Moving the Needle: Measuring the Performance of an Energy Program Promotional Campaign

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How To Measure Success?

peaksaver PLUS®
Earn 100 AIR MILES
reward miles.
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FRIDGE & FREEZER PICKUP
Earn 100 AIR MILES
reward miles.
LEARN MORE >

HEATING & COOLING INCENTIVE
Earn 50 AIR MILES
reward miles.
LEARN MORE >
Leverage the IESO’s Tracking Study

Triple-A (Awareness, Attitudes, Action) Survey—an on-going, weekly, web-based tracking survey

Quasi-experimental approach with defined target and baseline group respondents

Straightforward methodology for quantifying promotional lift from a marketing campaign
Measuring Lift

- Base line participants
- Target participants

Lift
Initial Design Assumptions

• AIR MILES Collectors were the target group
• Non-AIR MILES Collectors were the baseline group
• Historical, average program participation rates were 2.4-3% depending on the program
• IESO planning documents estimated a promotional lift of 10% for peaksaver PLUS, 7% for Fridge & Freezer Pickup, and 1% for Heating & Cooling Incentive

• GOAL: 2,000 survey completes (1,000 each with AIR MILES Collectors and Non-AIR MILES Collectors)
Selecting Target & Baseline Groups: Think it through

- Aware of Promotion
  - Aware Non-AIR MILES Collectors
  - Aware AIR MILES Collectors
- “Target” Participation
  - Unaware Non-AIR MILES Collectors
  - Unaware AIR MILES Collectors
- Unaware of Promotion
  - Non-AIR MILES Collectors
  - AIR MILES Collectors
Initial Data Collection

- 6 weeks of survey data collection: mid-Oct thru Dec 2013
- 4 months after the launch of the saveONenergy AND BE REWARDED promotion in June
- Completed surveys with 1,000 AIR MILES Collectors
- Completed surveys with 1,000 non-AIR MILES Collectors
- Similar demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, age, education, income, etc.) between Collectors and non-Collectors
Initial Results

The Good News

- AIR MILES Collectors much more likely to be aware of promotion (yea!)
- AIR MILES Collectors noticed promotional emails
- People aware of promotion tended to learn about promotion from > 1 source

The Not-So-Good News

- Most still unaware of promotion
- Not enough survey respondents actually participated in the 3 targeted EE programs to reliably estimate lift
Uh Oh! What To Do?

Collect More Data!
Final Results

- Ultimately collected ~2.5X more completed surveys
- Awareness of promotional campaign significantly higher in 2014 than 2013
- Enough program participants to reliably calculate lift
  - But total program participation rates were still lower than we had initially assumed except for HVAC program
- Lift: those aware of the promotion were ~ 2X more likely to participate
Take Aways…

• Leverage existing data collection activities rather than launch new ones

• Study design assumptions *really* matter—program participation rates are critical
  • *Program participation can & does vary annually & intra-annually*

• Think carefully about who is exposed to the promotion and define target and control groups based on awareness of the promotion
And Lastly…

• Be patient
  • Awareness is a first step towards participation, and awareness takes time
  • Promotion of an EE program that requires people to do more difficult behaviors e.g., install a new HVAC system, takes more time than a retail promotion that encourages people to buy stuff e.g., buying an LED
Thank you &

May the Force be With You!

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