s analytics found that followers were most active during lunchtime and at 10 p.m.
If humor isn’t your strength, get someone else’s help – CoMo Energy Challenge had a university improve group make a humorous video about the challenge: https://youtu.be/A_k3VNjy0Rg.

• Blog posts can be engaging, but time consuming.
  • CoMo blogs 1-2 times per month.
  • Write about what people are interested in (landscaping, buying guides, home décor, etc.) and tie it to EE. Readers get tired of a constant “turn it off” and “save” message.
  • Recruit guest posts with interesting voices.

• Be aware of FTC regulations about hashtags and contests.
Better Buildings Residential Network
Voluntary Initiative: Social Media Toolkit
Jonathan Cohen, U.S. Department of Energy
Voluntary Member Initiatives

- Members identify common needs & opportunities
- Invitations sent for limited time effort
- Members voluntarily join together, create a toolkit
- Advice and consent model
- Recognition for participating
- Opportunities to be featured in materials
- Virtual toolkit training for all staff
Social Media Toolkit - Background & Purpose

- **Social media** is a set of online tools that make it easier to create, curate, and share ideas.

- **Toolkit purpose:** Help residential energy efficiency programs learn to engage potential and existing customers through social media.

- **Advantages:**
  - Two-way communication where the audience engages in and helps curate content
  - Builds brand awareness
Tips for Getting Started

- Social media warrants an integrated strategy
  - It should not replace all marketing efforts
- Provide value to your users
- Get your content right before utilizing social media
- Consider time and resources available – social media is a commitment!
How to Choose a Social Media Outlet?

- What information do I want to communicate?
- To whom do I want to communicate?
Toolkit Contents

- Social Media Channels:
  - Facebook
  - Twitter
  - LinkedIn
  - Blogs
  - Pinterest, Instagram, Snapchat
  - Wikipedia

- Examples
- Things to know about each platform
- How to use each platform well
Facebook

- **Good for:** Reaching a broad audience
- Facebook is the most popular social media site
  - One of the largest digital ad platforms in existence with ~1.3 billion people
  - Content will reach only about 6% of your fans (unless you pay for ads)
- Add photos, upload video, post links
Twitter

- **Good for:** Starting conversations
- Not good for driving traffic to website content
- Ephemeral content
- Needs care and feeding
- Post frequently; 14 times per day is a rule of thumb
LinkedIn

- **Good for:** professional networking, involving your program team
- “Professional Facebook”
- Emphasis on thought leadership
- Geared toward individuals over brands
**Blogs** (e.g., WordPress, Tumblr, Medium, Blogger)

- **Good for:** sharing program stories, successes, and educating an audience

- **Top Tips:**
  - Be conversational
  - Keep it short
  - Link generously
  - Use search-friendly titles and headings
Pinterest, Instagram, & Snapchat

- **Good for:** image sharing, visual campaigns
- **Consider your target demographic:**
  - 71% of Pinterest users are women
  - 60% of Instagram users are 18-34
  - 71% Snapchat users are under the age of 25
- **Top Tip:** Use images of homeowners and community members
Wikipedia

- Go-to source for basic information (not for research though)
- **Good for:** Adding research content as sources for articles
- **Not good for:** Marketing
- 1-9-90 Rule: ~90% of users just view content, 9% will edit content, but just 1% will actively create new content
Web portal of residential EE upgrade program resources, & lessons learned to plan better, avoid reinventing the wheel.

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https://bbnp.pnnl.gov/
Where to Download?

Find the Social Media Toolkit on Home Energy Pros
Discussion Questions

- What are some examples of social media campaigns your program has implemented or considered?
- What are the benefits of using social media over other forms of marketing? What are challenges?
- What types of messaging and imagery has your program found most effective?
- How can programs effectively convert social media and other messaging campaigns into program participants, retrofits, and energy savings?
Social Media Best Practices

- **Social media is a commitment.**
  - Anticipate the level of effort and resources required before launching a campaign.
  - Stay engaged and don’t leave content stagnant.

- **Know your message first;** social media is just one strategy to amplify it.
  - Don’t tweet for the sake of tweeting: have actual content.

- **Know your audience** when considering which social media tool to use and when to use it—both the platform and the timing matter!
  - Different platforms can involve different levels of effort and resources.
  - Twitter can be a time commitment—CoMo tweets 3-4 times per day.

- **Be transparent and responsive** when dealing with negative or off-color commenters.
Challenges When Using Social Media

- With one channel and a program that covers many audiences, it can be difficult to visually differentiate content and direct it to its target audience.
  - If using Twitter, different Twitter handles can be useful. For Facebook or LinkedIn, just one account should be used.
  - You can share different content on different platforms.
  - Hashtags can be a way to differentiate content.
Closing Poll

After today's call, what will you do?

- Consider implementing one or more ideas discussed – 50%
- Seek out additional information on one or more ideas – 44%
- Make no changes to my current approach – 6%
- Other (please explain) – 0%
Thank you!

Please send any follow-up questions or future call topic ideas to: peerexchange@rossstrategic.com