HHW Public Education Through the "Big Box" Home Improvement Stores

2004 Statewide
HHW/Used Oil Conference
Sacramento

Stephen Groner
S. Groner Associates
sgroner@sga-inc.net
562.597.0205

Overview

- Background
- Goals/Objectives
- Scope of Effort
- Evaluation

Why work with these stores?

- The Background
  - Research
  - Audience
  - Motivators
  - Geographic area

Background - research

- LA County Survey on Do-It-Yourselfers (DIY'ers) – April 1996
  - Over 70% of residents buy either lawn chemicals or paints at the large home improvement stores
  - DIY'ers on average visit these stores just under 10 times in 6 months

Background - research

- LA County Segmentation Study
  - Target audiences
    - Neat Neighbors
    - Fix-it Foul-ups

Background - research

- LA County Segmentation Study
  - Motivators
    - Children/Family
    - Takes pride in DIY'er projects

Background

- The program was originally developed for LA County's HHW Program
- The program has since been adapted for four Stormwater Programs
  - City of Los Angeles
  - County of San Bernardino
  - County of Riverside
  - City of Oxnard

Background

Program started with the following stores:

- Home Depot
- Lowe's
- Orchard Supply Hardware (OSH)

Background

- Overall home improvement stores are
  - Targeted
    - Over 70% of DIY'ers are customers
  - Visited Frequently
    - Average 20 visits per year
  - Influential
    - Important information source for HHW users

What are we trying to accomplish?

- Goals
- Objectives

Goals

- Change behavior:
  - Increase proper disposal of hazardous products
  - Increase pollution prevention efforts (i.e., implementation of BMPs)
  - Reduce purchasing/use of hazardous products
- Meet NDPES Permit requirements

Objectives

Strategically reach our target audience

- Through spokesperson/endorsement most credible to our audience
  - "Co-Branding"
- At a time and place where we can best influence behavior
  - Point of purchase
  - Event promotion

How does the partnership educate our audience?

- Employee Training
- Point of purchase advertising
- Event promotion

Employee Training

Purpose

- Enlist advocates on the “frontlines”
- Use influence/credibility of the store/employees (co-branding)
- Multiply messengers for the program

Employee Training

Objective

- Educate employees on the program/BMPs
- Give them a resource
- Get information in their manual

Employee Training

Implementation:

- Presented info at storewide meetings
- Conducted training for key departments
- Participated in “Product Knowledge” trainings
- Distributed info through company’s in-store trainings

Point of Purchase Advertising

Purpose

- Inform residents about HHW disposal and BMPs
- Provide resource information that they can take home
- Motivate on a more subliminal level source reduction

Point of Purchase Advertising

Objective/Implementation

- Place shelftalkers near hazardous products in the stores
- Place information tearsheets near products
- Place posters at entrance/exit

Event Promotion

Purpose:

- Promote collection event to customers
- Answer questions regarding proper disposal

Event Promotion

- Objective
  - Proactively give information to residents
  - Address issues/questions residents have regarding HHW

Event Promotion

Implemented

- Cashiers bag stuffed event flyers
- Set up info table on weekends
- Distribute information through “how to” clinics

So what did you accomplish?

Evaluation

- Partnership numbers
- Economic valuation
- Change in behavior

Evaluation

Partnerships

- 70 stores participating
- 4200 employees trained

Evaluation

Partnerships

- Expanded program to include:
  - Other big box stores (Wal-Mart, Target, K-Mart)
  - Smaller outlets (hardware, paint stores, nurseries)
  - Auto-parts stores

Evaluation

Economic valuation

- Point of purchase ads
  - $131 per month
  - $12,576 value per year (8 ads)

Evaluation

Behavior change

- Less effective with temporary events
- More effective with permanent locations

Evaluation

- Behavior change
  - Permanent Location
    - 36% heard info through POP
    - 15% mass media (newspaper, radio, outdoor)
    - POP over 4 times as cost effective per dollar spent than mass media

Evaluation

Behavior change

- Additional research/evaluation is needed for the following:
  - Cost-effectiveness of employee trainings
  - Effectiveness regarding BMP education

Lessons learned

Keys to building a partnership:

1. No one likes to cold call, but that's where it starts
2. Be patient, but persistent
3. Start out small – get your foot in the door
4. Foster the relationship
5. Keep asking for more

Conclusion

1. Outreach through partnerships are very cost-effective
2. Know your audience and who they listen to
3. Determine your educational objective
4. Build a relationship

HHW Public Education Through the "Big Box" Home Improvement Stores

2004 Statewide
HHW/Used Oil Conference
Sacramento

Stephen Groner
S. Groner Associates
sgroner@sga-inc.net
562.597.0205