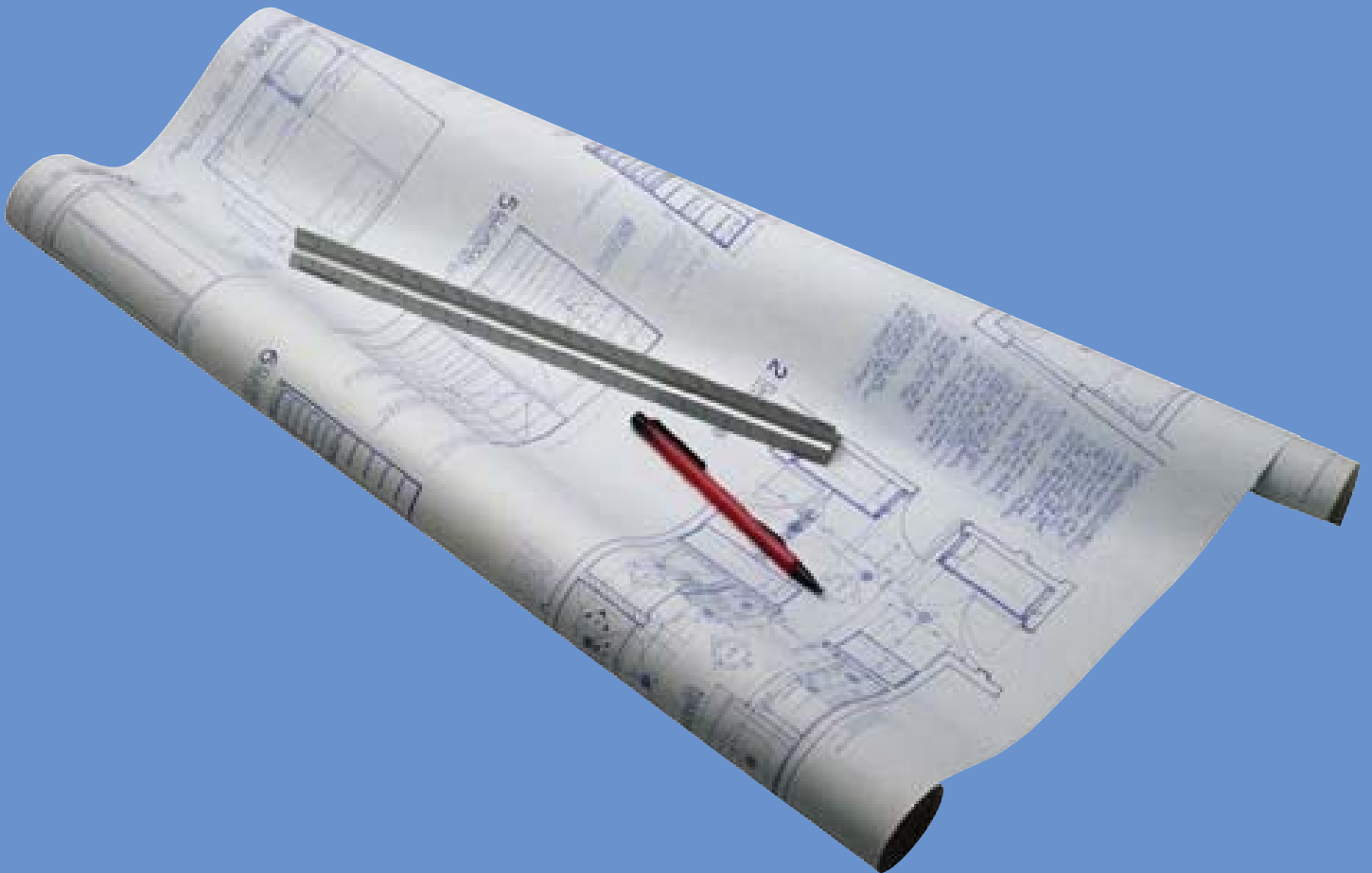




Guidelines for Designing EPA Partnership Programs



The National Center for Environmental Innovation wishes to thank the members of the Partnership Programs Workgroup and other EPA contributors who assisted us in this effort.

This document was developed for use by EPA managers and staff and their contractors as they develop Partnership Programs.

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Executive Summary

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) began using Partnership Programs prominently in the early 1990's as a unique, non-regulatory approach to environmental management. EPA is increasingly turning to a voluntary approach to protect public health and the environment, and over the past decade, Partnership Programs have become more and more important as tools for the Agency.

EPA Partnership Programs typically:

- Encourage groups to go beyond regulatory compliance.
- Provide alternative ways to meet regulatory and statutory objectives.
- Use recognition, information, competitive pressure, and other incentives.
- Leverage market forces to provide benefits to participants.

See www.epa.gov/partners for more information about EPA's Partnership Programs and Partners.

These Guidelines lay out the structure for designing a Partnership Program and offer practical tips to help you navigate these steps. Throughout the Guidelines, we share lessons learned and

experiences compiled by successful Partnership Programs throughout their development and growth.

These Guidelines should be used in conjunction with the *Guidelines for Measuring the Performance of EPA Partnership Programs* and the *Guidelines for Marketing EPA Partnership Programs*.

Creating a Foundation for Your Program

The most successful Partnership Programs start with a solid foundation. To create this foundation, you'll need to focus on identifying:

- The basic environmental problem you are tackling.
- The overall market you are addressing.
- The actual change you are hoping to achieve.

This step may seem very basic, but it is critical in ensuring that your program design is clear, effective, and fits in with EPA's strategic goals.

Once you've laid the foundation for your program, you'll need to delve into the specifics by selecting target decisionmakers and the desired action steps you want them to take. These steps ensure that you cover the "who" and the "what"

of your program: who you're targeting and what you want them to do.

After identifying the target decisionmaker a new Partnership Program must determine the value proposition. The value proposition is the “deal” your program is offering to target decisionmakers—the action steps that you are asking them to take and what they'll get in return for taking those steps. At this stage, you'll need to define the value proposition of your program and communicate it to your target decisionmakers. The stronger and clearer your value proposition is, the greater the value target decisionmakers will see in your program. The bottom line is that your value proposition must convince your target decisionmakers that your program is worthwhile to them.

Coordinating and Measuring Your Program

Once you have outlined the basic design you need to coordinate and measure your program and build your brand. Voluntary initiatives are not only used increasingly by EPA; they are also used by other government agencies, industry representatives, and independent, non-governmental organizations. With all of these Partnership Programs, it is important to avoid duplicating efforts that are already underway, either at EPA or in other organizations. If too many programs are created that focus on the same target decisionmaker, it can create “initiative fatigue” and other problems for participants.

In addition to coordination, measures of environmental results and agency resource investment need to be addressed when creating your program. The bottom line is that you must cre-

ate effective metrics and accurate environmental estimates to illustrate the potential success of your program. How successfully you frame your program in terms of near-term, intermediate-term, and long-term success directly relates to your ability to secure resources both within the Agency and outside of it.

Building Credibility and Rolling Out Your Program

Credibility and the value of your brand are essential to nearly all EPA Partnership Programs, even those that do not target consumers or citizens. They define how your target decisionmakers and supporters will perceive your program and therefore how they will respond to it. Even the best brands and programs can be destroyed by a bad customer experience or a public relations problem so even those programs that are not large enough to require true brand management still need to apply the principles.

Determining how to roll out your program is also important. Programs can be rolled out in two different formats, as a pilot program or as a full-scale program. A pilot program is limited in size and scope and focuses on a limited geographic area, market segment, or limited number of target decisionmakers. A full-scale program does not have a “test period,” but rolls out immediately on a larger scale.

Assessing the Design of Your Partnership Program

To create consistent and effective EPA Partnership Programs, senior managers should review them early in the development process to ensure they are on the right track, and later assess their readiness for launch. A checklist has

been provided below to help managers determine whether their new programs will meet the guidelines laid out in this document.

Checklist for Assessing Partnership Programs

Goals

- ❑ What are the specific, measurable goals the program estimates it can achieve in the near-term, medium-term, and long-term?
- ❑ Do these goals flow reasonably from the number of target decisionmakers the program can reach, the value the program can deliver to the target decisionmakers, and the likelihood they will take the desired action steps to improve public health and the environment?

Resources, Effectiveness, and Coordination

- ❑ Do the expected environmental results warrant the level of resources that EPA would invest in this Partnership Program as compared to other approaches?
- ❑ Does the Partnership Program have the necessary expertise and credibility to understand and be respected by the target decisionmakers?
- ❑ Does the program have the resources to secure this expertise through 3rd parties or contractors?
- ❑ Is the program coordinated with related programs, in EPA HQ and Regions, other federal agencies, other levels of government, business, NGOs, educational organizations, and other stakeholders?

Decisionmakers

- ❑ Is the program targeting the most receptive actual decisionmakers who have the power to take the desired action steps?
- ❑ Has the program strategically selected target decisionmakers to maximize its leveraging potential (typically a small set of decisionmakers who, in turn, influence many other decisionmakers to achieve substantial environmental impact)?
- ❑ Who are these target decisionmakers, as specifically as possible, and how do they influence the decision to take the desired action steps?
- ❑ Is there a match between a) the number of decisionmakers the program is expected to reach and influence and b) the resources available to the program?

Value Proposition

- ❑ What specific action steps is the program asking target decisionmakers to take?
- ❑ Has the program identified a sufficiently strong “value proposition” to convince a reasonable number of target decisionmakers to take the desired action steps?
- ❑ What are key elements of the value proposition? (The best value propositions solve important problems experienced by decisionmakers. For manufacturers this could be gaining access to new markets. For parents this could be preventing their kids from getting cancer. For cash-strapped consumers it could be cutting rising energy bills).
- ❑ Has the Partnership Program identified valued services it can offer decisionmakers as part of the value proposition (e.g., training, technical support, analytical tools)?

- ❑ What kinds of resistance are the target decisionmakers likely to have to the proposed action steps and how will the program address them?
- ❑ Will the desired action steps meet many (if not all) of the needs of the target decisionmakers currently met by the conventional behavior, product, or service?

Communicating the Value Proposition

- ❑ How will the program communicate the value proposition to target decisionmakers in a way that reaches them, gains their attention, is perceived as credible, and then convinces them to act?

- ❑ How will the value proposition be framed?
- ❑ What communications channel will be used?

Legal Issues

- ❑ Has the program contacted the EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assistance (OECA) if there are any enforcement- or compliance-related incentives? Has the program contacted the relevant EPA program office if there are any regulatory incentives for the program or if any components could affect regulatory requirements?
- ❑ Has the program considered any potential challenge a stakeholder could make about the program's design and how to respond?

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Chapter 1:

Introduction

Why Partnership Programs?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) began using Partnership Programs prominently in the early 1990's as a unique, non-regulatory approach to environmental management. EPA is increasingly turning to a voluntary approach to protect public health and the environment, and over the past decade, Partnership Programs have become more and more important as tools for the Agency.

Partnership Programs represent a change from "business as usual." Because of this, many in EPA have questioned:

- What are Partnership Programs?
- What should these programs look like?
- What steps do you follow to create a successful Partnership Program?

These guidelines are designed to answer these questions and, in doing so, help EPA develop successful and consistent Partnership Programs.

What Are Partnership Programs?

Partnership Programs are EPA-managed programs that motivate people and organizations to take actions that improve the environment

According to a recent National Academy of Sciences publication, "There has been increasing concern among environmental protection officials in the Federal government about the problem of diminishing returns from regulation... Consequently, there has been a search for alternatives to regulation, including a shift to market-based approaches such as tradable emissions permits, to informational approaches, and to voluntary measures."

Dietz, T. and Paul C. Stern, "New Tools for Environmental Protection"

and public health. Because the programs are voluntary, they focus on convincing decisionmakers to take environmentally significant actions in non-regulatory ways.

EPA Partnership Programs typically:

- Provide alternative ways to meet regulatory and statutory objectives.
- Encourage groups to go beyond regulatory compliance.

See www.epa.gov/partners for more information about EPA's Partnership Programs.

- Use recognition, information, competitive pressure, and other incentives.
- Leverage market forces to provide benefits to participants.

Many EPA Partnership Programs rely on cooperative partnerships. These partnerships bring EPA together with external groups—business and industry, other governmental agencies, tribes, communities, environmental and public interest groups—to promote environmentally preferable actions. These partnerships are meant to be “win-win” propositions that are valuable to both EPA and program participants.

EPA’s Partnership Programs vary greatly—in the environmental issues they address, the changes they seek, the decisionmakers they target, and the value they offer to those decisionmakers. Some of the major program types are:

- Programs that promote the purchase of environmentally preferable products.
- Corporate commitment programs and partnership programs.
- Recognition-only programs.
- Regulatory flexibility programs.

Please see Appendix C: Types of Partnership Programs for more details and examples.

Is a Partnership Program the Right Tool for the Job?

Partnership Programs are a type of policy tool that is best suited for dealing with certain types of environmental problems. Conducting a needs assessment prior to beginning to design the program will help you determine if this is the right tool to solve the problem you have

identified. Partnership Programs should only be used where there is a good business case, and addressable barriers. For example, consider the case of a business-oriented EPA Partnership Program. In general a reasonably strong business case reduces cost, increases revenue, increases profitability, and reduces liability creating an environment in which a Partnership Program can succeed.

Not all environmental problems are appropriate for a Partnership Program. Partnership Programs that offer a good business case that is not being acted upon and where EPA has the capability to overcome barriers, which will be discussed later in this document, are generally the most successful.

How Can These Guidelines Help You Create a Partnership Program?

These Guidelines lay out the structure for designing a Partnership Program and offer practical tips to help you navigate these steps. Throughout the Guidelines, we share lessons learned and experiences compiled by successful Partnership Programs throughout their development and growth.

These Guidelines should be used in conjunction with the *Guidelines for Measuring the Performance of EPA Partnership Programs* and the *Guidelines for Marketing EPA Partnership Programs*.

The appendices also provide additional in-depth information that may be helpful as you work through these Guidelines.

Who Should Use the Partnership Program Design Guidelines?

We developed these guidelines primarily for the following audiences:

- **EPA Partnership Program Managers and Program Staff** can use these Guidelines to plan and design new, improved, or expanded Partnership Programs.
- **EPA Managers and Senior Decision-makers** can use these Guidelines to assess existing, new, improved, or expanded EPA Partnership Programs.

If you have any questions or would like additional information please contact Stephan Sylvan, Partnership Programs Coordinator, based in the EPA's Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, National Center for Environmental Innovation.

What Are the Key Steps in Designing an EPA Partnership Program?

EPA staff members have used many approaches to develop Partnership Programs, and there is not one “correct way” to design an effective and successful program. However, the following major steps have been used successfully by other EPA Partnership Programs in the past. Each of these steps includes lessons learned from the experience of existing EPA Partnership Programs.

Senior managers and decisionmakers should be sure to review the executive summary which contains a useful Checklist for reviewing Programs.

The following chapters thoroughly explain the steps other Partnership Programs have used:

- Chapter 2. Creating a Foundation for Your Program
- Chapter 3. Selecting the “Who” and “What” of Your Program
- Chapter 4. Identifying and Communicating the Value of Your Program
- Chapter 5. Coordinating with Other Programs and Avoiding Conflicts
- Chapter 6. Measuring Results and Securing Agency Resources
- Chapter 7. Building Credibility and Brand Equity for Your Program
- Chapter 8. Rolling Out Your Program
- Chapter 9. Case Study of a Partnership Program

How Do These Guidelines Help EPA Ensure that Partnership Programs Fit Within the Strategic Plan?

With EPA developing so many Partnership Programs, it is important that they all fit within the Agency’s strategic goals and objectives. Partnership Programs should not simply be a piecemeal approach to environmental problems, but rather a coordinated and streamlined effort that reflects the core values of the organization. We use two methods to coordinate our Partnership Programs and ensure that they support the strategic plan:

- I. Using a streamlined notification process.** All Partnership Programs go through the Agency Notification Process. This process ensures that all EPA offices know about new Partnership Programs and are given an opportunity to comment on

them. It also places you in contact with other individuals conducting similar efforts or who have experience in the type of program you are developing.

For more information, see Chapter 5: Coordinating with Other Programs and Avoiding Conflicts and Appendix A: Notification Process.

Notification has three stages, preliminary notification, program development, and final notification. During preliminary notification, you provide an outline of the concept for your Partnership Program. During Program Development, the Partnership Programs Coordinator helps you coordinate your efforts with others in the Agency. Final Notification happens after you've done some preliminary development of your program and it is ready to launch.

The notification process is not an approval process, but a chance to provide information about your program and get information about other programs. This process promotes coordination across the Agency's program offices and shares useful lessons learned, creating more efficient and consistent Partnership Programs.

2. Allocating resources based on program goals and results. All Partnership Programs must show how they will solve environmental problems, how they will meet certain measures, and how they will support EPA's overall goals and objectives. How well you demonstrate your program's potential and its role in meeting Agency priorities could affect the resources you can secure. You'll need to examine the goals and objectives that relate to your program and determine how your program contributes to them. You can access EPA's strategic plan online at:

www.epa.gov/ocfopage/plan/plan.htm

See Chapter 6: Measuring Results and Securing Agency Resources for more information on creating measures and securing resources for your program.

EPA is focusing more and more on measuring its programs against targets set in the strategic plan. As you develop your program, you'll need to identify relevant metrics and gather information on whether your program is meeting those targets.

Chapter 2:

Creating a Foundation for Your Program

The most successful Partnership Programs start with a solid foundation. To create this foundation, you'll need to focus on identifying the basic environmental problem you are tackling, the overall market you are addressing, and the actual change you are hoping to achieve. This step may seem very basic, but it is critical in ensuring that your program design is clear, effective, and fits in with EPA's strategic goals.

This chapter will help you:

- Identify the Environmental Problem
- Identify the Market
- Identify the Environmental Change
- Identify and Secure Necessary Expertise

See Chapter 9: Case Study of a Partnership Program for more concrete examples of the concept discussed. We illustrate each step to show how they all work together to create an effective program.

Identify the Environmental Problem

EPA Partnership Programs are developed to solve important environmental problems. Your program should be able to clearly identify the

environmental problem the program is addressing. You'll need to identify the environmental problem at the highest level (e.g. clean water; clean air, etc.) and then all the way down to the most specific level possible (e.g., public health problems associated with particulates emitted by residential wood burning). Also be sure to compare the environmental problem you identify to any existing regulatory and voluntary efforts to see if there is a niche for the new program.

Identify the “Market”

Once you've identified the environmental program you're tackling, you'll then need to identify the market/industry responsible for that problem. As you identify the market, think as specifically as you can by naming the category of people, consumers, producers, organizations, professionals, etc. the program will be targeting. Conduct research to identify organizational relationships, influential players, organizational culture, organizational barriers, and prior history with initiatives perceived to be similar. All of this information can help you at late stages of your program development. At this stage your

goal should be to develop a deep and strategic knowledge of your market.

The term “market” is placed in quotes because some EPA partnership programs are not market based. That is, they do not operate in an environment where products or services are bought, sold, manufactured, distributed, marketed, etc.

Identify the Environmental Change

Once you identify the market you're targeting, you'll need to identify the change in the market that would lead to the desired environmental progress. At this stage, you don't need to be so specific in identifying the desired change that you include targets and timetables (e.g., the amount of mercury waste reduced and by what year). You will create more specific targets and timelines later after you know more about the design of the program and its potential impact.

Many partnership programs have successfully used consultants when designing programs. It may be worth the time and investment to find those consultants and consulting firms with strong records of providing EPA and other organizations outstanding voluntary environmental program consulting services in a cost effective manner. Ask around within EPA for referrals to good consultants.

Identify and Secure Necessary Expertise

The first step in creating your program is perhaps the most important: enlisting the right people with the right skills to support your program. More than anything, this set of core competencies will help ensure your program's long-term success.

Partnership Programs depend on a different set of core competencies than regulatory or scientific environmental initiatives. In particular, they usually require strong business and communications skills, technical analysis expertise, and a collaborative team that respects these skills.

Partnership Program designers should consider the need for team members possessing the following skills:

- Marketing strategy
- Communications materials design
- Creative web design
- Product positioning
- Brand building
- Persuasive oral and written communications
- Media outreach strategy and implementation
- Customer service
- Business strategy
- Industry/competitive analysis
- Creative engineering analysis of emerging technologies
- Financial, economic, and environmental analysis
- Coalition building
- Business negotiations and deal-making
- Entrepreneurial skills

If your program needs help in developing this expertise internally or finding this expertise through experience consultants, contact the Partnership Programs Coordinator or another member of the EPA Partnership Programs Coordination Team.

Chapter 3:

Selecting the “Who” and “What” of Your Program

Once you’ve laid the foundation for your program, you’ll need to delve into the specifics by selecting target decisionmakers and the desired action steps you want them to take. These steps ensure that you cover the “who” and the “what” of your program: who you’re targeting and what you want them to do.

This chapter will help you:

- Identify Target Decisionmakers to Maximize Leveraging Potential.
- Identify the Action Steps.
- Identify Problems Solved by Action Steps.

Identify the Target Decisionmakers to Maximize Leveraging Potential

As you begin targeting specific decisionmakers, you move from thinking about the market in general to the specific people who have the power to make these environmental changes and are receptive to them. Your target decisionmakers are the “doers” who will help your program achieve success. With industry based programs you also have to determine in what part of the value chain you will intervene. Ask yourself will this program influence manufactur-

Target decisionmakers should never be as broad as “the public,” “consumers,” “manufacturers”, or “state governments.” Coca-Cola, which has many more resources than an EPA Partnership Program, would never try to reach all consumers.

ers or consumers, retailer or wholesalers, where is the point of maximum leverage in the value chain.

When you identify target decisionmakers, you should be as focused and specific as possible. Selecting a highly focused set of target decisionmakers who can, in turn influence many other decisionmakers, makes it more likely your program will be able to:

1. Reach these decisionmakers with limited resources.
2. Understand your decisionmakers well enough to develop a compelling value proposition (explained in the next chapter) that convinces them to take the desired action steps.
3. Use a single value proposition and a set of messages to convince decisionmakers to change behavior.

4. Interest target decisionmakers enough that they may help convince the next set of decisionmakers to take the desired action steps.

Trade associations can be valuable partners as you design and implement your programs. Be aware however, that some trade associations may represent the views of the most oppositional member companies making it difficult to strike agreements with the most receptive member companies.

The following steps are recommended in selecting the most strategic target decisionmakers to maximize leveraging potential of your program:

1. Identify the primary decisionmakers.

These are the decisionmakers whose behavior needs to be changed to achieve significant environmental impact. This is usually a fairly large group. Let's assume your program was trying to prevent water pollution from gasoline leaking from lawnmowers (hypothetical example). The primary decisionmakers might be the owners and operators of the lawnmowers, a very large group. The desired action step might be for them to tighten a bolt on the lawnmowers or to replace old leaky lawnmowers with newer ones. Note that reaching the primary decisionmakers directly (e.g. through phone calls, meetings, direct mail) is usually impossible given their large numbers (millions of lawnmower owners/operators) relative to the limited resources of EPA Partnership Programs.

2. Brainstorm influencer and gatekeeper decisionmakers.

This would be a list of all individuals, groups, companies, governments

who have potential influence on the primary decisionmakers to change their behavior, getting them to take desired "action steps." Ideally, at least some from your brainstormed list will be smaller groups than the primary decisionmaker group. Using the leaking lawnmower example, you might name the following in your brainstorm list: block captains, neighborhood association presidents, fire departments chiefs, fire marshals, homeowner insurance company executives, newspapers editors, owners of landscape companies, lawnmower manufacturer executives, lawnmower retailer executives, etc.

3. Select most strategic influencer decisionmakers from brainstorm list.

This step requires both a deep and broad understanding of the world of lawnmowers and lawn mowing. It will typically require information collection and analysis from many perspectives: economic, financial, institutional/organizational, political, and sometimes legal. The goal is to select just one (or sometimes two or three) decisionmaker groups from the brainstorm list based on their likelihood of **maximizing leveraging potential**. Consider an ideal hypothetical situation using the leaking lawnmower example. Let's assume your program could convince a few key homeowner insurance executives to partner with you in convincing most major lawnmower manufacturers to redesign most of their products to be leak-free. In this example, the insurance executives would represent influence decisionmakers great leveraging potential.

It's very important to recognize that target decisionmakers are individuals and not organizations,

companies, or governments. Organizations don't make decisions, people do. When dealing with anything but the smallest organizations, you will need to identify the department (e.g., customer service department, manufacturing department) and title of the person within that organization you plan to target. For example, a company's vice president of manufacturing will have very different spheres of influence within the firm as well as different interests, goals, concerns, and incentives than the vice president of marketing. By focusing on those people who will benefit the most from your program, you increase the likelihood that they will participate. One approach is to begin with the most potentially receptive target decisionmakers and move outward.

Identify the Action Steps

Action steps are the decisions you want the target decisionmakers to make or the new things you want them to do to achieve the environmental change you identified earlier. An "action step" is the specific action you'd like decisionmakers to take. It can be very specific and defined by the program designers, or more generally defined as broad areas for partner commitments (e.g. waste prevention, recycling, etc), with specific actions defined by individual participants. Some elements of a good action step are:

- **Simple.** The action step is one that target decisionmakers perceive as easy to remember and complete.
- **Significant.** The action step gets results that are environmentally important.
- **Possible.** The action step is within the realm of the possible for the target decisionmakers.
- **Identifiable.** It's easy to tell if someone

has taken the action step or not (e.g., you don't need to bring a watt meter to the person's house to test a product for energy efficiency).

- **Measurable.** You can measure the outcome of the action step and count the number of decisionmakers who have taken the action step.

Remember the "WIFM Principle:" What's In It For Me? All target decisionmakers will want to know how your program will benefit them.

When you develop action steps, you should look at the world through the eyes of your target decisionmaker. You'll need to assess what your program is really asking them to do from *their perspective*. Specifically: what action steps are you asking them to take? And, how will these action steps affect their day-to-day operations? The perceived value of your program is directly related to how it affects business-as-usual. If target decisionmakers see the program as asking a great deal of them and disrupting their daily work, they will see less value in taking part.

As you select an action step, you'll need to consider the level of environmental aggressiveness you're asking for. This can be tricky due to the competing pressures to either specify a "tough action step" or an "easy action step." With a tough action step, you create sustainable changes, but the actions may be so hard that few will take this step. On the other hand, easy action steps are so obvious or simple that your program will get a lot of participants, but the action may not have a significant environmental impact unless very large numbers take this step. It may attract more participants, but make no real, sustainable changes.

Talk to the target decisionmakers throughout the design process. Their input can be helpful in shaping the program and ensuring adoption of the action steps.

As you create action steps, it can be easy to find yourself caught between stakeholder groups. Non-governmental environmental groups often prefer tough action steps because they prevent "green washing" (companies claiming unwarranted environmental benefits for products). At the same time, industry often prefers easy action steps because they are easy to undertake and don't require major investment, effort, or changes in standard operating procedures.

Neither extreme—tough action steps or easy action steps—is typically appropriate when a program is first developed.

A far better approach is to begin your program with an action step already taken by a small share of potential target decisionmakers—the "doers"—who make up perhaps 15 percent of the "market" you are targeting. This approach has several strategic advantages:

- There's greater chance the "non-doers" will be exposed to the "doers" or their activities.
- The "doers" can be an example for others to follow.
- The "doers" can help prove the action step is possible and eliminate the argument that the action step is too difficult or too costly.
- The "doers" could be enlisted to help convince some "non-doers" through peer and competitive pressure.
- The action step is tough enough so that the program should be able to resist attacks for setting too weak a standard.

- The action step is tough enough to ensure the program and the participating decisionmakers represent "excellence" in that particular market.
- In subsequent phases of the program when the "doers" have increased from, say, 15 percent to 50 percent or 60 percent of the total, the action step can be adjusted so it once again represents, approximately 15 percent.

Keep in mind that large organizations, governments, or companies are not monolithic. Just because one or a few individuals in one part of a large organization, government, or company have little interest in taking the desired action steps, does not mean others will not be interested. Different departments have different professionals, cultures, needs, issues, and leaders. Some may be more receptive than others.

As you set up your program and identify action steps, be careful when thinking about defining multiple action step levels of participation (e.g., Gold, Silver, and Bronze levels of participation). Some state leadership programs have used this multi-level approach, and been successful. It can allow programs to give different support and recognition to different kinds of partners. However, multiple action steps have some risks that should be considered:

- 1. Loss of producer leveraging.** Product/service producers rarely, if ever, promote claims about their products being "2nd best" or "3rd best" as the Silver and Bronze levels. This will mean the program will not be able to leverage the marketing resources of product/service producers.
- 2. Loss of branding.** Multiple levels of performance are not the way most buyers/con-

sumers make their buying decisions. Most do not make significant efforts to accumulate additional information or investigate multi-level indicators of product/service performance.

- 3. Lack of resources.** Few EPA Partnership Programs will ever have sufficient resources to adequately communicate multiple levels to a reasonable number of target buyers/consumers.
- 4. Added Complexity.** Most EPA Partnership Programs struggle to maintain a single standard of performance or level of participation. Multiple levels of participation/performance add a layer of complexity few programs can afford.

Identify Problems Solved by Action Steps

For your program to be compelling, you'll want to make the outcomes as concrete as possible for target decisionmakers. To do this, you need to identify an important problem expe-

rienced by decisionmakers which would be solved if they were to take the desired action steps. Some of the most effective Partnership Programs (EPA and others) help target decisionmakers solve a problem they either already perceive as serious or become convinced is serious.

One good example is EPA's Green Lights program (now sunset and folded into the Energy Star Buildings Program). The Green Lights program did not just solve a possible environmental problem associated with commercial buildings. The Green Lights program also convinced Chief Financial Officers and other senior decisionmakers that one of their problems—bringing corporate operating expenses down—could be partially solved by upgrading the energy efficiency of their lighting. The program also made some progress in convincing some corporate decisionmakers that upgrading their lighting could also help them address another major challenge: boosting worker productivity.

Chapter 4:

Identifying and Communicating the Value of Your Program

The value proposition is the “deal” your program is offering to target decisionmakers—the action steps that you are asking them to take and what they’ll get in return for taking those steps. At this stage, you’ll need to define the value proposition of your program and communicate it to your target decisionmakers. The stronger and clearer your value proposition is, the greater the value target decisionmakers will see in your program. The bottom line is that your value proposition must convince your target decisionmakers that your program is worthwhile to them.

This chapter will help you:

- Create a Strong and Clear Value Proposition.
- Identify Barriers.
- Translate Value Proposition into an Agreement.
- Address Barriers with Tools and Customer Service.
- Communicate the Value Proposition.

Create a Strong and Clear Value Proposition

The best value propositions solve important problems experienced and perceived by de-

cisionmakers. For manufacturers this could be gaining access to new markets. For parents this could be preventing their kids from getting cancer. For cash-strapped consumers it could be cutting rising energy bills.

As you develop your value proposition, you’ll again need to try and see the world as your target decisionmakers do: What would be most compelling to them? What deal will make the program worth it for them? Only by thinking the way your decisionmakers do can you be sure you will compel them to take the action steps you’ve identified.

While recognition and awards are a component of many EPA Partnership Programs, recognition and awards alone are typically not sufficient incentives for the target decisionmakers of most EPA Partnership Programs. Increasingly, target decisionmakers will need more than recognition to take the desired action steps. Once a strong value proposition has been established around other valuable incentives, recognition and awards can serve as “icing on the cake” for those target decisionmakers who value it.

The value proposition is only as strong as its perceived value by target decisionmakers. When

developing the value proposition consider:

- Problems the target decisionmakers might believe would be solved by taking the desired action steps (both environmental and non-environmental problems but especially non-environmental problems).
- New opportunities target decisionmakers might believe would open up as a result of taking the desired action steps.
- Services EPA might offer (or get third parties to offer) the target decisionmakers if they take the desired action steps.

Partnership Programs can offer a variety of other valuable services to program participants. EPA has a unique knowledge base that can be shared through useful information and technical assistance. These programs provide networking opportunities, can address company image issues within a community, and can contribute to cost savings. Be sure to look at all possible areas to which your program can add value when developing your value proposition.

Identify Barriers

Since participation in your program is voluntary, you must assure participants that the value you are offering outweighs the costs. It is difficult to create a compelling value proposition without realistically assessing the barriers that your target audience may perceive. When you identify barriers, you're looking at the realities of your program: What could derail it? What could get in the way of a target decisionmaker buying in to

Remember the "Doctrine of No Surprises:" identify up front the problems, issues, and barriers that could derail your program so that you can address them from the beginning.

the program? How can you deal with these barriers up front to ensure the long-term success of your program?

Partnership Programs work best when demonstrating better ways for the target decisionmaker to meet their own objectives while also helping protect the environment. Target decisionmakers are obviously less likely to respond to Partnership Programs that require them to incur significant cost or put them at a disadvantage relative to their competition. Talking to the target decision makers throughout the design process will help you ensure that you are meeting their needs.

To identify barriers:

1. Talk to decisionmakers. Talk to those who have taken the desired action steps already as well as those who haven't. Asking them why they did or did not take the desired action steps is often helpful. Frequently you'll need to spend some time and probe to determine why decisionmakers made certain decisions to gain enough insight to contribute to your program design. Before talking to target decisionmakers, however, consider strategically how you want to introduce them to your program. For example, it may not help if certain target decisionmakers form their impressions of your initiative and respond in kind before you have fully defined key elements of the initiative.

2. Observe the organization closely. Look at factors related to how the organization operates that could impact your program. Factors commonly overlooked are the standard operating procedures within the organization, the organizational culture of the

organization, the organizational cultures of sister organizations or of the parent organization or company, the values of key people occupying key positions of authority, the values of key people who lack the formal authority but wield informal authority, external and perceived professional or industry norms, and external events.

3. Create a cost/benefit analysis. The costs and benefits are relative to a business-as-usual scenario (e.g., if a new financial investment were being considered, the cost would be the incremental cost difference between the “standard” option and the environmentally preferable option). Costs include the initial costs at time of purchase or investment as well as any additional maintenance, time, and operating costs.

Benefits include the savings to the organization as a result of being in the program. The benefits could include savings in operating and maintenance costs, reduced business risk, reduced health risk, or enhanced public relations. Savings depend on the type of action steps and are based on an assumption of what would have occurred if the desired action steps were never taken.

In some cases the savings can be difficult to predict. When action steps are part of a larger system, projected savings depend on more than just the action steps themselves; they also depend on all the other parts of the system working correctly.

As you create a cost/benefit analysis, you should also address situations in which the savings may depreciate over time. For example, as toilet flappers age and are

replaced, the gallons/flush of a low-flow toilet can increase dramatically. You would need to address the reduction in savings over time in your cost/benefit analysis.

4. Define the investment opportunity for the participant. For an action to be financially attractive, the decisionmakers must believe that any up-front costs will be recovered over a reasonable period of time. What defines an attractive investment to a set of target decisionmakers depends on a variety of factors. Generally, a “payback period” should not go beyond several years (the time it takes to recoup all the up-front costs and begin to experience savings).

Other aspects of the desired action steps can make an apparently less financially attractive investment more attractive. For example, if the action helps reduce the risk of higher future business costs, some organizations will make a change.

This investment opportunity is the case with green power purchasing. Some companies are locking in long-term contracts for green power to help hedge against higher natural gas prices. Other examples could include an action's expected positive impact on the company's brand or corporate image (which might increase future corporate valuation and stockholder satisfaction) and on employee morale (which might help with hiring and retention).

Never underestimate the importance of good responsiveness and overall customer service. They can help overcome limitations in many areas of the program.

As we uncover good examples illustrating the methods outlined in the Barriers table we will add them to subsequent versions of the document.

Address Barriers with Tools and Customer Service

Target decisionmakers may perceive many barriers when approached by an EPA Partnership Program to take specific action steps. You should be prepared to address and overcome these barriers within your program. To do this, identify key services or tools you could offer

to the target decisionmakers which could help overcome barriers or just make the action steps more compelling. You could, for example, offer training, technical support, analytical tools, media exposure, etc., to address barriers. Sometimes, several tools and services need to be applied together to overcome a barrier and achieve the stated goals.

The table below identifies some common barriers we've identified in EPA Partnership Programs and the methods that have been successfully used to address them:

| What Are the Typical Barriers? | How Can You Overcome This Barrier? |
|--|---|
| Costs | |
| Target decisionmakers perceive initial costs or ongoing costs to be too high. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus initially on a set of target decisionmakers willing and able take the desired action steps until price comes down due to technology innovation, economies of scale, "learning by doing", etc. • Arrange for a "market aggregation," that is, getting large buyers of the product/service to conduct a mass purchase to bring initial cost down. • Support product research, development, and/or demonstration projects to bring down the initial cost. • Bring in a third party willing to defray the initial costs (e.g. Energy Service Company or "ESCO" model). • Produce a communications strategy to convince target decisionmakers that the higher initial costs are worth the investment. • Work with financial institutions in developing financial products to address cash flow problems. • Consider ways in which a product can be offered instead as a service (e.g., a company pays for the service of carpeting instead of the carpeting itself). |
| Convenience | |
| Target decisionmakers believe they will be burdened with paperwork or data collection. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider simplified Web-based enrollment and reporting for partners. • Wait until the program matures and increases in value to target decisionmakers before asking for additional information. • Offer to collect information over the phone. • Communicate how quickly program partners completed the program's paperwork (if true). |

| What Are the Typical Barriers? | How Can You Overcome This Barrier? |
|--|--|
| Target decisionmakers lack the time to learn about the desired action steps. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enlist skilled graphic designers, Web designers, and writers to make action steps seem as simple as possible. • Consider simplifying or reducing the number of action steps. |
| Misperceptions | |
| Target decisionmakers believe “green products” will not perform as well as conventional products (inferior quality) or not perform as claimed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in the partner agreement a statement that product performance must be at least as good as conventional products. • Convince a trusted third party to test and report on product performance. • Develop a media campaign (or get key stories placed) with a theme “A new, improved generation of water-saving toilets, etc.” • Enlist trusted leaders to make statements about product performance. • Ask satisfied users of the product to make statements about product performance/satisfaction. • Organize a “try it” before buying it policy. • Develop over time a trusted brand that stands for a high-performing product (as well as other things). |
| Target decisionmakers do not trust EPA as a partner. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convince a third party organization trusted by the target decisionmakers to do one or more of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Speak on behalf of the EPA program at conferences, meetings, etc. (2) Endorse the program through a letter, article, or quote (for use on Web site, brochures, etc.). (3) Join a coalition with the EPA in support of the program and communicate with the target decisionmakers through the coalition. (4) Contact the target decisionmakers directly, convincing them to join the program. • Hire, through an EPA contract vehicle, an individual respected by the target decisionmakers (to produce reports, share opinions at meetings, etc.). • Convince a trusted third party organization to be the primary contact for target decisionmakers. |
| Knowledge or Training | |
| Target decisionmakers are unaware that your program exists. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convince the distributors most frequently used by target decisionmakers to carry the “green product” and make the “green products” prominent in their product offering materials (catalogs, Web sites, advertisements, product spec sheets, etc.). • Produce a directory explaining the services, or products your program offers (using the Web or other means). • Develop a media campaign (or get key stories placed) highlighting the existence of products (possibly partnering with producers of the “green products” or services). • Convince decisionmakers who have implemented the action steps to tell other target decisionmakers about their success. • Organize providers of the product or service into a task force to help solve the problem. |

| What Are the Typical Barriers? | How Can You Overcome This Barrier? |
|---|---|
| Target decisionmakers do not know how to participate in your program. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce easy to use materials or Web sites explaining how customers can participate in your program. • Produce materials or Web site content for a trusted third party to send to target decisionmakers. • Organize the providers of the product or service into a task force to help solve the problem. • Develop a customer service hotline or e-mail system to answer participants questions. |
| Target decisionmakers do not know how to implement your program. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop easy to find and use training materials or Web sites and/or a training course. • Enlist a trusted professional association to conduct the training and/or add this training to professional certification. • Consider using cost effective training technologies like Web-conferencing and mass-telephone conferencing. • Develop a "train the trainers" program. • Convince key media organizations (e.g., trade journals) to help educate and train. • Develop a customer service hotline or e-mail system helping people with product usage problems. • Develop software on how to use the product/service. • Organize providers of the product or service into a task force to help solve the problem. |
| Availability | |
| Target decisionmakers cannot take the recommended action steps because they have not been commercialized. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize a "golden carrot" program that gives a significant monetary or other reward to manufacturers producing a fully commercialized "green product." • Find or fund research demonstrating willingness of potential target decisionmakers to take the desired action steps. • Show producers evidence demonstrating how producers in other markets had similar beliefs only to find later that a lucrative market exists. • Convince a large buyer to issue a statement (or contract) about their willingness to take action steps meeting certain specifications and price. |
| Target decisionmakers cannot take the recommended action steps because they are not available through the conventional distribution channels. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Web-based or other directory of recommended products and how to purchase them. • Convince buyers to purchase through conventional channels once the product is available in that way. • Find or fund research demonstrating willingness of potential buyers to purchase the product/service through conventional channels. • Develop a media campaign promoting the virtues of the "green products"/services (possibly partnering with the producers of the products/services). |

| What Are the Typical Barriers? | How Can You Overcome This Barrier? |
|--|--|
| Incentives | |
| The individuals benefiting most from the action steps are not the same as the target decisionmakers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore ways in which those who will benefit from the desired action steps can share the value with target decisionmakers. • Consider ways in which a product can be offered instead as a service (e.g., a company pays for the service of carpeting instead of the carpeting itself). |
| Target decisionmakers don't perceive sufficient value in the action steps or don't know how to estimate the value. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Web tool or other system to help target decisionmakers estimate the value of the desired action steps (cost and benefits). • Consider targeting different decisionmakers. • Explore serious problems experienced by target decisionmakers that could be solved with action steps. • Consider developing and offering a valuable service to target decisionmakers in exchange for taking the desired action steps. • Enlist a skilled marketing communications specialist in reframing the value proposition. |
| Urgency | |
| Target decisionmakers do not see any urgency to take the desired action steps. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a "join by" deadline to participate in some kind of event recognizing or awarding participants (commonly referred to as a "cliff event"). • Convince decisionmakers who have already taken the action steps to contact your target decisionmakers, suggesting they take the same steps. |
| Few target decisionmakers have taken the action steps or seem willing to consider them. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask "doer" decisionmakers to help convince the "non-doer" decisionmakers to take the action steps. Research finds this "peer pressure" to be highly effective in solving many environmental problems. |

You may encounter different barriers than those we've listed above. You may also find that the suggested ways to overcome the barrier don't work with your specific target decisionmakers. This underscores the importance of learning as much as you can about your market and your target decisionmakers and potentially doing some investigative trials of your own. To do this, observe your target decisionmakers and their organizational context. Then, define a hypothesis about a perceived obstacle and a value proposi-

tion to overcome the obstacle. Then test the hypothesis on some target decisionmakers. The proof of the hypothesis will "be in the pudding;" target decisionmakers will take the desired action steps as planned.

Translate the Value Proposition into an Agreement

Many successful Partnership Programs translate the value proposition into a written agreement with partner companies, organizations,

or governments. Often under the name MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) or just “Partner Agreement”, these agreements may include sections describing:

- Program background. This could include a description of the environmental problem and/or the environmental improvement opportunity addressed by the program.
- Definitions of roles and special terms.
- The scope of the agreement. This might include what types of companies, organizations, or governments are eligible for this partnership and/or what product, service, or behavior categories it addresses.
- What’s in it for the partner. This would include what EPA and other supporters will do for the partner or what other value the partner might derive. In the case of eco-seal oriented programs it might give a company permission to market qualified products using the eco-seal.
- What’s expected of the partner in return. This would include the action steps defined above.
- Dispute resolution and enforcement steps that might be taken in case of non-compliance.
- How a partner may exit from the agreement.
- Logo use guidelines. (see www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=logos.pt_guidelines)

Partner agreements don’t need to be overly long and legalistic. Your program may be better served by a shorter, simpler document that is accompanied by marketing materials describing some of the information above.

The following are Web sites containing sample partner agreements from the Energy Star and

Best Workplaces for Commuters Programs:

- www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/product_specs/eligibility/tv_vcr_elig.pdf
- www.energystar.gov/ia/about/join/Sample_PA.pdf
- www.ergweb.com/projects/ccli/enroll/doiqualify.htm

For other sample partner agreements or advice on crafting one, please contact the EPA’s Partnership Programs Coordinator or another member of the EPA’s Partnership Program Coordination Team.

Communicate the Value Proposition

Once you have a value proposition, you’ll need to communicate it to target decisionmakers by developing a communication plan that frames out:

- How you will reach target decisionmakers.
- How you will gain their attention.
- How the value proposition will be communicated so that target decisionmakers perceive it as credible and compelling.

The most important thing to remember when creating your communication plan is that the value proposition must be compelling. Only those messages that reach the decisionmakers both emotionally and rationally have a chance to “cut through the noise” so they are actually heard and acted upon.

Example: Consider an advertisement for hybrid vehicles that emphasizes the message: “save money.” While true, such a message is unlikely to be unique or emotionally compelling to the target decisionmakers given how worn out that message is. An underlying message “impress your friends as a hip environmental and technology leader,” could be more unique and compelling.

In order for you to develop a unique, compelling message that is heard by target decisionmakers, follow four steps for communication:

1. Ensure your message is communicated by a respected source of information.

For example, if you are trying to convince a Vice President of marketing to take some action steps, try to include a strong marketing professional on your team in the “pitching” and idea generation phase. These marketing professionals on your team will probably be able to “speak the same language” as the target marketing Vice Presidents as well as share experiences and values. They should therefore be able to more quickly and easily establish rapport with the target marketing Vice Presidents and potentially be more successful in getting them to take the desired action steps. Finding a respected internal champion of your initiative within the target organization is another approach.

2. Communicate through a channel that reaches the decisionmakers.

Do not rely too heavily on brochures and mailings to convince target decisionmakers to take desired action steps. Few people will take significant action steps because they were sent or read a good brochure or other mailing. Targeted mailings to specific target decisionmakers have been used successfully, and when followed-up with a phone call can have a great impact. In general, well-planned, timed, and executed phone calls often have a bigger impact than brochures alone.

3. Reach decisionmakers at a time and place when they are receptive.

For a message to be compelling, you must reach

decisionmakers when they are most likely to listen and respond. You might, for example, reach target decisionmakers through a meeting where you can have their full attention, rather than through a mass mailing that has no personal impact. In the case of industry-based Partnership Programs, trade shows can often be great places to meet target decisionmakers face-to-face in a non-formal yet business-oriented setting.

4. Use language and imagery target decisionmakers can assimilate quickly and easily.

When talking about your program, speak in plain English. Use common, everyday terms whenever communicating about the program to outside parties. Unless your target decisionmakers are environmental professionals, environmental science or policy terms like “non-point source,” “nutrients” as pollutants, or “tons of carbon monoxide” should be avoided. They will probably mean little if anything to them. Worse, you could inadvertently send the message that you are difficult to work with, don't understand them, or feel they must be as knowledgeable and concerned about environmental issues as you are in order to partner with you. If possible, introduce your initiative using a metaphor or analogy familiar and appealing to the target decisionmaker (e.g., “Some people have described this initiative as the ‘Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval’ for environmentally responsible disposal of electronics equipment”).

Every interaction your program has with target decisionmakers and other customers must be positive and should reinforce the value proposition.

Chapter 5:

Coordinating with Other Programs and Avoiding Conflicts

Non-Regulatory initiatives are not only used increasingly by EPA; they are also used by other government agencies, industry representatives, and independent, non-governmental organizations. With all of these Partnership Programs, it is important to avoid duplicating efforts that are already underway, either at EPA or in other organizations. If too many programs are created that focus on the same target decisionmaker, it can create “initiative fatigue” and other problems for participants.

This chapter will help you:

- Identify and Coordinate with Other Programs.
- Notify the Agency of Your Program.

Identify and Coordinate with Other Programs

With a growing number of Partnership Programs within and outside EPA, it is increasingly likely that your program may target the same environmental issue, market, communications channels, and/or decisionmakers as another program. It is therefore important that you identify and strategically coordinate with all efforts, especially EPA efforts. Coordination will keep you

from potentially confusing decisionmakers and other EPA customers, wasting public resources, and under-achieving on your program’s environmental goals.

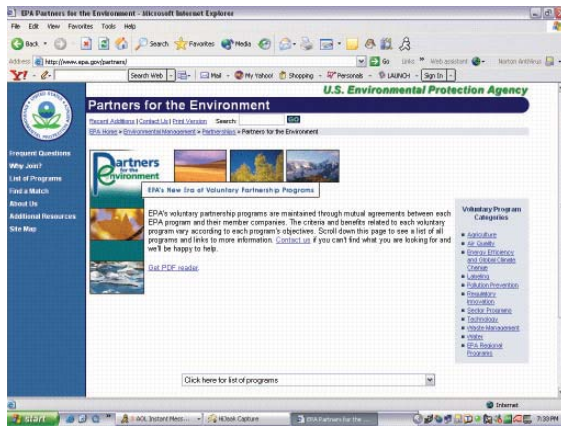
Efforts Within EPA

EPA currently has over 70 Partnership Programs targeting a wide-range of participants from different sectors. To avoid over saturating a particular sector or market segment and to maximize the impact of limited resources, you should try to work collaboratively with other programs that overlap in the areas you’re targeting. Coordinating with others can allow you to build on successful practices and get “lessons learned” to avoid pitfalls. In addition it may help you identify technical assistance programs, grant programs, Memoranda of Understanding, or public information efforts that take similar approaches or affect the same customers. Several Agency resources can help you learn more about other Partnership Programs:

Partnership Program Web-Portal

The Partnership Program Web-portal is a good place to start getting an idea of other programs currently being offered across the Agency. This

site, <www.epa.gov/partners>, provides an up-to-date list of Partnership Programs operating across the Agency, their environmental goals, the sector or partners on which they focus, and direct links to each programs Web site.



Partnership Programs Coordinator

Housed in the Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation (OPEI), National Center for Environmental Innovation (NCEI), the Partnership Programs Coordinator is a key point of contact for anyone designing a Partnership Program. This individual is responsible for coordinating an intra-agency workgroup on Partnership Programs, answering more in-depth questions about current initiatives, and putting program staff in touch with current experts on a variety of topics. The coordinator also guides new programs through the Agency-wide notification process.

Efforts Within Other Federal Agencies

The EPA is not the only government entity using Partnership Programs to obtain environmental results. Other federal agencies such as Department of Energy and OSHA also use voluntary partnerships. Prior to launching a new program,

review whether your program overlaps with other federal initiatives. Information about other programs can typically be found on the Internet, but if you need additional information, you can talk with the Partnership Programs Coordinator.

If you find a program with similar goals, consider entering into a partnership with the sponsors of that program. *Energy Star* is one EPA program that has used this model, partnering with the Department of Energy to help expand efforts and obtain increased environmental results.

The *Best Workplaces for Commuters Initiative* is another example. This EPA program partnered with the U.S. Department of Transportation to build an even stronger initiative.

Efforts Within State, Local, or Private Organizations

Recently, voluntary environmental initiatives have become increasingly popular in Regional, state, and local governments, and other private organizations. In addition to those programs run out of headquarters, EPA currently has over 20 regionally-based programs that operate at a local level. State and local governments also use Partnership Programs to achieve their environmental objectives, and many non-governmental and community organizations have developed programs aiming at local issues.

To ensure that your program supplements ongoing activities, coordinate with the EPA regional office and state and local agencies to ensure that you are not duplicating ongoing programs. Look into the possibility of partnering with some of these efforts to create a more robust program.

In addition to governments, both industry-sponsored and non-governmental sponsored

Partnership Programs exist. For example, the American Forest & Paper Association and the American Chemistry Council both developed Partnership Programs aimed at addressing environmental issues related to their sectors. Such industry-based programs could offer an opportunity for partnerships, but could also complicate the prospects for separate government-run programs attempted in the same sector.

Notify the Agency of Your Program

If you are developing a new or significantly expanded EPA Partnership Program, you will need to go through the Agency Notification Process (Appendix A). This process ensures that all EPA offices know about new Partnership Programs and are given an opportunity to comment on them and properly coordinate with them. It also places you in contact with other individuals conducting similar efforts or who have experience in the type of program you are developing. Notification is not an approval process, but a chance to notify the Agency so that you can get

[See Appendix A: Notification Process for more extensive guidelines.](#)

information about other programs. This process promotes coordination across the Agency's program offices and shares useful lessons learned, creating more efficient and consistent Partnership Programs.

To notify the agency, you will go through the following, general steps:

- 1. Preliminary Notification for New and Expanding Programs.** Once the program office identifies a concept for a new program, you'll submit an outline of your program's concept to the Partnership Programs Coordinator (PPC).
- 2. Program Development.** During program development, the PPC facilitates communication and information exchange with other programs and access to support services. The PPC can assist with any questions related to the guidelines.
- 3. Detailed Program Proposal.** After your program has done some initial development and is ready to launch, you'll provide a developed program proposal.

Chapter 6:

Measuring Results and Securing Agency Resources

Environmental measures and agency resource investment are important topics to address when creating your program.

These two issues may seem unrelated, but they're not. The bottom line is that you must create effective measures and accurate environmental estimates to illustrate the potential success of your program. How successfully you frame your program in terms of near-term, medium-term, and long-term success directly relates to your ability to secure resources both within the Agency and outside of it.

This chapter will help you:

- Define the Measures of Environmental Impact.
- Estimate Environmental Results and Cost Effectiveness.
- Consider Market Transformation and Exit Strategy.
- Secure EPA and Other Resources.

Define the Measures of Environmental Impact

In designing a Partnership Program, you should consider the types of information you will need

A more detailed discussion of these topics is covered in the Guidelines for Measuring the Performance of EPA Partnership Programs.

to measure progress, and how this information will be obtained. Measurement is essential for communicating with the public, with partners, and external reviewers. Measures produce more than just standard information on program accomplishments. They encourage participation by showing the benefits to the public, the environment, business.

Effective measures strengthen our ability to represent these programs to external reviewers. An effective approach for measuring progress will be useful for providing information on results expected under the Government Performance and Results Act. Information on program progress may be ultimately be needed to respond to demands for evaluation under PART—OMB's Program Assessment Rating Tool.

Like other Agency programs, Partnership Programs should measure environmental outcomes. More traditional measures like behavior change, and outputs and activities may also be appropriate measures depending on your program design. Not every program needs all of these measures.

The need to measure progress should not outweigh the need for environmental results. Rigorous measurement of results needs to be balanced with feasibility and availability of information. Demanding too much information from partners can drive down participation. Use a limited number of measures. Data necessary to measure results may not be gathered or recorded if too much is asked.

EPA Partnership Programs built around business partnerships should develop measures in consultation with potential providers of the information such as the business partners. Accounting or other information collection systems may already be in place within the firm. Third parties, such as trade associations, can potentially play a useful role in both gathering information and assuring quality or confidentiality, and in suggesting ways that information requests can be harmonized with sources of information that might already be available in the business community.

You'll need to define measurements of progress and estimate environmental impact over time. To do this, use the best and most reasonable data and assumptions about the desired action steps, target decisionmakers, the value proposition, and the communication plan.

Estimate Environmental Results and Cost Effectiveness

Sometimes measures are arrayed as a hierarchy: environmental outcomes are a preferred approach, and the other measures, such as outputs and activities, are regarded as interim steps. For Partnership Programs, all these measures are potentially relevant. Measures of behavior change, and program outputs, may be useful in estimating your environmental results—can

the Partnership Program take credit for the behavioral change, and can the environmental result be attributed to the behavioral change. And some Partnership Programs are aimed at improving resource efficiency, rather than a precisely defined environmental problem.

In addition, Partnership Programs also need information on benefits for program participants. These may include cost savings for business participants, evidence of voluntary participation, and other information that is potentially helpful in promoting private party participation.

You must conduct an analysis of your program to show how it maximizes environmental results relative to the amount of resources being invested in it.

Consider Market Transformation

Even as you are launching a new program, it is important to consider how to institutionalize the desired action steps, thereby making the environmental benefits you are trying to achieve sustainable. Once this occurs, you can focus your efforts on a new environmental problem and the resources can be reallocated. So the program design should address how you will exit the program when your goal is met. Of course, this also requires clear program goals and reliable measurement of progress toward those goals.

It is possible that the relationship will need to continue as the program and participants reach toward a new goal, but it is also possible that the program will end and something new will evolve. Another possibility is that an external group (e.g., a non-governmental organization) might adopt the basic program approach and manage the effort, removing the need for EPA sponsorship.

The success of certain Partnership Programs has led some stakeholders to consider and embrace a concept called “market transformation”—using voluntary means to achieve not just incremental environmental, but significant and lasting, environmental impact. For more information about “market transformation,” see the research literature or the EPA’s Partnership Programs Coordinator.

In several cases Partnership Programs have been able to achieve substantial environmental results through market transformation. Market transformation is achieved by using market forces and a powerful value proposition to make the desired action steps nearly imperative for most decision-makers within a market. This allows EPA to step away from the program and rely on the market to entice continued participation.

Secure EPA and Other Resources

Once you have a clear idea of your program design and understand the elements needed to make your program successful, you should determine what resources would be needed. A Partnership Program has specific goals, and to deliver results effectively you should have a clear understanding of the resources that would be needed to meet your target decisionmakers needs (i.e., people, start-up costs, contract dollars, etc.). Pilot programs can often be a good way to examine the true cost of an initiative,

Currently the Agency has a number of Partnership Programs with significant operating budgets, but it also has an equal number of programs operating with budgets of less than \$200,000.

and can be done at reduced risk to the Agency. With limited resources a pilot can be launched and tested, and the results can be used to garner needed resources if warranted.

Regardless of whether your program is a pilot or a full-scale initiative, you should conduct a cost analysis. A cost analysis compares the anticipated environmental results with the amount it would cost the Agency to implement the program. This analysis should include not only the direct costs to your program but also the possible resource impact on other EPA program offices (e.g., OECA, for enforcement screens of participants proposed for Agency recognition) and the EPA Regional Offices (e.g., if Regional direct involvement or coordination is likely).

Also examine other efforts (voluntary and non-voluntary) that are underway to help meet your chosen goal. There may already be programs focusing on solving this environmental problem and additional efforts may not be needed and may actually hinder on-going programs. Resources could be extended by partnering with these efforts, or could be allocated to an alternate effort where environmental results are needed.

Chapter 7:

Building Credibility and Brand Equity for Your Program

Credibility and brand equity are essential to nearly all EPA Partnership Programs, even those that do not target consumers or citizens. They define how your target decisionmakers and supporters will perceive your program and therefore how they will respond to it.

This chapter will help you:

- Brand the Program
- Select and Protect your Trademark
- Establish Credibility for the Program

Brand the Program

Too many voluntary environmental program developers see branding as just one more step and sometimes as an optional one at that. Still others recognize the importance of branding, but believe it's primarily about program logos and names. Both of these positions minimize the importance of thinking strategically and comprehensively about your program's brand. Just

Not all programs will evolve to the level that requires fully branding the program. However the branding principles apply to all programs regardless of size.

like the world's most successful companies, well designed Partnership Programs make branding central to everything they do. After all, the brand you create determines how your target decisionmakers (and others) perceive your program and the value it offers.

If branding is done well, your target decisionmakers will perceive your program positively. They may come to see your program, for example, as a savvy, flexible, problem solving business partner that is responsive to their needs. This is a "brand," and it is one that could help tremendously when proposing that decisionmakers take new action steps to improve environmental protection.

If branding is done poorly, on the other hand, your target decisionmakers could perceive your program as bureaucratic, unresponsive, uncoordinated, redundant, ignorant of their world, and uninterested in learning about it. This is also a "brand," but it is one that virtually assures a program's long-term demise.

To build a strong brand, every touch point—each time the target decisionmakers are exposed directly or indirectly to your program—must reinforce the value proposition. As you

might expect, these touch points include the program's name, logo, and slogan. But they also include all print materials, Web sites, and slides associated with your program whether produced by you or a supporting organization. A brand also includes every e-mail and phone call, even callers who speak on behalf of the program and how they speak. It is important to remember that even the best brands and programs can be destroyed by a bad customer experience or a public relations problem (e.g. compact fluorescent light bulbs that don't fit fixtures or take too long to turn on).

Developing a strong brand not only reflects well on the program, but also on EPA's reputation for effectively protecting human health and the environment. By adhering to sound branding principles, Partnership Programs will be consistent in their ability to deliver environmental results—and positive experiences—to target decisionmakers.

The *Guidelines for Marketing EPA Partnership Programs* include more information on how to brand your program.

*More details about how to brand your program will be included in the publication *Guidelines for Marketing EPA Partnership Programs*.*

Select and Protect your Trademark

The most visible aspect of your brand will be the program's name and/or logo. Target decisionmakers and other customers will use the name/logo to identify the program and the value it provides. As a result, the program name and/or logo should be tied to the primary message you are conveying to the target decisionmaker and should reinforce the value proposition.

1. Using trademarks in establishing

your brand. The program's name or logo functions as a mark. There are several types of marks. Each has a specific purpose, sends a specific message, and has restrictions or requirements regarding how it may be used. Most importantly, all marks must be monitored for proper usage and protected when used improperly. Failure to do so can result in an abandonment of EPA's right to limit who can use the mark, which can destroy the integrity of the program.

Successful and effective use of marks in connection with a Partnership Program requires a well thought out plan of the proposed use(s) of the mark(s) both in the short and long term and an identification of who within the distribution channels, including the actual customer, would be allowed to use the mark.

2. Selecting a name/logo. A well-named program implies both the value achieved via environmental results and any non-environmental problem it may be addressing. However, if your program wants to be the exclusive owner of the name or logo and control who uses the mark, then you need to select a name/logo that is not "generic" or "merely descriptive" of the program and its characteristics or purpose. This can be difficult when also seeking a name that conveys the value of the program to the customer.

Additionally, if you want to use "green" or "star" or other commonly used words as part of the program name, there are other considerations. Given that other programs have similar names, you need to understand

the meaning the word has with current EPA customers and identify how the new program will be consistent with and help build upon that meaning.

Prior to finalizing a selection of the program's name or logo, a proper search needs been conducted to ensure that the Agency's use of the name or logo does not infringe the rights of any third party. A search can also help to determine the strength of the mark for protection purposes.

Establish Credibility for the Program

Closely related to branding is the concept of credibility. You want your overall brand to be seen as trustworthy and credible in the eyes of target decisionmakers. Therefore, everything you do should support the basic principle of credibility: say what you mean and mean what you say. Some elements of credibility to remember as you develop and brand your program are:

- **Credibility of the person delivering the message.** Ensure the individual (or entity) communicating the value proposition is credible to the target decisionmakers. In some cases, this may be a third party recruited by EPA to carry its message.

- **Credibility of the information itself.** EPA should only be communicating information based on reliable sources and analysis.
- **Consistency of information.** EPA must only communicate information consistent with other EPA sources of information and with external organizations. To the extent possible, your information should be consistent with other EPA messages and with messages delivered on similar topics by other organizations.
- **Honesty of information about environmental impact.** EPA must be careful not to claim organizations or companies are achieving environmental results when they are merely "free riders."
- **Support of products or services highlighted as environmentally superior by EPA.** EPA must be careful not to highlight products or services which perform so poorly they give the EPA or the program a bad name.

Recognize that the EPA name can be a major asset. Everyone at EPA has a responsibility to protect it.

Chapter 8:

Rolling Out Your Program

Programs can be rolled out in two different formats, as a pilot program or as a full-scale program. A pilot program is limited in size and scope and focuses on a limited geographic area, market segment, or limited number of target decisionmakers. A full-scale program does not have a “test period,” but rolls out immediately on a larger scale.

This chapter will help you:

- Choose the Type of Program
- Create a Program Launch

Choose the Type of Program

I. Pilot program. A pilot program is a good way to test a new idea with limited resources. A pilot program allows you to test your program on a small scale and see if, in practice, you achieve the environmental results you hoped for. Some ideas look good on paper, but do not actually deliver the expected results when put into practice. Since a pilot program is limited in size and scope, it subjects the Agency to reduced risk and allows an idea to be tested with the potential for scale-up later. If a program doesn't obtain the results expected, it can be adjusted

before it is presented to additional target decisionmakers.

You should consider the following issues when developing a pilot:

- **Receptivity of target decisionmakers.** It is usually wise to initiate a pilot with highly receptive target decisionmakers or other partners since success is very important and some program kinks have not been worked out.
- **Applicability of results to other areas.** You want to have a pilot that other target decisionmakers or supporters would find credible (for example, don't choose Denver as the pilot site if key Houston decisionmakers won't find a successful Denver pilot applicable).
- **Gaining the attention of the next group of target decisionmakers.** If the pilot is successful, you typically want it selected and designed in such a way that it will get noticed by the next group of target decisionmakers.
- **Proving the value proposition and messaging.** Design your pilot in a way

to test a value proposition hypothesis (for example, if we solve the supplier issue for this group of companies, we believe they will start buying the greener products).

- **Program measurement and evaluation.** Collect some data as you go along. Good pilots can provide useful information for evaluating the effectiveness of a scaled-up program.
 - **Program expansion.** Think about the point at which you will take the project to the next stage. It is possible that the program you are developing is not intended to move beyond a small niche program. If, however, there is the potential to expand to other markets, media, geographic areas, or sectors, you should define when and how that might occur. As a program is scaled-up, you should complete the final notification phase of the Agency-wide notification process.
- 2. Full-scale program.** If you are rolling a program out as a full-scale, or fully developed program it is important that you have answered all of the questions outlined in these guidelines. Be sure that you have identified a strong value proposition and that you have participated in the Agency Notification Process.

Create a Program Launch

Generally, a launch event should only be organized if it contributes to the program's strategic goals. Launch events can be a great opportunity for reaching target decisionmakers if the proper

For assistance with a program launch, contact Stephan Sylvan, EPA's Partnership Programs Coordinator or another member of EPA's Partnership Programs Coordination Team. They can contribute sample launch strategies, launch plans, communications materials, as well as advice based on significant experience.


venue, speakers, participants, date, and media strategy (if appropriate) are selected.

The initial launch of a full-scale program should elicit interest and enthusiasm from the intended target decisionmaker in order to maximize participation and long-term success. Existing Partnership Programs have successfully used special events to gain such attention. These events can involve key Agency officials, allies in other government agencies, trade groups, non-governmental organizations, and initial program participants (or target decisionmakers who can be held up as models of the action to be promoted).

Similarly, asking allies to spread the word about the program's launch (and perhaps endorse the program) through their communication channels can focus additional attention on the new program. A launch event can serve as an effective way to convince target decisionmakers to take the desired action steps by offering "charter partner" status to those that do. Understanding the target audience will help the program design an initial publicity and outreach effort that reaches the potential customers in the most effective way.

Chapter 9:

Case Study of a Partnership Program

 In the next few pages, we show a hypothetical example of a Partnership Program. We illustrate each step to show how they all work together to create an effective program.

Identify the Environmental Problem

Air, global warming, and water pollution (e.g., deicing chemicals) associated with government-related airline travel.

Identify the “Market”

The “market” for this hypothetical example would be professionals involved in government-related airline travel.

Identify the Environmental Change

Significantly reduce the air and global warming pollution associated with government-related airline travel.

Ensure That the Program Contributes to EPA’s Strategic Plan

This example would likely fit under Goal 1: Clean Air and Global Climate Change and Goal 2: Clean and Safe Water.

Identify Target Decisionmakers

- **Primary target decisionmakers.** They would be the federal officials responsible for deciding which federal travel contracts will be pursued and negotiated with travel agents, airlines, rental car companies, and other travel service providers.
- **Secondary target decisionmakers.** They would likely be the travel agents and managers of the travel agents providing travel services to federal employees (e.g., Sato Travel).
- **Tertiary target decisionmakers.** They would likely be the employees of a pilot agency (e.g., U.S. EPA) and even a particular office within that agency.

Identify the Action Steps

- **Primary target decisionmakers.**
 - 1) Develop an RFP for rail and bus carriers, and
 - 2) ask major rail and bus companies for bids on the RFP.
- **Secondary target decisionmakers.**
 - 1) Attend training on rail and bus options, and
 - 2) offer these options to their customers.
- **Tertiary target decisionmakers.**
 - 1) Learn about rail and bus options from

e-mail and Web postings, 2) consider rail and bus options, and 3) take advantage of rail and bus options when they make sense.

Identify Problems Solved by Action Steps

- **First target decisionmakers.** 1) Cutting waste in government travel spending, and 2) respond to policy directives to seek greener ways of doing government business.
- **Secondary target decisionmakers.** 1) Improve customer satisfaction by offering customers new travel options, and 2) improve skills so they are employable in other companies and industries (rail and bus).
- **Tertiary target decisionmakers.** 1) Save time when rail or bus is faster (avoiding long security lines and travel from airports to the central business districts), and 2) stretch limited travel funding.

Create a Clear Value Proposition

The EPA may agree to 1) find appropriate train and bus companies, 2) conduct research on reservation systems and training needed for travel agents to include rail and bus options, 3) serve as a pilot agency, 4) promote rail and bus options, and 5) publicly recognize federal procurement officials for reducing waste in government travel expenditures and reducing air pollution in exchange for these federal procurement officials agreeing to 1) develop an RFP and 2) ask major rail and bus companies for bids on the RFP.

Identify Barriers

Federal procurement officials who negotiate agreements with travel agencies may have little experience negotiating travel options beyond airline and rental cars. They may not know how

to find the appropriate bus and rail companies, how to procure and integrate the appropriate reservations software, and what costs travel agencies would incur in purchasing and training on these new or revised reservation systems.

They may also be concerned about educating travelers on these new options and ensuring the reimbursement systems can handle them.

Address Barriers with Tools and Customer Service

EPA could offer to conduct the research needed by federal procurement officials asked to negotiate agreements with train and bus operators. This research could include answers to questions like “Who are the major and appropriate train and bus companies?”; “How would train and bus reservations be integrated into existing airline and rental car reservation systems?”; “What would it cost?”; and “How should travel agents be trained?” The EPA could also offer to pay the expenses of educating employees and updating reimbursement systems and policies to reflect new travel options.

Translate Value Proposition into an Agreement

The EPA might want to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding or some other kind of document with GSA codifying the agreement described in the value proposition step above. The EPA could look to similar MOUs produced between federal agencies as examples.

Communicate the Value Proposition

Since the officials responsible for deciding which federal travel contracts to pursue are probably fairly senior officials, the EPA program manager

would probably be wise to convince a senior EPA manager to make the initial contact by sending a letter requesting a meeting followed by a call to these officials to schedule the meeting. But this would not be done until the EPA program manager learns about these decision-makers so the letter and following “pitch” can be tailored to their needs and concerns.

Brand the Program

Branding would have to occur on at least two levels. The branding at the first level should probably reflect the way in which the target decisionmakers—federal officials responsible for federal travel contacts—would like this program to be known publicly and within the federal government. The branding might therefore be designed to convey messages about reducing government waste and possibly air pollution (e.g., one crude program naming concept could be: “Fed Travel Waste Saver Program”).

Coordinate with Other Programs and Avoid Conflicts

It’s conceivable that the U.S. Government Services Administration, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, U.S. Department of Transportation, the U.S. Department of Energy, as well as state and local governments have attempted a similar initiative. It is also conceivable that several parts of the EPA may have attempted such an initiative. Before contacting any potential target decisionmakers, this hypothetical program should thoroughly investigate these possibilities and strategically coordinate through the EPA’s Partnership Program Coordination Team and Workgroup.

Define Program Outputs

Define some measurable outputs from the program such as 1) The number or percent of federal travel agents (e.g., Sato Travel) trained in offering these new options, 2) The number or percent of federal employees who have been sent information about these new options.

Define Measures of Environmental Impact

Good measures of the program’s impact could be: 1) the number or percent of travel agents who say they understand and are comfortable offering these new options, 2) the number or percent of federal employees who say they understand and are comfortable using these new options, 3) the number and percent of federal employees with access to bus and rail options for short-haul flights, 4) The number and percent of federal employees who are using bus and rail options for short-haul flights, 5) The number of airline trips and miles prevented, 6) the overall emissions savings for the program, 7) the overall financial and time savings, and 8) the level of satisfaction employees and managers have with the initiative.

Estimate Environmental Results and Cost Effectiveness

One step would likely be finding the most reliable sources estimating the emissions per mile or trip associated with air, rail, and bus travel. The next step would likely be estimating the emissions (and other savings like financial and time) per airline mile replaced by a bus or rail mile. A third step might be estimating the number of miles that would be replaced by a bus or rail mile for various scenarios of participation by the

target decisionmakers (federal travel contract officials, travel agents, and employees). To get the program-wide estimate, these emissions per mile estimates would be multiplied by the estimates of the miles of air travel replaced by bus or rail.

Investigate Legal Issues

Consider legal issues and check with appropriate EPA legal offices (OGC and OECA).

Secure EPA and Other Resources

Estimate the program impact under various scenarios of success and resource investment by EPA. Translate these estimates into estimates per resource invested (bang for the buck). Provide summaries of these estimates of program impact to EPA managers responsible for making program resource investments.

Establish Credibility for the Program

If EPA were to make false claims about cost or pollution savings from the hypothetical green federal travel initiative, the exposing of these claims could cause the program to unravel. Worse, such false claims could damage the EPA's ability to conduct other voluntary and regulatory business.

Roll out the Program

Once the key federal officials responsible for Federal travel contracts and key stakeholders have bought into the program concept and preliminary financial and travel systems are in place, it may make sense to organize a pilot for a certain, small set of travel agents and federal employees. Once the pilot has proved a success, it may make sense to organize a broader announcement to key stakeholders about the pilot and plans to expand the program to other parts of the Federal government.

Appendices

- Appendix A: Notification Process
- Appendix B: Types of Partnership Programs
- Appendix C: Trademark Basics
- Appendix D: Suggested Reading

Appendix A: Notification Process

EPA Notification and Comment Process for New or Expanding Partnership Programs

EPA's Partnership Program notification process will strengthen management of these programs by improving information sharing and communication. There is a wealth of knowledge across the Agency on how to effectively run a Partnership Program that produces environmental results and value to customers. Notification will facilitate learning, ensure that programs do not duplicate or conflict with other efforts, and provide a means for discussion and review by interested offices prior to final decisions. Decisionmakers should only be presented with Partnership Program proposals that have been vetted through the Agency's notification process.

Section I: Getting Started

What is a Partnership Program?

Partnership Programs motivate people to take environmental actions not required by regulation. They may achieve their goals through the use of market forces or by providing recognition or other incentives. They may encourage actions that go beyond compliance with environmental requirements, or provide an alternative way to achieve a regulatory objective. They rely on partnerships with business and industry, trade associations, government agencies, communities, and environmental and public interest groups. They obtain measurable environmental results.

Who Participates in the Notification Process?

All New Partnership Programs meeting the above criteria are expected to participate in the notification process; however, *small pilot* programs need only provide preliminary notification. (A small pilot is a startup or experimental project that is allowed more leeway, and need not participate in final notification until they scale-up for full Agency operation. This allows time for the pilot to be developed and market tested without impacting the overall image of EPA's Partnership Programs.)

Existing Programs planning a significant *programmatic scale-up in program size or expansion into new geographic areas, sectors, or environmental problems* are also expected to participate, to ensure that new initiatives do not overlap or conflict with any existing Partnership Program.

Who is Responsible for What?

- The OPEI *Partnership Programs Coordinator* (PPC) shepherds programs through notification by providing the necessary information to participate in the process. The PPC liaises with the Partnership Program Workgroup, and makes connections with other Partnership Programs that can offer lessons learned and design support.
- The *Partnership Programs Workgroup* reviews and comments on new and expanding programs, supports the development of high quality programs, and facilitates contacts between programs for information sharing. Workgroup members ensure that their respective programs participate in the notification process and that their offices' interests are fully represented.

- The *Program Office or Region* (hereinafter referred to as “program office”) developing or expanding an existing Partnership Program, contacts the PPC about a new effort, and then works with the Workgroup through program development.

Section II: Preliminary Notification for New and Expanding Programs

Step 1: Program office develops concept outline & notifies the Partnership Programs Coordinator

Once the program office identifies a concept for a new program, it notifies the PPC. A format to assist in addressing key questions about the proposed program is attached. Making notification before involvement of external stakeholders will ensure that any internal inconsistencies are resolved, and that stakeholders do not get conflicting messages. The PPC will provide the program office with design and other guidelines (when available), and a list of Partnership Programs.

Step 2: Program office submits initial concept outline to Partnership Programs Coordinator.

The coordinator then meets with the submitting office to discuss the proposal and if support services are needed.

Step 3: Program office presents outline to Partnership Programs Workgroup.

The program manager presents the new program outline to the Partnership Programs Workgroup so that they can comment on possible issues and synergies with existing efforts. The PPC works

with the program office to incorporate advice and comments.

Section III: Program Development

During program development, the PPC facilitates communication and information exchange with other programs and access to support services. New and expanding Partnership Programs should be designed using the guidance provided on design, measurement, and branding so that all programs achieve optimal environmental results and meet stakeholder needs. The PPC can assist with any questions related to the guidelines.

Section IV: Final Notification

Step 1: Program office presents the program to the Partnership Programs Workgroup.

The program office presents the developed program to the Partnership Programs Workgroup for discussion and questions.

Step 2: Workgroup provides comments.

The Workgroup has two weeks to offer formal written comments to the PPC, who assembles the comments and reports back to the program office. Issues that cannot be settled within the Workgroup are forwarded in writing to the IAC principals for resolution. Any unresolved issue will be referred to the Deputy Administrator (DA).

Step 3: Program office implements the new or expanded Partnership Program.

Once final comments are received and addressed, the program is launched.

Section V: Ensuring Accountability

Primary responsibility for successfully implementing Partnership Programs lies with the Agency's executive leadership, senior managers, and each office's representative to the Workgroup. OPEI will maintain a notification database as a clear-

inghouse for Partnership Program information for both internal and external customers. The PPC will conduct a biennial evaluation of the notification process effectiveness, and present the results to the DA with recommendations.

Format For Partnership Program Preliminary Notification

Version 1.0

Please provide brief answers/descriptions.

Background Information

Working name for the proposed partnership program: _____

Originating Office, division, branch, and contact name/number: _____

New program ? OR expansion of existing program (e.g. expansion from facility level program to corporate level; localized activity to national/international; expansion to another sector or environmental medium)? _____

If you have a Web site for this effort, what is the URL? _____

Program Design

1. What is the environmental problem your program will address? Are there multi-media aspects?
2. What is the "market" (e.g. industry, sector, group) that will take action to solve this problem?
3. Who is/are the target decision-maker(s) (e.g. VP for Environmental Affairs, District Water Commissioner, Hospital or School Administrator)?
4. Briefly describe your "value proposition" (e.g. the benefits you are offering participants in exchange for the costs of meeting program requirements). What other services (e.g. training, technical support, analytical tools) will you offer as part of the value proposition?
5. What action steps are you requiring participants to take to address the problem?

6. What do you plan to measure to show results?

7. Will this project be launched as a pilot? If so, in what areas?

Coordination Status and Needed Services

8. Have you identified and addressed potential impacts on other existing EPA partnership programs, other Agencies, other levels of government, NGOs or other stakeholders?

9. Have you contacted OECA or relevant Program Office regarding any regulatory enforcement or compliance-related issues?

10. Is there any service or assistance you would like to request of the Partnership Program Workgroup or Partnership Program Coordinator?

11. Any additional information you wish to add:

Appendix B: Types of Partnership Programs

This appendix offers some examples of current program designs at EPA. This is not an all-inclusive list, but it does offer some concrete examples of programs currently in operation.

I. Programs that promote the purchase of environmentally preferable products.

Some programs promote environmentally preferable products by providing environmental information to affect purchase decisions. These programs provide environmental information to impact decision-making for complex products, or they can define and promote the environmentally preferable choice.

- **Clean Marine Engine Initiative.** In this regional program, EPA New England and its partners have entered into voluntary agreements to encourage consumers to purchase and use low-pollution marine engines. These engines deliver improved performance, reduced fuel and oil usage, and reduced emissions.
- **ENERGY STAR Product Labeling Program.** This program defines a class of environmentally preferable products and services and recommends that consumers purchase these products. Here, the Agency uses its position of authority to define which products are efficient to convey that the benefits from the products are real and show that there are opportunities to protect the environment with no sacrifice in quality of life.
- **Environmentally Preferable Products (EPP) Program.** This program provides

guidance, information, technical assistance and tools (e.g., training, guides, databases, model contract language, and specs) to promote green procurement, especially in the Federal government.

- **Environmental Technology Verification Program.** This program develops testing protocols and verifies the performance of innovative technologies that have the potential to improve protection of human health and the environment. Its goal is to provide credible performance data for commercial-ready environmental technologies to speed their implementation for the benefit of vendors, purchasers, permittees, and the public.

2. Corporate Commitment Programs and Partnership Programs

These programs are partnerships between EPA and Corporations or other Partners. EPA offers information and technical assistance, and the corporation or partner commits to particular environmental goals. Once certain goals are met, EPA offers recognition and awards for environmentally positive practices and achievements.

- **Climate Leaders.** Partners commit to inventory their greenhouse gas emissions, announce aggressive greenhouse gas reduction goals, and implement efforts to reduce their emissions. EPA provides technical support and recognition for successful Partners.
- **Green Chemistry Program.** This program promotes the research, development, and implementation of innovative chemical technologies that prevent pollution prevention in a scientifically sound and cost-effective manner. Green Chemistry works

with many partners representing academia, industry, other government agencies, scientific societies, trade organizations, national laboratories, and research centers.

- **Green Suppliers Network (GSN).** This program is a collaborative venture between industry, the EPA, and the US National Institute for Standards and Technology Manufacturing Extension Partnership. GSN works with all levels of the manufacturing supply chain to achieve environmental and economic benefits. GSN improves performance, minimizes waste generation, and removes institutional roadblocks through its innovative approach to leveraging a national network of manufacturing technical assistance resources. With GSN support, suppliers can continuously improve their products and processes, increase energy efficiency, identify cost-saving opportunities, and optimize resources and technologies with the aim of eliminating waste.
- **Semiconductor Industry Program.** In this program, partners in the semiconductor industry commit to identify their emissions of potent global warming gasses and implement cost-effective solutions to reduce these emissions. EPA provides technical support and provides recognition for successful Partners.
- **Voluntary Aluminum Partnership.** In this program, partners in the aluminum industry commit to identify their emissions of potent global warming gasses and implement cost-effective steps to reduce these emissions. EPA provides technical support and provides recognition for successful Partners.
- **WasteWise.** This program provides technical support and information to organizations (businesses, institutions, and governments) so

that they can develop their own solid waste reduction program and set environmental goals. Partners report progress annually and EPA provides recognition for success.

3. Recognition Only Programs

Although many of the other programs mentioned above include awards and other recognition mechanisms, some Partnership Programs focus on recognition of accomplishments by corporations, governments, and other organizations as their main activity.

- **Clean Water Act Recognition Program.** This program recognizes municipalities and industries that demonstrate outstanding and innovative technological achievements in wastewater treatment and abatement programs.

4. Regulatory Flexibility

- **Performance Track.** This is a public/private partnership that recognizes top environmental performance among participating U.S. facilities of all types, sizes, and complexity, both public and private. Program partners are providing leadership in many areas, including preventing pollution at its source. One benefit of Performance Track membership is that EPA rewards participants by developing regulatory and administrative actions that only apply to participating facilities. Such incentives: recognize and reward environmental accomplishments; encourage facilities to perform beyond basic compliance; allow members to operate more efficiently; and demonstrate that innovation is integral to EPA's evolving regulatory framework.

For a complete list of the Agency's Partnership Programs please see <www.epa.gov/partners>.

Appendix C: Trademark Basics

1. What is the purpose of a trademark?

Trademark rights protect words, symbols, devices, sounds, smells, trade dress, or product shape that are distinctive and used to identify and distinguish goods or services.

In general, trademarks perform four functions:

- To identify one seller's goods and services and to distinguish them from goods and services sold by others.
- To signify that all goods/services bearing the mark come from a single, albeit anonymous, source.
- To signify that all goods/services bearing the mark are of an equal level of quality.
- As a prime instrument in advertising and selling the goods.

A trademark is the objective symbol of the good will which a business has built up. Trademarks, by their identifying nature, let consumers know how to find the goods and services they prefer.

2. What are the rights of the trademark owner?

The trademark owner can prevent the use of a mark by others if the use is likely to cause confusion or mistake, or to deceive as to the affiliation, connection, or association of such person with the trademark owner; or as to the origin, sponsorship or approval of his or her goods, services, or commercial activities by the trademark owner; if the trademark owner would be damaged by such use.

3. What kind of mark does your program have?

The kind of mark created depends on how the program intends to use the mark. Will it be used on goods or services? Will it certify that the goods or services meet certain standards? Will it be used to show association with a group? The four basic types of marks are described below.

What is a trademark?

A trademark includes any word, name, symbol, or device, or any combination, used, or intended to be used, in commerce to identify and distinguish the goods of one manufacturer or seller from goods manufactured or sold by others, and to indicate the source of the goods. In short, a trademark is a brand name.

Examples include: Tide, Just Do it, Fresh Step

What is a service mark?

A service mark is any word, name, symbol, device, or any combination, used, or intended to be used, in commerce, to identify and distinguish the services of one provider from services provided by others, and to indicate the source of the services. This also includes some domain names, when they function as a service mark by offering services on the Web, and the domain name acts as a source identifier, not just a directional reference such as a telephone number.

Examples include: PRICELINE.COM, BEYOND.COM, ENERGY STAR

What is a certification mark?

A certification mark is any word, name, symbol, device, or any combination, used, or intended to

be used, in commerce with the owner's permission by someone other than its owner; to certify regional or other geographic origin, material, mode of manufacture, quality, accuracy, or other characteristics of someone's goods or services, or that the work or labor on the goods or services was performed by members of a union or other organization.

Examples include: Washington (for apples) and the Energy Star logo

What is a collective mark?

A collective mark is a trademark or service mark used, or intended to be used, in commerce, by the members of a cooperative, an association, or other collective group or organization, including a mark which indicates membership in a union, an association, or other organization.

Ownership of such marks properly lies in the parent body, group or collective organization,

because of its exercise of legitimate control over use of the mark by the members in the group.

Examples include: American Forest and Paper Association

Are trade names considered trademarks or service marks?

A trade name will be considered a trademark or service mark only when it is used in such a manner that it also functions as a trade/service mark. There is no provision in the Trademark Act for the registration of a trade name alone, without showing it functions as a trade/service mark.

Using the EPA Seal or Identifier

The Agency has Order outlining the appropriate use of the EPA Seal and Identifier. Please consult with the Office of Public Affairs for more information on this.

Appendix D: Suggested Reading

- Academy for Educational Development (AED) (2000). Social Marketing Lite: A Practical Resource Book for Social Marketing. AED
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