



Integrated Communications: The Case for Making Multiple Plans Work Together

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ABSTRACT

One plus one plus one equals way more than three, at least in regards to promoting your programs. Over the years, Focus on Energy, Wisconsin's statewide program for energy efficiency and renewable energy, marketed each of its respective programs separately. There was an overall branding effort for Focus on Energy (Focus), but each of the three programs—residential, business, and renewable energy—had its own audience, and targeted its marketing for that audience.

By combining the media buying resources of its suite of programs, Focus witnessed unparalleled success in 2009. In the past, Focus split its media spending in several ways—by program, by sector, and by promotion. In 2009, the marketing staff combined media budgets and was able to make the radio advertising dollars go farther and allow for more advertising messages to be heard.

More media exposure means increased program awareness and the ability to aid in achieving the program's savings goals.

Introduction

Focus on Energy was established in 2001 as a result of Public Benefits legislation in Wisconsin. Focus works with eligible Wisconsin residents and businesses to install cost-effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. By providing information, technical resources, and financial incentives, Focus helps customers implement projects that otherwise would not be completed, or to complete projects sooner than scheduled. The Focus program helps Wisconsin residents and businesses manage rising energy costs, promote in-state economic development, protect the environment, and control the state's growing demand for electricity and natural gas. The program's overall goal is to achieve direct energy savings (kilowatt, kilowatt-hour, and therms), while increasing public awareness of, and interest in, energy efficiency and renewable energy. Focus programs also include a strong market transformation component and strive to transform the markets for particular products and services so that consumers will choose energy-efficient solutions by default and the market will meet the demand.

Promotion of individual programs combined with general Focus awareness is imperative to the success of Focus. Ensuring that residential and business customers are aware of the programs takes a variety of marketing tactics.

During the past nine years, Focus marketing efforts included limited general awareness tactics, but mainly focused on targeted marketing to specific program audiences. These tactics included anything from direct mail and radio advertising to print advertising and trade shows. However, the ongoing theme was that each program's marketing promotions operated separately, focusing on the specific target audience. What did this mean? It meant marketing dollars were spent by promotion or target, and potentially, there may be crossover in the type of marketing tactics used. The marketing staff realized there would be some benefit in combining media buying efforts for the individual programs as well as Focus awareness.

Admittedly, not all of the budgets for the various marketing tactics could be combined. For example, radio stations target both business and residential customers, but a particular publication may only target one of these audiences, thus not providing an opportunity to combine advertising budgets. Because of this, print and online advertising buys continued to be done on an as-needed basis. Still, there was an opportunity to join efforts where programs could benefit from economies of scale. Radio advertising was still a potential option. Programs would still be able to market by audience or promotion but be able to obtain further reach because advertising dollars were being combined.

In 2009, Focus marketing staff came together and discussed the possibility of combining marketing dollars specific to radio advertising. By doing this, the team anticipated that Focus as a whole would benefit from additional marketing opportunities that individual programs were not able to capitalize on.

Objectives, Challenges, Opportunities

Consolidating all the radio media buys wasn't a simple task. The objectives were as follows:

- *Ensure media buys were statewide.* There are locations in Wisconsin where the prevailing media is based in a bordering state and not in Wisconsin; this can make advertising challenging for a Wisconsin-specific entity like Focus.
- *Strategically determine which promotions need to occur at certain times of the year.* For example, Focus' yearly lighting program kicks off in October and the promotion of furnace replacements logically takes place near fall and winter. The team had to ensure these promotional timelines were considered during the media buy process.
- *Ensure that a Focus message was on the air every week.* Not previously possible since advertising was purchased as needed.

Taking Advantage of New Opportunities

As mentioned above, in the past nine years, Focus staff purchased media specific to each individual program's needs. By doing this, buying power was restricted and limited which radio stations individual programs could advertise on. The lesson to be learned from this is even though a radio station or website might be a good fit for the audience, it may be cost prohibitive to one individual program—potentially losing out on a great opportunity. This means a smaller program has limited radio advertising dollars and may not be able to afford the cost of advertising spots on a specific radio station. By combining all radio advertising dollars, smaller programs would now have access to radio stations they couldn't previously afford.

Focus marketing staff considered what their overall program needs were for radio advertising purchases. The first step was to develop a matrix (see Table 1) that included details about projected advertising plans for the year, including: program promotional needs, targeted audiences, and advertising budget estimates.

Table 1: 2009 Focus on Energy Radio Advertising Matrix

Radio Advertising Budget	Program, Promotion, and Audience	Geographic Requirements	Timing Requirements
\$100,000	Business Programs Audience: General Business Awareness and Agricultural businesses	Statewide	Anytime throughout year
\$40,000	Residential Lighting Earth Day Promotion Audience: Residential consumers	Statewide major media markets	Weeks surrounding April 22
\$239,000	Residential Lighting Fall Light Bulb Promotion Audience: Residential consumers	Major metro, local markets when needed for specific retailers	October 1 through November
\$100,000	Existing Homes Consumer Radio Ad Campaign Audience: Homeowners	Review marketing plan	Review marketing plan
\$281,000	Residential Awareness “Ask the Experts” Promotion Audience: Residential consumers	Review marketing plan	Review marketing plan
\$10,000	Renewable Energy Promotion of Statewide Conferences Audience: Residential and business customers interested in renewable energy	Statewide major media markets	MREA (June) Solar Decade (October) Solar Hot Water (December)
\$100,000	Shared Services Statewide Focus Awareness Audience: Residential and business consumers	Statewide major media markets	To be determined
Total Radio Advertising Budget: \$870,000			

Although seemingly very simplistic, this information ensured the staff knew which programs were being marketed and when those messages needed to be on the air. The matrix also ensured that Focus messages were not competing against each other. Only one message at a time would be running on a radio station. In addition to this radio campaign, the various programs also used print and online media.

Realizing the Possibilities

Once the radio buy information was put together, the media team began looking at advertising options. This was tricky because it was truly the first time that all Focus radio advertising efforts were being handled from an overall media approach, with the goal of promoting multiple programs while simultaneously leveraging the brand. It was important to make sure that each program’s promotional needs were met while ensuring that the Focus brand also obtained appropriate coverage. Not only did it take significant research to ensure flights, levels, impressions, etc. were equally distributed, but also that they were hitting the correct audiences at the

right time and in the right place. The media team at Hoffman York, the marketing firm for Focus on Energy, took the necessary time to evaluate and review various radio stations and radio station families to acquire the best advertising deal for the dollars being spent. When planning what to buy, the media team evaluated four things: station formats, pricing rates, demographics of the radio station vs. the programs' targeted audiences, and geography to ensure the Focus message was being heard statewide.

After obtaining the possible radio buy options, the marketing staff evaluated what would best meet each program's advertising needs. Table 2 shows the actual Focus radio buy for 2009:

Table 2: Focus Radio Placements

	APRIL		MAY				JUNE				JULY				AUGUST				SEPTEMBER				OCTOBER				NOVEMBER				DECEMBER				Total TRPs																																
	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	5	12	19	26	2	9	16		23	30	7	14	21																											
METRO RADIO																																																																			
Change a Light																													150	125	100	100	100	100	125	150														950																	
Home Performance	35	34	30	30	34	34	34	30	34	34	34	34																														397																									
Lighting	20		20					20		20					20		20																			20	19														159																
Appl & Plug / E. Heat & Cool													24	24	24													24	24	24													24	24	24		216																				
Shared Services																	21	21	20	20	20																														102																
Holiday Lights																													20	20	20														60																						
Renewable													10	10													10	10													10	9		59																							
Ask	40	40	45	45	45	45	35	30	50	40	40	55	40	50	35	55	55	50	50	50	45	45	45	45	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	10	10	10	10	5	1,115																												
Business Programs	15	15	15	15	15	15	12	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	5	5	5	5	5	397																													
TOTAL METRO WEEKLY TRPs:	35	34	105	105	94	94	94	97	94	94	94	94	85	94	84	90	86	85	85	85	89	104	103	60	60	165	140	115	125	125	115	140	165	35	69	68	39	10	3,455																												
BREWER RADIO NETWORK																																																																			
Program Allocation TBD																													25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	5	580
WISCONSIN PUBLIC RADIO																																																																			
Program Allocation TBD																																																																			
TOTAL WEEKLY TRPs:	0	35	34	130	130	119	119	119	122	119	119	119	119	110	119	109	115	111	110	110	110	114	129	128	85	85	170	140	115	125	125	115	140	165	35	69	68	39	10	4,035																											

Negotiating Added Value

In addition to purchasing radio time, Focus was able to take advantage of value-added opportunities. Value-added opportunities are additional promotional options that radio stations offer advertisers to promote a product or service using other auxiliary media that are free of charge. These auxiliary media can range from web exposure and radio events to various sponsorship opportunities. Advertisers may be offered these opportunities when buying large amounts of radio time or radio advertising that spans an extended period of time.

Value-added items offered to Focus included: billboards and sponsorships, home makeovers and energy efficiency contests, weekly/daily green tips, event sponsorships, radio remotes, myth buster contests, and "Ask the Expert" interviews, to name a few.



The Focus radio buy for 2009 included the following:

- Overall, a buying savings of 20 percent allowed Focus to purchase additional advertising time on Milwaukee Brewers Radio Network and Wisconsin Public Radio/WUWM.
- Metro coverage including 53 stations across Wisconsin.
- Weekly on-air Focus message.
- Strong reach throughout the state (see Figure 1).
- Value-added promotions included:
 - 4,153 radio billboards on 33 stations across the state. An example of a radio billboard is “The news this hour is sponsored by Focus on Energy.”
 - 45 stations added a total of 45 promotions to our radio buy. These promotions included: the reading of green tips (see Sample Radio Tips), a DJ challenge, and radio remotes.

Sample Radio Tips

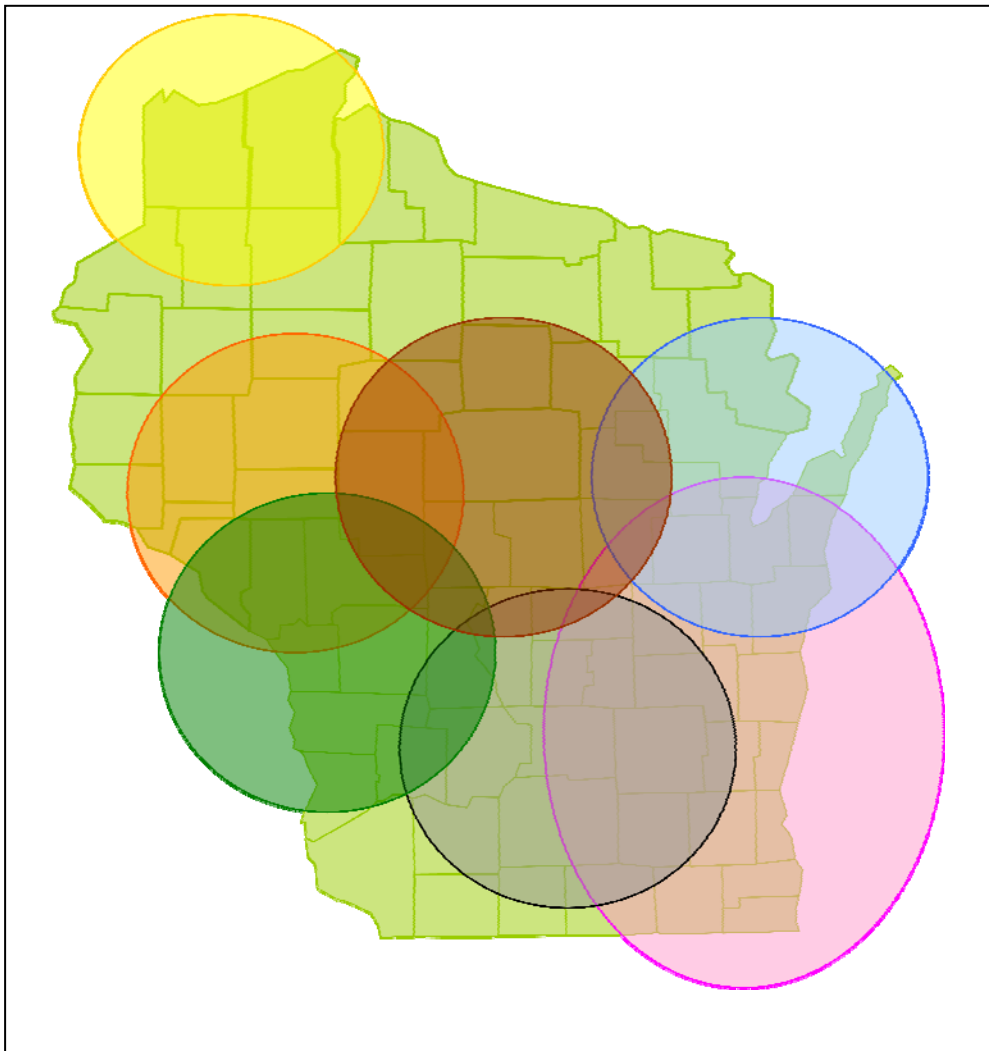
One of the value-added promotions that many of the radio stations offered Focus was the reading of energy-related tips. These tips were developed and provided by Focus to the radio stations. Tips varied throughout the year to coincide with the season. The tips were one more opportunity to promote Focus on Energy, in addition to the actual radio ads that Focus developed. The following quotes are examples of the tips provided to the radio stations:

- **:15 Phantom Load Tip**
“Here’s another valuable green tip from Focus on Energy: some electronics draw power, even when turned off. Reduce energy costs by using a power strip and switching it off when items aren’t in use. For more Focus on Energy green tips, visit focusonenergy.com.”
- **:30 Save Hot Water at Home Tip**
“Here’s another valuable green tip from Focus on Energy: soak in the savings by opting for a shower over a bath. This will cut your water use in half and save hundreds of dollars each year in water heating costs. For even more savings, install a low-flow showerhead which limits water use to 2.5 gallons per minute or less. But that’s just the start. There are so many ways to green the way you live and save energy and money. For more green tips from Wisconsin’s energy efficiency and renewable energy resource, visit them online at focusonenergy.com.”
- **:15 Business Furnace Maintenance Tip**
“Here’s another valuable green tip from Focus on Energy: businesses can cut overall heating costs by 10 percent and reduce fan energy use by 30 percent, simply by maintaining their furnaces. For more Focus on Energy Green Tips, visit focusonenergy.com.”

Wisconsin Radio Coverage

The map (see Figure 1 below) shows the regions of the state covered in the Focus radio buy; nearly the entire state was covered. There was limited reach in the northern quarter of the state, which includes preserved forest and sparsely populated areas.

Figure 1: Wisconsin Radio Coverage Map



Campaign Results

Media Buy Value

Focus' advertising efforts were compared across 2007, 2008, and 2009. There was a definite difference in the amount of money spent on radio advertising across the three years. It is important to remember that the totals for 2007 and 2008 are actually a combination of radio advertising dollars spent by program and are added together. In 2009, the advertising dollars were combined and spent at the same time which allowed Focus to take advantage of the value-added opportunities. Table 3 shows the radio advertising spend compared by year. The bottom line is the advertising dollars went further in 2009 than in 2007 and 2008 combined! Even though actual spending between 2008 and 2009 was very similar, by combining the radio advertising spend into one budget, Focus was able to capitalize on the overall dollar amount spent.

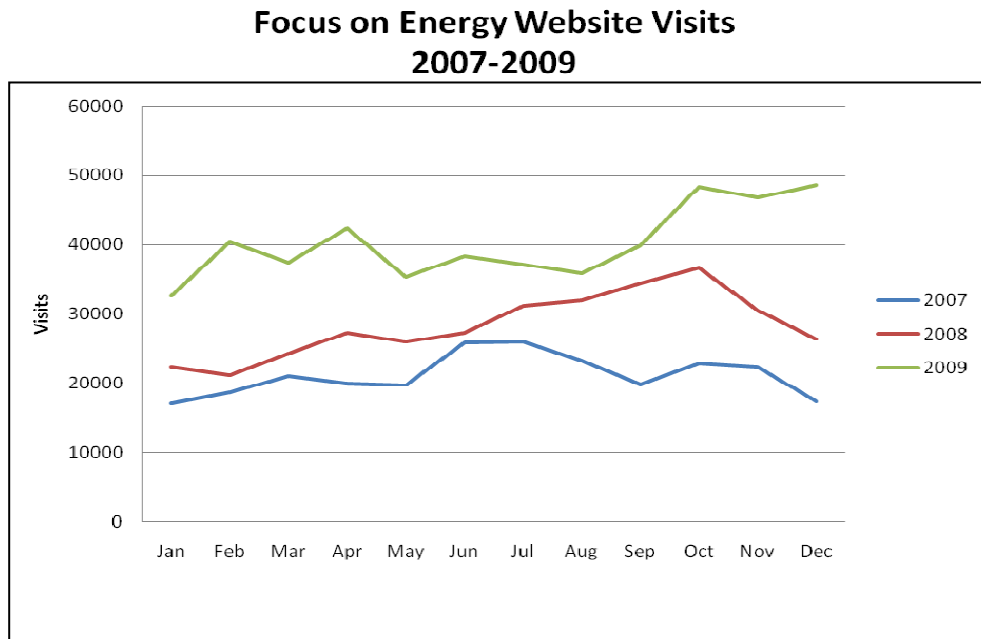
Table 3: Focus Radio Advertising Spend Compared by Year

Year	Radio Advertising Spend	Estimated Promotional Added Value
2007 (12 months)	\$346,479	\$0
2008 (18 months)	\$945,584	\$0
2009 (12 months)	\$1,060,021	\$500,000

Website Visits

Overall, the Focus website experienced a surge in visitor activity during the 2009 radio advertising campaign. The results (see Figure 2) were obtained from Google Analytics. The highest website visit numbers ever in the history of the program occurred during 2009, especially during the yearly lighting promotion.

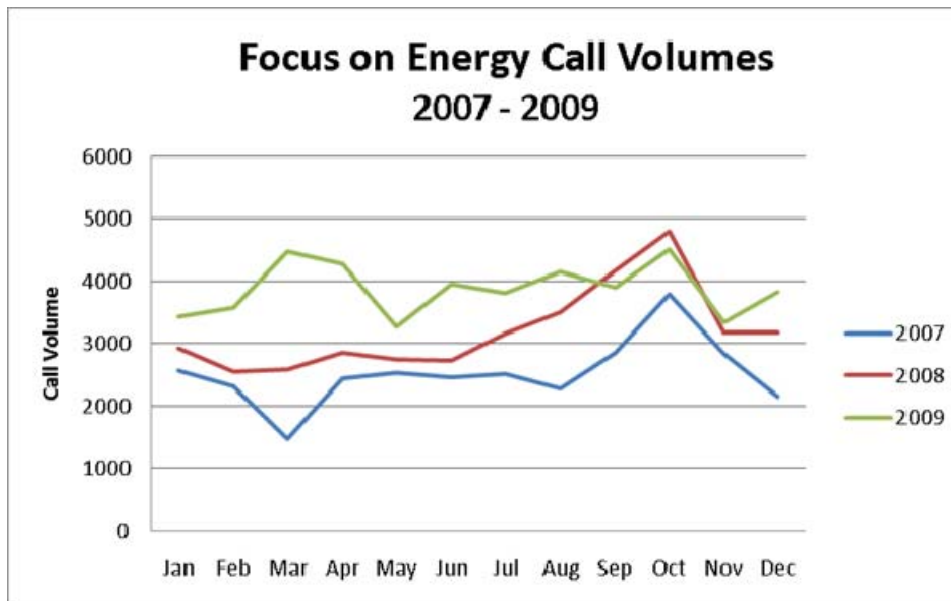
Figure 2: Focus Website Visits Compared by Year



Call Volume

Focus also experienced a steady increase in call volume throughout 2009 (see Figure 3). Although Focus' call volume fluctuates, these numbers show an overall increase compared to the previous two years, indicating that the overall radio buy impacted the 2009 call volume.

Figure 3: Call Volume Compared by Year



Name Recognition

Each year, members of the Consortium for Energy Efficiency (CEE) sponsor a survey of ENERGY STAR® awareness and recognition. In 2008 and 2009, Focus became a sponsor and was able to include additional questions specific to people surveyed in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin-specific questions of the survey assessed Focus’ name recognition. In 2008, 28 percent (Van de Grift & Hanigan 2009) of people surveyed recognized the Focus name. In 2009, 49 percent (Van de Grift & Hannigan 2009) of people surveyed said they recognized the Focus name. One reason for the increase in awareness is the consistent weekly Focus message made possible by the combined radio advertising buy.

Program Results

To be successful, it is important for a program like Focus to use a portfolio of marketing tactics to reach the targeted audience. The marketing results are partially due to the successful radio media buy, as well as other marketing tactics such as print and online advertising, social media, and direct mail which enhanced the value of the radio advertising.

Program results also indicate the success of the ability to combine radio advertising among the various programs. Although radio isn’t the only marketing communication tactic, it certainly impacted the overall awareness of the program and in turn program savings.

Program savings for Focus in 2009 were more than 412 million kWh, more than 72,000 kW, and more than 16 million therms. These large savings successfully exceeded the savings goals for the year. The portfolio savings achieved, as a whole, were over 100 percent of the set goals (Van de Grift, Williams & Wichert 2010).

Conclusion

Overall, by streamlining and consolidating radio advertising, Focus successfully met and surpassed its savings

goals in every category. Mission accomplished! By combining total advertising dollars, the marketing team reached a much larger audience and made the advertising dollars work harder. Thus, Focus' marketing efforts outperformed previous efforts. Focus achieved greater audience penetration, generated significant program awareness, and gained more participants in the programs. All in all, this new approach made for a very successful marketing campaign and program year, and would be a process that would be used for years to come.

References

Van de Grift, S., Hannigan, E. (WECC). 2009. Communication to PSC. December 2009

Van de Grift, S., Williams, K., and Wichert, D. (WECC) 2010. Communication to PSC. January 2010