

Background to the Supporting Document # 12

The multi family recycling project was driven by a business need to reduce the amount of contamination received in the apartment blue bins, which was causing equipment breakdowns and increasing the risk of injury to staff at the recycling facility.

I assigned this project to my senior social marketing coordinator by defining the goals and the scope and directing him to work with a pool of staff that I chose. I also gave him a firm budget and overall guidance throughout the planning and implementation.

The supporting document is a presentation that I have given at recycling conferences, to explain how we use social marketing to achieve behavior change. It summarizes at a very high level, the scope and the results of the project.

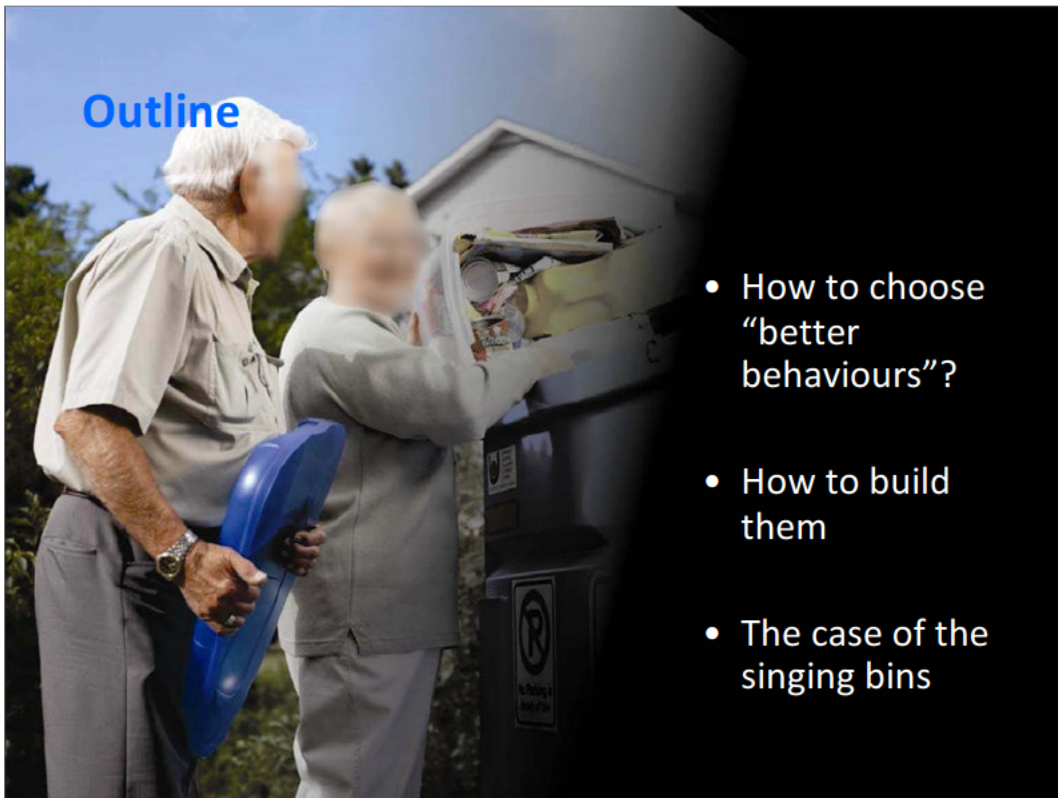
Building Better Behaviours

Mobilizing the Community
One behaviour at a time

The City
October 13, 201X



•Thanks ____ and Good morning everyone.



- How to choose “better behaviours”?
- How to build them
- The case of the singing bins

My objective today is to give you a brief overview of

- How we decide which behaviors to focus on,
- How we build those behaviors,
- And then I'll give you an example with our most recent campaign that featured the controversial singing blue bins.

I'll end with a few lessons learned that hopefully you'll find helpful if you work in the area of social marketing.

A highly integrated system



- First, some very quick background on the city:
- Our city is the 5th largest city in Canada, with a population of 783,000.
- We service 324,000 households (about 55% single family households, and 45% multi-family households)
- Since our 30-year waste management strategy was approved in 199X, we've been building one of Canada's most comprehensive waste systems. Our strategy is focused on diverting as much waste as possible from landfill.
- Many public meetings were held during the 80s and 90s and the input from citizens helped shape our strategic plan.
- As a result of the extensive public input, we now have a very integrated and sustainable waste system.
- We have 3 main areas of operation:
 - community relations, where we educate and encourage residents to participate in activities such as recycling and taking HHW to an Eco Station,
 - Collection – the collection of residential waste and recyclables; and
 - Processing & Disposal, where we manage the waste we've collected.

Social marketing key part of the system

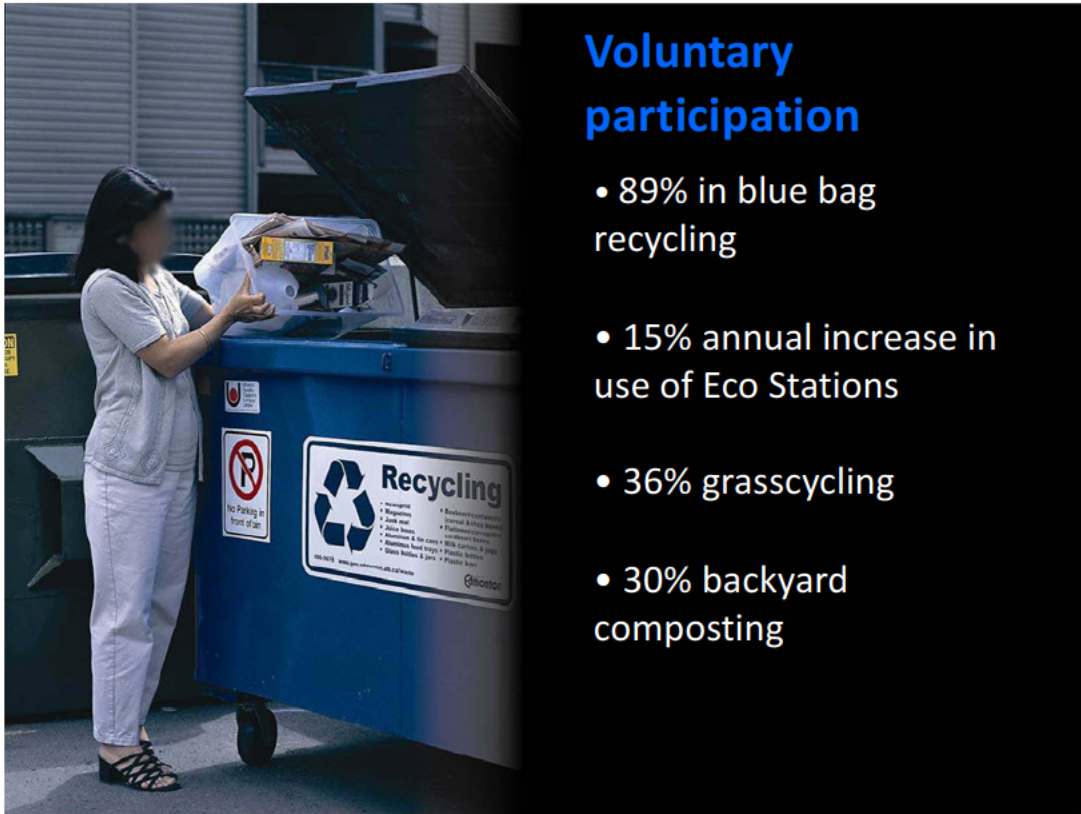


Social Marketing is now an integral part of our system.

Our community relations section is responsible for educating City residents about waste behavior as well as listening to the residents to ensure our programs meet their needs.

We give tours to 17,000 students and teachers each yr, we have a MCRP, we run a customer support centre, and a Reuse Centre and we deliver a wide variety of outreach programs.

We use the principles and techniques of community-based social marketing to change behaviour. Social marketing as many of you know goes beyond communication and uses a variety of behaviour change tools.



Voluntary participation

- 89% in blue bag recycling
- 15% annual increase in use of Eco Stations
- 36% grasscycling
- 30% backyard composting

Our emphasis on Social Marketing has helped the City achieve high participation rates in a number of voluntary waste practices.

- 89% in blue bag recycling
- 15 % annual increase in use of Eco Stations for HHW
- 36% participation in grasscycling (single family households)
- 30% participation in backyard composting (single family households)

There is virtually no enforcement of the waste bylaw – all activities are voluntary and are fostered by the relationships we build with the community.



Choosing best behaviours

- Increase recycling rates and quality of material
- Reduce HHW in waste stream
- Increase waste reduction and reuse practices
- Sustain compliance with waste preparation

There are a number of behaviors we need residents to practice on a regular basis. These are the major ones:

Recycling – which of course includes recycling the right materials so our processing facilities can operate efficiently

Reducing the HHW in the waste stream – for the quality of our compost and for worker safety

Waste reduction and reuse – primarily composting and grasscycling to reduce the volumes that need to be collected

Proper waste set-out – for collector safety and efficiency

Those are the major activities that we need residents to engage in, to meet our strategic plan as a branch and to ensure that our system works efficiently.

One behaviour at a time

- Reflect business needs
- Focus on one behaviour
- Maintenance after building
- Partnership with residents



Each year we develop a strategy based on our business plan and budget for the year.

We focus on one behaviour at a time for major social marketing and communications programs.

But we also need to maintain that behaviour on an ongoing basis after we've launched it. For example, in 200X we launched a grasscycling social marketing program and we saw participation increase from 29 to 36%. But 5 years later, since we haven't been maintaining the program, that participation has dropped slightly. So we can see the direct effects of not maintaining a behaviour.

One of our ongoing challenges is maintaining a number of behaviours simultaneously. Last year our major focus was on mf recycling, but we also opened a third Eco Station and ran a reminder campaign about HHW; and we delivered a collector safety campaign to remind residents to package their waste properly.

We see our waste system as a partnership between the City and the residents. We need the residents to engage in certain behaviours for our system to work. So our work, like all social marketing, is extremely audience-centred and behaviour-focused. This means that we conduct research regularly and we collect input from residents on a formal and informal basis to help us understand their awareness levels, their motivations and their actual behaviours.

Case study: multi-family recycling

- Multi-family Recycling – 2002 Launch
- Extensive social marketing campaign
- Success and rapid growth: 90% participation in 2006



Last year we focused on mf recycling.

The blue bin recycling program for apartments and condominiums was actually introduced in 200X.

The original program launch included an extensive social marketing campaign inviting property managers to sign up for the service and encouraging mf residents to participate in the program.

A “guerrilla” marketing force delivered information and promotional material to virtual every multifamily suite in the City.

In 20XX, 4 years after we launched the program, 90% of mf residents who had a blue bin were using it.



The Blue Bin Blues

- 2009: participation down to 80% and contamination up
- Research – 2009 pilot project to test bins and public education
- Public education was recalled but the measurement was not precise

But in 20XX our biannual customer satisfaction survey found that participation had dropped to 80%. And reports from the MRF indicated that contamination rates were increasing and the incidence of plant shutdowns because of inappropriate material was increasing.

As with all social marketing programs, we started with research including intervention interviews at apartments. A 20XX pilot project tested modified bins that prevented full opening of the lids to prevent residents from placing large non recyclable items (mattresses, furniture, carpets etc.) in the bins.

Information and promotional material was also distributed directly to residents in the pilot areas to test the effect of public education on increasing recycling and reducing contamination.

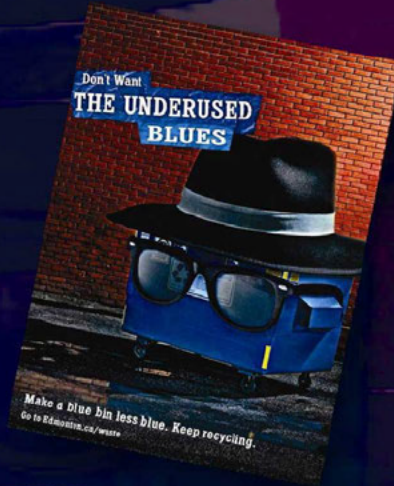
When we surveyed the residents in the pilot area, we found that the recall was quite high and people found the information and method of delivery useful.

Bins in the pilot area were inspected on a regular basis with photos taken of contaminants. The Modified bins were deemed to be of limited success in preventing contamination.

We inspected the bins and took pictures of the contamination but it wasn't a precise enough form of measurement. What we really needed was actual weight of contamination for the pilot area but the sample size was too small to really assess cause and effect. A larger sample size and actual weight of contamination would have been more helpful.

Multi-media campaign

- Goals: increase participation & reduce contamination
- Radio, transit campaign
- Bin decals, singing bins



Based on the success of the public education material in the pilot, we decided to go ahead with a public education campaign. The goals were to increase participation in blue bin recycling and to reduce the nonrecyclable items multifamily residents were putting in the blue bin.

The target for the campaign was 18-40 year olds living in multifamily residences. Radio was the major component of the \$150,000 campaign with ads on five radio stations that provided blanket coverage of the target audience. That was supported by transit.

We worked with our ad agency to develop a conceptual theme that would carry through advertising and other promotional activities. The theme was “don't give your blue bin the underused blues” (or the misused blues: alternative wording for increasing participation and reducing contamination respectively).

Decals inviting multifamily residents to “keep recycling” were installed on 800 bins to reach residents as they put out their garbage and recycling. This thinking was extended to the idea of having the bins actually “talk” to residents. As they lifted the lid of their blue bin, they heard this message:

(play sound device)

The Motion activated sound devices were installed in about 300 blue bins across the City

Blues kick-off

- Singing blue bins
- Media launch
- Extensive media coverage



We kicked off the campaign with a media event, which we had never done before for a public education campaign. We had a talking blue bin in City Hall, and here you can see XXXX interviewing the bin. XXX XXXX was hidden behind a tree, providing the voice of the bin.

The talking “talking blue bin” event received a lot of media attention with most local media in attendance. For the most part, the coverage was positive, the campaign received national and international attention. But one local newspaper misreported the cost of the talking blue bin element, reporting that the talking bins were costing taxpayers \$150,000, when in fact that was the cost of the entire campaign .

The quirkiness of the idea saw the story carried on national radio, syndicated radio talk shows, national newspapers, with requests for information from international media outlets as well. One local radio station featured a raunchy version of a blue bin blues ditty penned by one of their morning on air personalities.

Once we started installing the sound devices, we discovered a number of logistical problems. For example the volume just wasn't high enough in some high traffic areas, and we installed about 200 instead of the 1200 we had initially considered. A lot of them were also removed from the bins.

Building behaviours

- Talking blue bin outreach
- Property manager liaison
- Overcoming cultural barriers



A key to social marketing success is to supplement media campaigns with a variety of outreach activities and programs that engage the target audience through direct interaction. These outreach activities built on the awareness created in the ad campaign and gave people the tools they needed to recycle more and better.

The talking blue bin concept worked much better in a more controlled environment. An interactive educational recycling game was developed using a sound device that allowed the game supervisor to have a custom made blue bin (suitable for transporting to events and displays) make positive or negative comments on the items participants chose to throw in the recycling bin. During June, July and August more than 7000 people tried out the “recycling game” at malls and major events.

The property manager liaison program uses the branch’s community volunteers to initiate and build a relationship with property managers and enlist them as partners in helping to deliver information and support to multifamily residents. The first part of this program currently being rolled out: volunteers deliver “new tenant” packages to cooperating multifamily complexes.

We found in our research that a high number of tenants did not speak English so we’re creating information products in 3 other languages.

MRF video, Open house, Urban Recycler other examples



Integrated solutions

- Changing the way we process recyclables
- Expanding the blue bin program
- Interactive education programs
- Measuring contamination

The solution to increasing MF participation and decreasing contamination is an integrated one that involves collection, processing and education. We're currently looking at modifying the processes at the MRF and adding a step to remove contaminants on the tip floor and prevent them from making their way onto the processing line and causing machinery breakdown.

We also want to expand the blue bin program. Currently about 65% of multifamily suites have access to a blue bin. Some sites simply can't accommodate another bin and can't join the program, but we estimate at least another 20% could and we'll be approaching them next year to bring them on board.

We will continue to make the "recycling game" and other educational activities a part of our displays at events, trade shows and branch programs. We're also planning to expand the property management liaison program and to build grass roots community partnerships.

As we start efforts to more effectively separate out contaminants on the tip floor at the MRF we have also added a step that weighs the various categories of contaminants. That measurement will give us the hard data we need to assess our effectiveness.

Results & lessons learned

- Blue bin blues campaign survey
- Increased volumes received at MRF
- 20XX Customer Satisfaction survey
- Improved campaign measurement capability



A campaign recall survey revealed a 52% campaign recall and about half the respondents identified the key message as “make sure you put the right things in the bin”. We thought a 52% recall was quite good.

We also saw increased volumes at the MRF. In the three months following the campaign recycling was up 8% (over 20XX tonnage vs less than 2% for the 4 months prior to the campaign.)

Our next Customer Satisfaction Survey will take place in 20XX and we will be able to see if the participation rate has increased from the 20XX level of 80%.

2 key lessons we learned: one is to do comprehensive field testing if you’re introducing something that needs to work in the field such as sound devices. We needed more lead time to test those devices, so we really should have started our planning at least 6 months prior to launching the campaign.

The other key lesson is the importance of reliable forms of actual measurement. With the separation of contaminants on the tip floor and the weighing of the different categories of contaminating items we’ll be better able to measure the impact of recycling campaigns in the future. We’ll even be able to create and evaluate campaigns that target specific contaminants by category – scrap metal, electronics etc.



Final tips for applying social marketing

- Research is essential
- Keep building
- Measure behaviour
- Hire passionate people

Some final tips for social marketing:

Research is essential if you're trying to change behaviour. If you're just reminding people to do more of something, such as taking HHW to an Eco Station, then research is probably not needed. If behaviour change is the goal, then you need to identify the most significant barriers. Perceived benefits and demographics are also helpful.

And keep building the awareness, and the behavior change. Don't rely on one form of communication or behaviour tool. The cumulative impact is what works.

Measurement: make sure you have a reliable method of measuring the behaviour change. And let your audiences know about their success. People like to know they're part of something bigger that is successful.

The last one, which you find in most social marketing text books, is to hire passionate people. We have 23 people in our section who truly believe in our goals of waste reduction and live what they preach. We hire people who are Master Composter/Recycler graduates, or they have an obvious passion for this subject. Their genuine belief in what they're promoting makes them self-motivated and engages people. It's their commitment and their enthusiasm that makes those strategies that exist on paper really come to fruition.