DOE OFFICE OF INDIAN ENERGY

ATNI Energy & Technology Training Summit

Creating Consensus for Tribal Clean Energy Projects

August 12, 2015
About Me

• Project manager, writer, editor – National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) Communications & Public Affairs Office

• 25+ years of communications experience; 10 in branding and communications strategy

• 6 years at NREL supporting DOE programs, initiatives in the areas of:
  o Island energy
  o Tribal energy
This Top-Secret Food Will Change the Way You Eat

More protein than beef. More omegas than salmon. Tons of calcium, antioxidants, and vitamin B. In their secret R&D lab, the scientists at Beyond Meat concocted a plant-protein-based performance burger that delivers the juicy flavor and texture of the real thing with none of the dietary and environmental downsides.

By: Rowan Jacobsen    Dec 26, 2014

Beyond Meat CEO Ethan Brown tests one of the company's burgers.  Photo: Misha Gravenor
Beast Burger or Biomass Project ... Consensus Is Key

- Pressing challenges
- New inventions, ideas, initiatives
- New paradigm ... or not ???
- Missing link is communications
Outside ... Rebranded

The Power List
Oscar Pistorius
The Fastest Man on No Legs
How to Be Strong and Healthy Forever

Live the Active Life

Get Healthier
The Smartest Fitness Tech

Boost Your Energy
Five Superfruits Every Athlete Should Eat

Escape the Crowds
Epic Adventures and Perfect Hideouts

Live Bravely

Weather Gone Wild
How to Survive the New World of Deadly Storms

Lifesaving Tips
Do-It-Yourself Forecasting Apps
Indestructible New Gear

Plus: Riding Out Hurricane Sandy with Jim Cantore
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!
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

...and I should care, why?
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
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
• VIenergize campaign jingle
• Community events
• Exhibit and posters
• EE tips postcard
• Quarterly newsletter
• Road Map brochure
• Technical reports
• Case studies. Fact sheets
• Website, blog
• Facebook
Tribal Communications Plan: St. Regis Mohawk

• Tribe is part of NY solar initiative
• Tribe launched campaign to make solar more accessible, affordable
• Solarize Akwesasne!
  – Goal: bring together potential customers with local installer to bring EE and long-term electricity savings to the community
  – Tactics
    • Tagline and logo
    • Community reception
    • Solar fair and walking tour
    • Akwesasne’s Wellness Day
    • Outreach via website, tribal newspaper
    • Social media presence
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
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!
Thank You!

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