Engaging Rural Wisconsin Customers
Presented by: Keith Cronin
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What is FOCUS ON ENERGY®?
Overview

• Focus on Energy is Wisconsin utilities’ statewide program for energy efficiency and renewable energy
• Partnership with 107 utilities
• Since 2001, has worked with eligible residents and businesses to install energy efficiency and renewable energy projects
• Provides financial incentives, education, information and other resources in an effort to encourage participation that leads to increased energy savings and reduced utility bills
Rural Wisconsin
Rural Engagement Evolution

- Core program participation
  - Residential Direct Install → Residential Packs (2016)
  - Retail Lighting & Appliance value and independent chain expansion (2017)

- Rural Broadband pilot programs (2017-2018)
- Rural-specific outreach campaign (2018)
- Rural-specific initiatives (2019-2022)

Incentives (% of total)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014-2015</th>
<th>2018</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Rural</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
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Incentives per Capita

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014-2015</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>$3.13</td>
<td>$6.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Rural</td>
<td>$5.45</td>
<td>$2.09</td>
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Rural Engagement: Pre-2017

- Focus on Energy’s historical priority was maximizing cost-effectiveness
  - No program goals related to rural customers
  - Serving rural customers is typically more expensive

- Population Density
  - Fewer Trade Ally contractors in sparse rural areas
  - Direct install programs focused on denser urban areas

- Marketing Complexity
  - Media market complications
  - Non-participating electric cooperatives in rural areas
2017-2018 Rural Broadband Pilots

• Fall 2016: PSC issues Notice of Investigation (NOI)
  • Are rural customers receiving equal benefits?
  • What role might broadband play?

• December 2016: PSC approve $26 Million
  • Two-year pilot period (2017-2018)
  • Programs should be designed to seek additional benefits through increased access to broadband services

• Spring 2017: Pilot Programs begin launching
2017-2018 Rural Broadband Pilots

• Connected Device Kits
  • First year: Partnered with Internet Service Providers to offer choice of 5 energy savings kits + upgrade/enrollment incentive
  • Second year: Rolled out this offering to utilities with rural service territories

• Communication Provider Initiative
  • Dedicated funding and technical support for ISP energy-related projects
  • Increased incentives for custom projects

• Rural Homeowners & Small Businesses
  • Increased incentives for Small Businesses in targeted communities
  • Increased mass media engagement and community-based outreach
  • Direct Mail Energy Assessment Surveys
  • Rural Home Performance
$26 Million Rural Portfolio Allocation

- Connected Device Kits, 62%
- Infrastructure Retrofits, 16%
- Rural Small Business, 12%
- Rural Home Performance, 4%
- Rural Outreach and Engagement, 3%
- Direct Mail Energy Assessment Pilot, 1%
- Online Analytics Platform Pilot, 2%
Rural Outreach and Engagement
Goals & Initiatives

- Increase rural engagement and participation in Focus on Energy programs
- Promote state pride and support through energy efficiency initiatives
- Direct marketing message toward 582 rural ZIP codes specified as target audience
- Heighten rural awareness of energy efficiency using a more relatable message and specialized marketing techniques
- Emphasize state pride in messaging and use efficient marketing techniques
Execution & Launch

• Designated large budget of $867,000 for use of targeted marketing techniques, including:
  • Direct and shared mail
  • Streaming radio, television, and newspaper advertisements
  • A web video
  • Mobile display
  • Official landing website (WisconsinIsIn.com)

• Pushed out campaign materials to rural market gradually
  • Helped analyze which methods were most effective and build upon those marketing tactics
Execution & Launch (continued)

• All participant-facing marketing materials directed interested residents to WisconsinIsIn.com for more information
  • Minimizes technical industry jargon for broader audience understanding and usability
  • Uses clear language so residents with limited knowledge of energy efficiency could grasp concepts

• Campaign largely driven by:
  • Proven program success and money savings in the past
  • Emotional strength of pride for Wisconsin messaging
Campaign Results & Future Steps

• Initiative advances the industry by strengthening understanding of rural market segments and participation drivers for country-wide program development
  • Found that rural participants are particularly interested in connection between energy efficiency and the economy
• In 2019, plan to extend “Wisconsin Is In” campaign marketing materials and techniques program-wide for both rural and urban participants
  • Lends to program-wide brand cohesion and structure
2019-2022
New Rural Initiatives

• Focus on Agricultural and Industrial sectors
  • $9 million annual budget for 2019-2022

• Offerings
  • Increased incentive levels
  • Added Energy Advisors for increased technical and outreach support
  • Awareness campaign, continuing rural focus while also expanding state-wide
  • Rural Residential Behavioral pilot
  • Industrial benchmarking
  • Rural Pop-up Retail
Contact Information & Acknowledgements

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Thank you!
Focus By The Numbers

- Focus on Energy has delivered more than $1 billion in economic benefits over the past eight years
- Supports 1,200 jobs a year in Wisconsin
- Served participants at more than 113,000 residences and more than 5,100 businesses in 2017