Building a Community-Based Social Marketing Program

Utility Energy Forum
May 5th
Asilomar, California

American Public Power Association

Community-Based Social Marketing

- CBSM means working with the community to create solutions that work in context - a bottom-up approach to change. Looking for problems blocking change (barriers) and trying to find ways around them.
- A hybrid combination of psychology and social marketing to help deliver a service more effectively

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What are the take away points?

- Remain adaptable in implementing your program
  - Do research
  - Change if necessary
  - Discontinue program if its not working
- Implement known solutions ‘tools’
  - Use existing tools and go from there
  - Don’t be afraid to innovate or ask for help
- Evaluate your program
  - Change course if necessary

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CBSM Theory

- Preliminary Research
  - Who are you trying to influence?
  - What are their barriers to saving energy?
  - What networks can be taped into to improve response?
- Use ‘tools’ to Initiate and Motivate
  - Develop tools to initiate behaviors
    - Information, prompts and persuasion
  - Develop tools to motivate behaviors
    - Feedback, incentives and disincentives
  - Utilize psychological findings
    - Groups, social norms

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CBSM Practice

- Commitment: The Pledge
- Prompts: Posters / Stickers
- Norms: What Is “Good”?, What Is Everyone Else Doing?
- Communication: Emails, Announcements, Bill Stuffers
- Convenience: Website Access, Direct mail, Information

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Assessing Impact

Assessment is a critical component of any program

- Behavior change is difficult to measure
  - Survey-measurements
    - Qualitative and Quantitative
    - Self-reporting
  - Direct electricity use measurements
    - Quantitative

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Energy Efficiency Behaviors in Springfield:

The Project

- Test the degree to which energy efficiency-related social marketing and the perception of "social norms" around energy usage can change customers' energy conservation behaviors.
- DEED grant to conduct this research awarded

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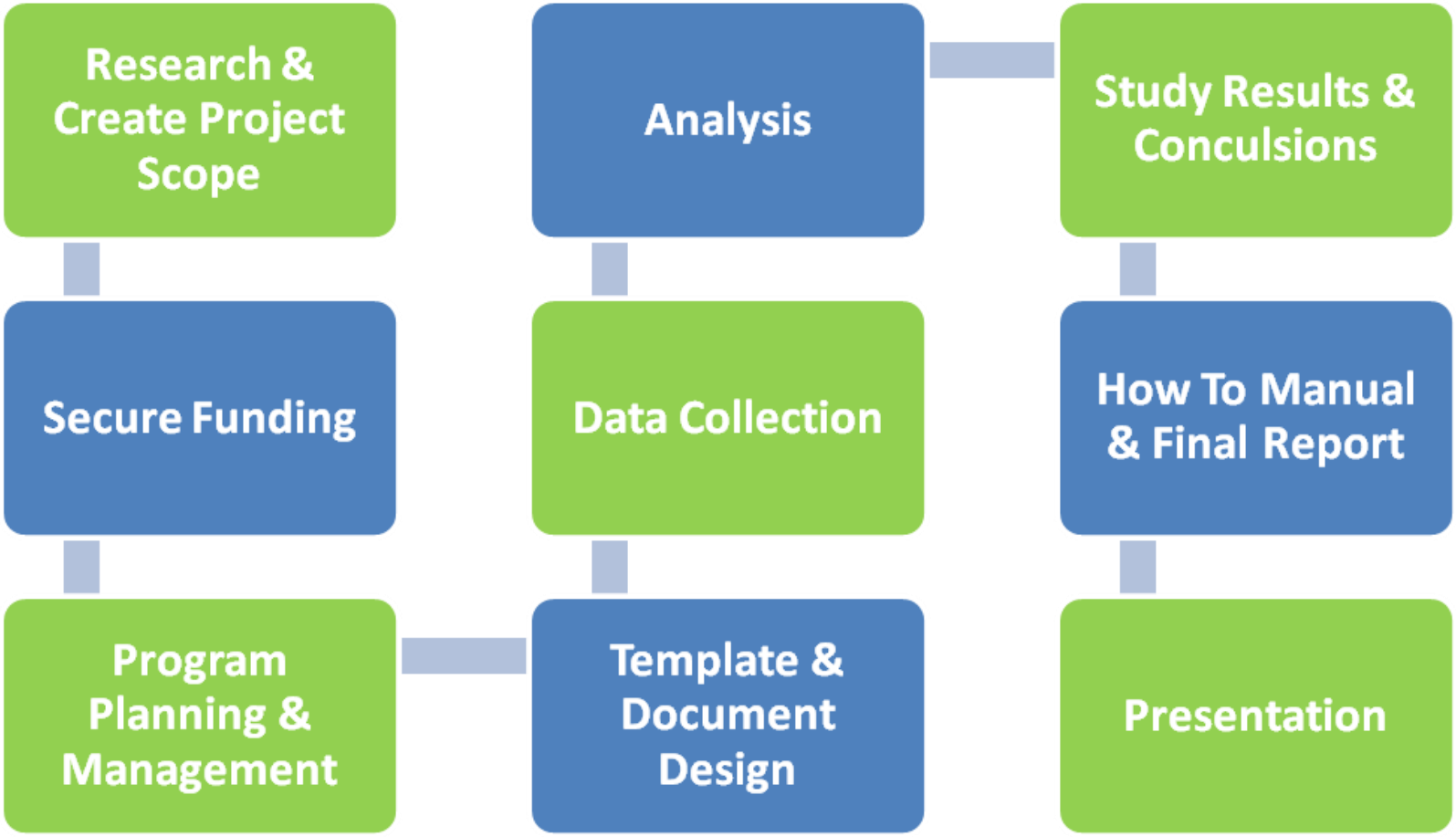
How Was it Done?



How was it done?

- ***Focus Groups*** – four focus groups with 6-12 people were created, totaling 27 participants.
- ***City-Wide Study Group*** – 203 households were chosen to receive the social norm EE message, along with their past four months of electrical usage data compared to the averaged electrical usage of the community as a whole.
- ***Neighborhood Group*** – this group was identified based on their geographical location. A selected neighborhood was targeted and a total of 203 households were chosen to receive the social norm EE message, along with their past four months electrical usage data compared to the averaged electrical usage their immediate neighbors.
- ***Control Group*** – this group consisted of 400 households who were not provided any information about the study or given any EE educational materials.

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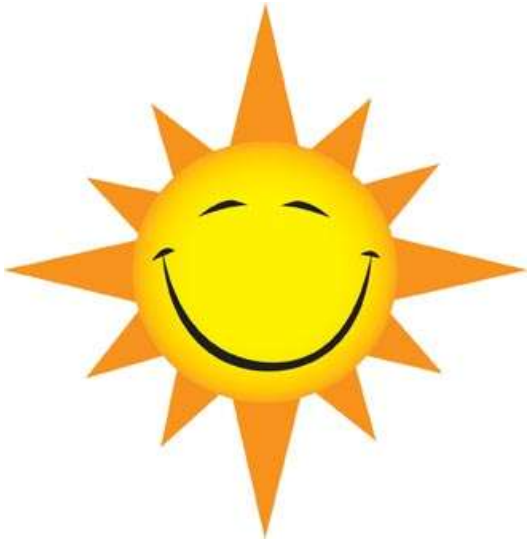

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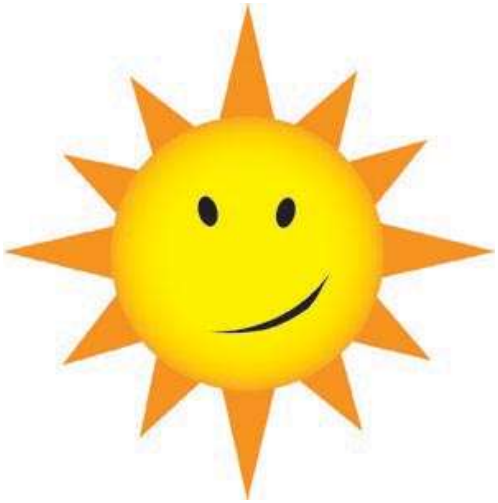

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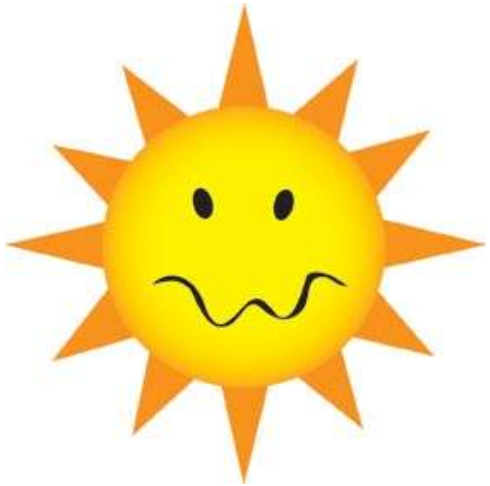
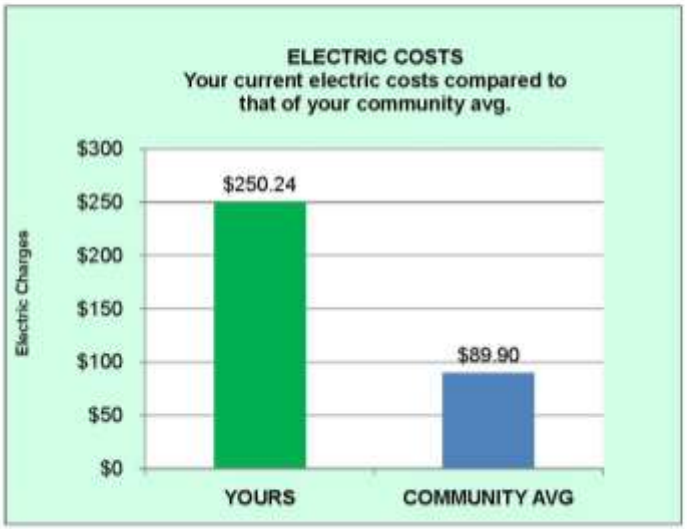
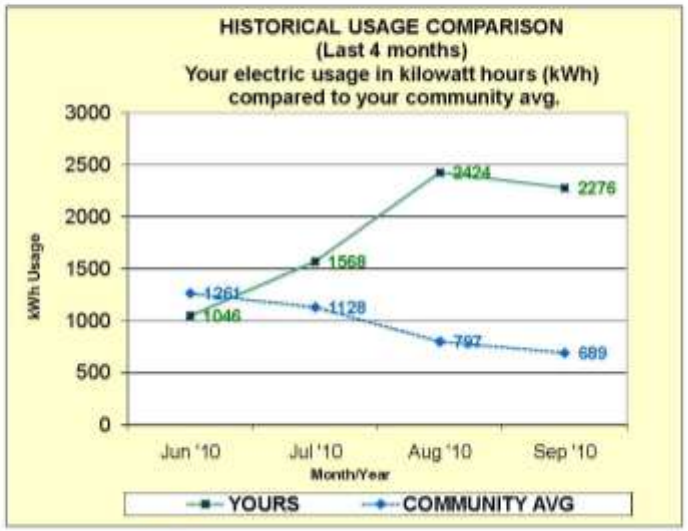


Results

Customer Name
Address
City State Zip
Account #: 123456-78910

YOUR PERSONALIZED ENERGY PERFORMANCE REPORT



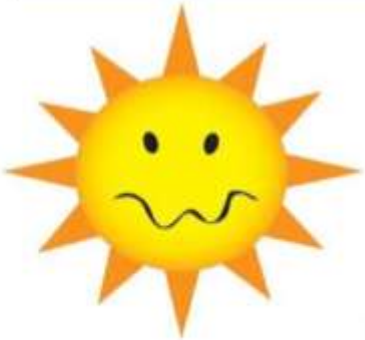


Helpful Hints

Screen savers do not reduce energy on a computer monitor. Automatic switching to sleep mode or manually turning it off is a better energy saver.

Because outdoor lights are usually left on for a long time, using CFL's in these fixtures will save

We hope you have found these reports useful. As our thanks for taking part in this program, please call 789-2957 and claim your free efficiency gift.



Your usage this month is high compared to the average. By incorporating one or more of the "Helpful Hints", you will reduce your usage.

real solutions. powerful results.

Results- Survey

- Discovery of what can be achieved (1%)
- 88% of respondents to survey after the program said they read the performance report
- 73% said report motivated them to save energy
- Differences between groups and control not statistically significant
- Unusually hot summer may have influenced results, longer program may be more desirable

Thoughtful Observations

- Consider the best way to make sure the report actually reaches and is read by the bill payer
- Seek the widest demographic possible for your pilot
- Billing system capabilities and limitations should be given careful consideration prior to undertaking a CBSM

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Questions?

Thank you.

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