

Starting Small, Saving BIG in New England Using a Public Affairs Approach to Engage Consumers and Mobilize Partners toward Energy Efficiency

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ABSTRACT

There has never been a better time to market energy efficiency. Energy demand is reaching record levels, and rising costs are pinching the wallets of all Americans. Meanwhile, public discussions around global warming are creating greater awareness and concern about the impact of energy use on the environment. As a result, consumers are becoming more focused upon reducing their energy consumption, and the media is actively looking to deliver answers to these issues for their audiences. This creates a perfect opportunity for efficiency programs that can overcome the challenges of reaching today's highly mobile consumers through costly and fragmented media, to deliver a tangible call to action.

The Sponsors of the Northeast Regional ENERGY STAR Lighting & Appliance Initiative (“Initiative”) have tapped into the energy zeitgeist with an innovative approach to communications strategy. By engaging regional media outlets and a number of credible and influential partners in a campaign to help New Englanders take charge of these challenges, they have made a meaningful impact against one of the most important issues of our time. The campaign has driven broader awareness of energy efficiency programs and increased consumer engagement through a rich and robust program website, myenergystar.com.

I. Introduction

The Northeast Lighting and Appliance Initiative is a consortium of electric utilities and energy efficiency program sponsors established to help New Englanders save energy and money in their homes through the use of ENERGY STAR[®] qualified lighting and appliance products and more energy efficient behaviors. Sponsors of the initiative include Cape Light Compact, Connecticut Light & Power, Efficiency Vermont, National Grid, NSTAR Electric, Until and Western Massachusetts Electric (the “Sponsors”).

Over the past 10 years, the Sponsors have been national leaders in the field of energy efficiency programming, transforming the market for energy efficient products and services, and delivering energy and monetary savings to consumers through rebates, education and upstream incentives.

In late 2006, the Sponsors perceived a new opportunity to elevate their marketing and communication efforts. A heightened interest in energy efficiency on the part of consumers, businesses, government and the media was creating a pressing need for energy saving information and solutions. Whether driven by rising energy costs, increased demand, an interest in energy independence, or a concern for the environmental impact of energy use, consumers sought answers, and the Sponsors had them. The challenge was to deliver them in a costly and highly-fragmented media market. Traditional advertising or public relations alone could not do the job, nor was funding available for such a considerable marketing investment. An innovative approach to communication planning was needed, with a strategy centered on a public affairs campaign.

II. Campaign Overview

A public affairs campaign is a communication initiative designed to benefit the community by delivering an educational message which serves the public good. Today, there is no doubt that improving consumer energy efficiency delivers a significant public benefit. Whether that is gauged as easing strain on the electric grid, lowering energy costs, or reducing environmentally-damaging greenhouse gas emissions – a public good is served.

In providing social benefit, public affairs campaigns are distinct from traditional advertising in that they do not deliver the kind of direct brand or sales messages associated with paid advertising. They do not sell products or companies; they sell ideas, education and a call to action. Consequently, it is possible to establish media partnerships and achieve a significant media presence without the full production and distribution costs of paid advertising campaigns. By providing information and resources, a public affairs campaign can impart informative and valuable content to media partners which can enhance and enrich the partners' programming.

The Sponsors saw the relevance of this approach to the Initiative's mission, and set about creating a public affairs campaign to raise awareness of their efficiency programs. By building campaign messaging under the Initiative's rich, educational website, www.myenergystar.com, rather than individual Sponsor brands, the campaign resonated as pure public service, rather than paid advertising.

The goals of the program were to inspire New Englanders to be more efficient in their use of energy, drive them to www.myenergystar.com to learn how they could take action, and facilitate these changes through Sponsors' residential conservation services. Concurrent with these goals was the objective of establishing the Sponsors' regional website, www.myenergystar.com, as a destination for energy efficiency information and resources.

The campaign was developed with leading regional media outlets, providing a "win-win" proposition for all parties. For media partners, the campaign fulfilled the need for the sort of timely, relevant content that makes captivating programming and promotions. In return, strategic industry and media partners provided the Sponsors with an opportunity to leverage their expertise and resources on a scale that otherwise would have been unaffordable, with the added benefit of third party credibility associated with trusted media sources. Influential public figures, agencies and other organizations were also invited to join the effort, helping to extend the credibility and the reach of the Sponsors' messaging. The result was a comprehensive communications effort which has proven to be a uniquely effective vehicle for unifying various efficiency programs and partners under one banner, and a powerful tool for raising awareness of the Sponsors' efficiency programs and mobilizing New Englanders toward greater energy efficiency, while enhancing the Sponsors' individual brands through their ownership of the effort.

III. Strategic Approach and Execution

The Sponsors employed a three-fold strategic approach in building and executing their campaign; developing a compelling messaging platform to engage and motivate consumers, building strategic partnerships to extend their messaging and add a degree of trust and credibility, and designing creative campaign communication elements which would engage, educate, and empower audiences to undertake more energy efficient behaviors.

A. Messaging Strategy

In marketing energy efficiency to the general public, one's messaging strategy must remain clear and simple, avoiding complex detail which can intimidate – and therefore lose – the audience. The Sponsors had successfully employed this approach in years prior by creating and consistently employing the tagline, “Save BIG” for their paid marketing/promotional efforts. This messaging platform had proven successful in a wide range of executions, from paid advertising to collateral to retail point of purchase materials, as it was equally relevant to all energy efficiency benefits, including energy savings, monetary savings, and environmental savings.

In order to develop a motivating call to action for their public affairs campaign, the Sponsors realized that they must infuse their message with an emotionally motivating quality, keeping clear and simple, while speaking to the inherent end benefit associated with the desired behavior change. According to energypulse 2005, the most “enthusiastic and emotional motivation” for consumers to undertake energy efficiency improvements is that “it is the right thing to do” and “provides a sense of satisfaction that I am doing my part.”¹ This was further substantiated by news coverage highlighting environmentalism energy efficiency as a “new form of patriotism”² The Sponsors leveraged this consumer sensibility when designing their messaging platform for the campaign.

They also understood that in order to motivate people to take action, the campaign call to action must impart a degree of attainability. Therefore, they built their campaign messaging upon the notion that energy efficiency does not require an “all or nothing” approach; small, simple changes can provide demonstrable gains and those individual gains, when taken collectively, add up to a significant difference in the world. In this way, the Sponsors anchored their campaign call to action with an important rational element of achievability, while infusing it with the emotional resonance of serving a greater good.

The Sponsors realized that their “Save BIG” messaging could be extended to their public affairs effort as well, offering consistency between their paid promotional communications and the public affairs effort. The campaign was therefore christened “Start Small, Save BIG,” grounded in the concept that every small step toward efficiency delivers collective gain. This common messaging approach served to close the loop for consumers between the awareness-building aspects of the public affairs campaign and the action-oriented, energy-saving function of the Sponsors’ paid marketing, retail and product promotions.

B. Partnerships

Negotiating effective partnerships is critical to making the public affairs model work. While partners can provide the obvious and important benefit of helping to extend the campaign through media support and financial assistance, they can also add credibility and influence with the target audience.

1. Media Partnerships & Strategy. First and foremost, strategic media alignments are key to effectively delivering public affairs program messages. Because the Sponsors realized that a multi-media approach was crucial to breaking through to New England consumers, market leaders across television, radio, print, online and outdoor advertising were carefully considered. Partners were ultimately selected based upon regional coverage, their ability to provide production assistance and their willingness to support the campaign with

¹ energypulse 2005: Where America Stands on Electric Utilities, Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Conservation, published by The Shelton Group, Knoxville, TN

²New York Times 4/15/07, “The Power of Green,” Thomas Friedman

added value beyond media time. The partners selected included:

- **New England Cable News (NECN)**, the nation's largest regional news network, immediately stepped forward as the campaign's charter media partner. Recognizing the importance of energy efficiency to New England and the world, NECN committed to a broad range of support over the course of an entire year for a nominal financial commitment. NECN support included a year long media schedule, as well as the production of twenty different 60-second public service advertisements (PSA) featuring on-air talent, which teach New Englanders how they can "Start Small, Save BIG" throughout the year. Additionally, NECN offered to produce and run complimentary 10-second promotional spots throughout the course of the campaign that provided important recognition for the Initiative's Sponsors with the inclusion of each Sponsor's individual organization logo at the close of the spots. Also notable was NECN's commitment to including energy efficiency education in its general programming and news content. The network committed to airing one story per week on energy efficiency, opening and closing each segment with the campaign's distinctive jingle, and advising viewers to visit myenergystar.com to learn more.
- **Greater Media Radio (GMR)** runs five of the top rated radio stations in the Boston media market, each reaching a distinct audience segment with its unique format, ranging from news to country, adult contemporary to classic hits. Greater Media was selected as radio partner based on the Sponsors' ability to leverage added value from their paid promotional advertising buy to support the campaign at no extra cost. In addition to providing exceptional regional reach and frequency of campaign messaging through free on-air support, Greater Media also provided production assistance, creating seven different public service announcements featuring their on-air talent to support the campaign. Greater Media provided streaming video and banner ads on each station's website, and brought the added value of special events and promotions, enhancing the campaign with exciting opportunities for direct consumer engagement to help maintain momentum throughout the year.
- ***The Boston Globe* and *The Worcester Telegram*** are the two leading daily newspapers in the Greater Boston media market. The Sponsors secured additional value in the form of additional, free print and online placements from their purchase of paid media with these print outlets to extend the campaign. Both papers supported the campaign through print advertising and advertorials highlighting campaign underwriters in prominent Sunday magazines, and through online feature on their prominent and heavily trafficked news websites, boston.com and telegram.com, which in turn linked to the myenergystar.com website. This partnership was also leveraged to add event opportunities, such as Sponsor presence at the heavily attended Boston Home Show in conjunction with *Boston Globe* Home Improvement columnist Peter Horton. *The Boston Globe* also featured the campaign call to action on the 2007 calendar it produced and distributed in its Sunday edition.
- **Clear Channel Outdoor** was the final member to join the partnership, providing billboard advertising on major thoroughfares, such as the heavily trafficked Expressway heading into Boston, free of media charge.

This multi-media support delivered a solid media backbone upon which to build the campaign.

2. Underwriters. In order to extend media support throughout the year and the region, local organizations with a vested interest in the issue of energy efficiency were invited to join the campaign as financial underwriters. Sponsorship packages were carefully designed to offer multi-media support to the underwriters through sponsorship mention in television, radio, print and online PSAs, editorial support for their own energy efficiency success stories, participation and/or collateral distribution at campaign events

and feature on myenergystar.com.

Two prominent residential efficiency collaboratives, MassSAVE[®] and GasNetworks[®], which both deliver home energy efficiency solutions, were invited to join in the campaign effort. Both organizations provided rich content and expertise which were utilized in both public service advertisements and news stories. Additionally, their sponsorship dollars were valuable in helping to extend the campaign's presence on radio beyond the greater Boston media market, as well as provide event participation in key environmental events in the region.

Two retail partners also signed on as underwriters. Percy's, a regional appliance store selling ENERGY STAR qualified appliances and electronics, and Whole Foods Market, the world's leading retailer of natural and organic foods. Retail partners provided the campaign with another venue in which to interact with consumers. Campaign posters featuring "Take One" tear pads of energy-efficiency tips were displayed in store, links to the campaign web page were prominently displayed on their websites, and in-store events supported by radio partners added to the excitement.

In total, the campaign underwriters contributed \$200,000 to the campaign, which helped to strengthen and extend media partner support throughout the year, amplify media support with spot radio in outlying markets, offer valuable content for news and general programming coverage regionally, and provide the important benefit of providing additional venues through which the Sponsors were able to deliver campaign messages to New England consumers.

3. Influencers. Influencers represent the critical third leg of the stool. By engaging prominent political leaders such as Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick, Massachusetts Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Ian Bowles, Region 1 EPA Administrator Robert Varney and other well-known figures, the campaign enjoyed immediate credibility and interest from the news media.

In addition to regional leaders, national celebrities have gotten involved in this important campaign. A radio PSA by Emmy, Tony and Golden Globe award winning actress Mary Elizabeth Parker, who is widely recognized for her environmental activism, recorded a public service announcement in support of the effort. Other environmentally inclined actors Kate Bosworth and Orlando Bloom also agreed to support the effort, generating news items in the local press while bolstering consumer awareness and interest. In addition, Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield, founders of the environmentally and socially responsible Ben & Jerry's, voiced their support of the campaign and are working with the Sponsors with the goal of participating in one of the campaign's television PSAs in 2008.

C. Campaign Communication Elements

With a solid network of partners and comprehensive media support in place, campaign communication development began. A variety of advertising materials was created, each formulated to engage audiences, provide educational messages and drive to the Sponsors website, myenergystar.com, to learn more and take action (download rebates, search for product, find retailers, etc.). Concurrently, myenergystar.com, as the campaign fulfillment center, underwent enhancements to provide consumers with a more robust resource for energy efficient solutions. Finally, public relations planning began in earnest to provide the critical third leg of the communications plan.

1. Advertising Materials. A variety of printed communication materials were created to support the campaign, including print advertisements, posters and flyers. All materials were anchored by a newly designed campaign logo, which was strategically created using the Sponsors' established "Save BIG" logo

as a base in order to reinforce their connection to the campaign. The logo included both the “Start Small, Save BIG” call to action as well as a stylized treatment of the myenergystar.com URL to ensure its prominence in all communications. This logo treatment was specifically designed to unite all campaign communications with a consistent, recognizable visual element, and was created in such a way that it could also stand alone as a communications tool in its own right, for example, as an internet banner ad linking to the website, an outdoor billboard, or the sign off on television public service advertisements. This design approach created a strong visual association across all communication materials, making them work harder to build awareness and recognition for the campaign. Additionally, the Sponsors commissioned an original jingle that incorporated the campaign name and served as an audio mnemonic device to sonically brand the campaign in television and radio media when used to open and close the PSAs, promotional spots, and streaming video segments.

In partnership with NECN, the Sponsors developed a series of 20 unique public service advertisements, scheduled to air in sets of five per quarter. Each 60-second television spot was structured as a vignette and offered the New England community information and tips on how to easily save money on energy costs through seasonally relevant energy efficient behaviors and an understanding of what constitutes highly efficient products, such as cooling your home efficiently in the summer, insulating effectively in the winter, and learning the meaning and importance of the ENERGY STAR label to the consumer’s purchase decision. Highly-recognizable NECN on-air personalities acted as spokespeople in the spots, lending greater credibility and interest, and each advertisement closed with a call to action encouraging viewers to visit myenergystar.com for more information. In addition to providing a rich and varied, year-long slate of campaign communications on NECN, the PSAs were leveraged for the production of a series of 15-second promotional videos, which NECN created at no cost to the Sponsors using content featured in the PSAs. These spots, spotlighting one or two efficiency tips, were specifically designed for off-air use. In addition to running on NECN’s website, the videos were broadcast at events, such as the WBOS Earth Day concert, and used as pre-roll streaming video on the Greater Media Radio station and Boston Globe websites.

Additionally, the 60-second PSAs were carefully constructed to draw their content from the core business and program missions of the campaign underwriters. For example, a summer cooling PSA was filmed inside Percy’s showroom, where ENERGY STAR qualified room air conditioners were prominently featured and a company spokesperson provided tips on camera; a fall PSA asked homeowners if it was time to upgrade their home heating equipment, pointing out the benefits of a high efficiency natural gas heating system and alerting consumers to rebates. Finally, attention was paid to tagging each PSA with the underwriters relevant to each spot’s content.

The Sponsors also developed 60-second second radio public service advertisements, with similar content and a consistent call to action as the television PSAs, and tagged by underwriters relevant to each spot’s content. All aired on all Greater Media Radio stations, and on spot radio in outlying markets.

2. Myenergystar.com Website. In this public affairs effort, the Sponsors’ website was effectively the campaign fulfillment center. All communications invited consumers to “Start Small, Save BIG,” and drove them to myenergystar.com to learn more. Already a leading resource for energy efficiency, the website was bolstered with new interactive consumer education tools, links to other efficiency program resources and a dedicated campaign page to provide a richer experience for visitors.

The “Start Small, Save BIG” campaign page enables consumers to find seasonal tips on making one’s home more energy efficient, watch the library of public service advertisements aired on NECN and even post their own stories about how they have made energy efficient improvements to their own home. Profiles of campaign underwriters are featured on the page, as are links to their websites. In the case of

MassSAVE[®] and GasNetworks[®], this has provided the added benefit of making myenergystar.com a portal of sorts to other residential efficiency programs, offering a broader variety of resources to meet consumers' needs.

The website was also enhanced with new, interactive elements, such as a "share your story" feature, opt-in e-Newsletters, links to the online lighting catalogs, and tools such as the national ENERGY STAR@home tool, an interactive module which allows users to navigate through a virtual home and learn of new opportunities to save energy; the ENERGY STAR Change a Light, Change the World Pledge, which registers consumers' intent to change at least one light to an ENERGY STAR qualified CFL, and the ENERGY STAR Giving Tree, which invites consumers to dedicate their energy saving actions.

3. Public Relations and Outreach. Public Relations played a critical role in building awareness and creating momentum for "Start Small, Save BIG" through two high-profile media events held in 2007, ongoing media coverage on NECN via its weekly story commitment in support of the campaign, and participation in large public events.

- **Media Events.** In 2007, the campaign has featured two high-profile events that served to bookend the campaign calendar year and provide high visibility for the Sponsors and their programs. The first event helped launch the campaign to the New England media just prior to Earth Day and was carefully designed to leverage the support and credibility of key influencer partners. A press event was held at the Massachusetts State House featuring Governor Deval Patrick, Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Ian Bowles, Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray, Regional EPA Administrator Bob Varney, Senate President Therese Murray and Speaker of the House Sal DiMasi. At the event, the Governor urged Massachusetts residents to achieve greater energy efficiency in their homes by participating in the "Start Small, Save BIG" effort, and directed citizens to myenergystar.com to learn more. Representatives from City Year, the youth community group, changed incandescent light bulbs in the Governor's and other legislative offices to ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs to celebrate the campaign kick off. The event was covered by regional television, print, radio and online news outlets, and posted on the Governor's podcast since its launch.

The second event took place in October, in conjunction with the national ENERGY STAR Change a Light, Change the World Campaign. The Sponsors hosted the New England stop of the national Change a Light Bus Tour in Boston with two days of events that capitalized on the theme of a "revolution" in energy efficiency. The media event featured an historic signaling at Boston's Old North Church with ENERGY STAR qualified lighting, mimicking Paul Revere's midnight ride. The event also included the participation and support of prominent influencers from the Boston area and region, including the national EPA campaign manager, Wendy Reed, EPA Region 1 Administrator Robert Varney, Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Undersecretary Ann Berwick, Energy and Environmental Director of the City of Boston, James Hunt, Sponsors representing the Initiative, including National Grid and NSTAR, and event partners like Osram Sylvania and the Freedom Trail Foundation. The event was promoted heavily by media partners NECN, and the Boston Globe and received an unprecedented coverage in both the Boston Globe and Boston Herald. A highly-attended second day event was held at Boston's historic Faneuil Hall Marketplace where the ENERGY STAR Bus and event staff greeted visitors to talk about the benefits of energy efficient products and practices. "Start Small, Save BIG" media partners WMJX and WBOS provided premiums and amplified music during the event to help engage the crowd and underwriter Whole Foods Market distributed free organic apples and bananas to visitors who came

up to the Bus, and the accompanying myenergystar.com and event partner booths.

- **NECN News and General Programming Coverage.** NECN's extension of its support of the "Start Small, Save BIG" campaign into the editorial side of its business demonstrated the station's commitment and dedication to the public affairs mission of the campaign. NECN agreed to include at least one story per week in its news or general programming that provided a local spin on energy efficiency and profiled New England residents and businesses who were each doing their part to reduce their energy usage and impact on the environment. The Initiative's Sponsors, as well as the campaign underwriters, were tapped for compelling story content that was formulated and pitched to NECN's news division throughout the month. Careful attention was paid to developing stories and case studies that would not only constitute compelling news coverage, but that pulled directly from the businesses and programs of the Initiative's Sponsors and campaign underwriters: from a feature on ENERGY STAR New Homes, to a segment on energy efficient commercial foodservice equipment in a prominent Boston restaurant, to the profile of an energy efficient Vermont business, to how a home energy audit is conducted, to a spotlight on "green" grocer Whole Foods, to a community energy challenge in Medford, MA.

Whenever possible, the Initiative's Sponsors were tapped as experts and featured on air to discuss ENERGY STAR qualified products and residential conservation services, and highlighting efficiency success stories in their respective communities. For example, a Western Massachusetts Electric Company spokesman participated in an NECN morning news show discussing with anchors the benefits of ENERGY STAR electronics and tips to reduce plug load energy use. Cape Light Compact representatives were guests on a hard news talk show discussing energy legislation and its impact on energy efficiency. Additionally, efforts were made to rotate story coverage across the region so that each Sponsor was afforded a chance to have their programs or companies featured in a story. This approach garnered more PR coverage for the Initiative's efficiency programs than had ever been achieved in a one-year period.

- **Consumer Events.** In addition to media relations, a series of consumer events, developed in partnership with Greater Media Radio, bolstered and helped to maintain campaign momentum throughout the year. For example, the Campaign was featured at the premier Earth Day event in Boston, The WBOS EarthFest concert, which is attended by over 100,000 New Englanders. An exhibit booth featuring access to the interactive tools on myenergystar.com served to engage consumers, and the video pre-rolls of quick energy-efficiency tips were shown on the "jumbotron" screen between performances.

Additional campaign support was dedicated throughout a prominent series of outdoor summer concerts in Boston's Copley Place. WBOS handed out free ENERGY STAR CFLs and music CDs to the first 25 people that went to the WBOS booth and took the ENERGY STAR Change a Light pledge. Finally, as part of their extended added value support of the campaign, Greater Media Radio provided pre-event and on-site promotional support for retail events held by retailer underwriters Whole Foods Market and Percy's. Support included a series of on-air promotional announcements on participating radio stations in the days leading up a retailer event and street team support on the ground day of the event to distribute premiums, play music and provide entertainment and excitement for the event. Underwriters MassSAVE® and GasNetworks® were offered opportunities to participate in these events by providing consumer education staff or distributing literature on their efficiency programs.

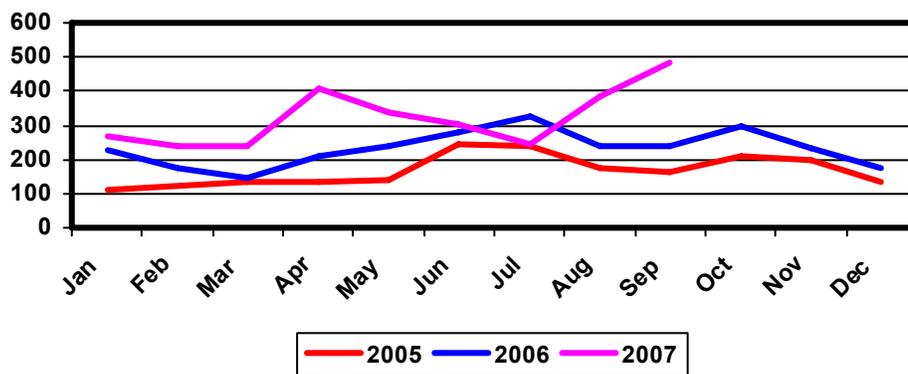
D. Results

Even before completion of the year-long “Start Small, Save BIG” public affairs campaign, success has been realized well beyond initial projections. The Sponsors, underwriters and media partners secured their position as regional leaders on one of the most important issues facing the nation today. The “Start Small, Save BIG” campaign – groundbreaking in its timeliness and content – is being copied by regional ABC, CBS and FOX TV affiliates who have created, or are in the process of soliciting sponsors for “Green” campaigns that include television spots featuring tips and education as well as driving to a campaign web site for more information. First in the market, “Start Small, Save BIG” preceded these efforts by nearly a year.

Overall, the campaign achieved success in a number of key areas, specifically:

- **Brand Awareness.** A primary measure of the campaign’s success is the degree to which it builds awareness of myenergystar.com and the Sponsor’s offerings. According to a survey conducted by *The Boston Globe*, awareness of myenergystar.com increased 14% from May to June 2007, which coincided with the campaign launch. A final study will be conducted at the campaign’s end in April, 2008 to measure overall success.
- **Web traffic.** Average daily unique visitors to Myenergystar.com have steadily increased since the campaign’s launch in April 2007, with the launch period alone showing a 100% increase over the prior year (April 2007 compared to April 2006). This growth is further substantiated by the fact that the site has seen a 43% increase in average daily unique visitors following the launch of the public affairs campaign (April – November, 2007 compared to January – March, 2007).

Figure 1. Number of Average Daily Unique Visitors to www.myenergystar.com in 2007



Also indicative of an increase in brand awareness is the increase in keyword searches for www.myenergystar.com and its variations, resulting in visits to the Sponsors’ site. In just the first two-and-a-half months of the campaign, “myenergystar.com” and variations of it were searched 714 times, compared to the entire year of 2006, which totaled only 48 searches (a nearly 1,400% increase).

Another web-based indicator of success is uptake of the myenergystar.com opt-in e-newsletter. Subscriptions have steadily increased since the newsletter was launched at the campaign inception in April, 2007. As of mid-November, more than 1,100 subscribers have signed up online to receive quarterly communications providing energy efficiency tips and information about the “Start Small, Save BIG” campaign. Website usage studies also indicate that more than half of the newsletter recipients opened and

read the communication (indicated by length of time newsletter is open on the desktop), demonstrating the Sponsors' success in inspiring consumers to learn more.

- **Media Impressions and Values.** While the public affairs campaign remains in progress until April of 2008, six month results indicate an over-delivery of media support by partners of approximately 200% to-date, meaning that the media partners engaged in this campaign have delivered 200% more media impressions³ than were negotiated and guaranteed at the start of the campaign.

The media value delivered from the earned (rather than paid) media portion of the “Start Small, Save BIG” campaign had already surpassed \$161,000 at the six-month mark of the campaign. These results were largely driven by coverage of the two major press events, earned media placements from partner print outlets such as the advertorials, and weekly coverage in NECN’s news and general programming.

Table 1. Total Paid and Earned Media Impressions at the Halfway Mark of the “Start Small, Save BIG” Campaign.

| Medium | Outlet | Impressions |
|---------------------|---|--------------------|
| TV | NECN PSAs | 2,589,510 |
| Radio | Greater Media Radio Launch PSAs | 1,146,096 |
| | Greater Media Radio Fall PSAs | TBD |
| | Worcester Paid Radio | TBD |
| | Springfield Paid Radio | TBD |
| Print | The Boston Globe | 7,540,900 |
| Online | Greater Media Radio Pre-Roll Videos | 104,667 |
| | Boston.com Web Banners | 14,426,607 |
| | Telegram.com Web Banners | 1,199,713 |
| Earned Media | Print and broadcast media coverage of launch and Bus Tour events ⁴ | 1,005,750 |

- **Partners.** “Start Small, Save BIG” also has proven to be an effective vehicle to recruit new business partners and to maximize Sponsor marketing resources by bridging their separate residential

³ A media impression can be defined as the number of people viewing or listening to a media program at the time the advertisement or message appeared or the total circulation of the newspaper multiplied by a figure representing how much that newspaper is passed along to other readers

⁴ Excludes online media impressions. Also impression numbers for NECN media coverage is not available. All NECN stories air at least twice, with some airing more than that. NECN is broadcast in nearly 3.7 million households across New England, with nearly 700,000 viewers per day.

efficiency programs. The campaign has delivered measurable business results to partners, as well. For example, since the public affairs campaign launch, MassSAVE® and GasNetworks® have demonstrated significant increases in activity on their websites since the campaign's inception. The GasNetworks® website, for example, shows a 10 point swing in unique visitors in the campaign period versus the period preceding the launch of "Start Small, Save BIG."

Campaign underwriter Whole Foods Market signed on as a new Partner to the Northeast ENERGY STAR Lighting & Appliance Initiative as a result of their involvement in the campaign. As part of their sponsorship of the campaign, Whole Foods' North Atlantic region (including stores in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island) developed and executed a highly-successful promotion for ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs in October that leveraged Sponsor upstream incentives on qualified lighting product and included creative and high-impact retail displays that incorporated "Start Small, Save BIG" advertising templates and NECN PSAs on video. Reports from Whole Foods indicate that this promotion moved more than 10,000 units, compared to a monthly average of approximately 200 bulbs across their stores within the region. Whole Foods was also a key partner in the Boston Bus Stop of the Change a Light Bus Tour.

Additionally, media partners and underwriters have increasingly played an important role in driving traffic to myenergystar.com from their respective websites. Partners like MassSAVE, Greater Media Radio Group, Whole Foods Market, and boston.com are consistently in the top ten of referring sites.

- **Other Results.** The "Start Small, Save BIG" campaign has been recognized by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE), an "exemplary program" as part of a national awards program to honor America's leading energy efficiency programs; and was selected by the Association of Energy Service Professionals (AESP) as a finalist in its Effie Awards for outstanding energy efficiency campaigns.

In analyzing the impact of a campaign such as "Start Small, Save BIG," it is important to remember that a public affairs campaign is, at its core, an awareness campaign. As such, its intent and design is to raise awareness about a specific issue or issues, as opposed to driving direct participation in, for example, a specific product incentive or promotion, or attendance at a special event. Therefore, in measuring the impact of a public affairs campaign, evaluation metrics are related to increases in overall awareness and, in this campaign's case, increases in visits to the campaign's website, as opposed to direct kWh reductions or numbers of rebates processed. When there is a desire to inject direct calls to action to consumers to participate in specific program initiatives or take urgent actions (such as reducing peak demand), campaign designers would be encouraged to work closely with partner media outlets to evolve the pure public affairs campaign model into more of a hybrid program, whereby public service advertising elements are combined with paid advertising components to allow tighter control of message content and placement.

Conclusions

Myenergystar.com's public affairs campaign has proven to be a successful approach to cost effectively harness the power of broad-based media support to deliver timely, relevant and rich content that breaks through today's fragmented and cluttered media environment *and* drives program results. Tapping into the sentiment of personal responsibility and collective action incorporated a key emotional motivator to Sponsor messaging, driving deeper consumer engagement with the Initiative's brand and enhancing individual Sponsors' brand positions as consumer advocates.

Further, by capitalizing upon public interest in energy and global warming in this way, the Sponsors of the Northeast ENERGY STAR Lighting & Appliance Initiative have positioned themselves as leaders in

the quest for greater energy efficiency and environmental protection, and ultimately engaged consumers with residential energy efficiency programs in a more meaningful way.

Both the Sponsors' impressive results and imitative programs coming to market in their footsteps, demonstrate that a public affairs approach is an effective and motivating method to help efficiency programs reach their goals, and to serve the greater good of associated benefits.