



INNOVATIVE LEARNING TOOLKIT

PROJECT TITLE: Naturally Smarter

Tags; behaviour change, local government, sustainability

This is an exceptional example from North Shore City Council of using an integrated community based social marketing approach to identify, then effectively work with target audiences to change behaviour.

Detail:

In 2007 North Shore City Council adopted a new corporate objective which focuses attention on sustainability in the community and on the promotion of environmental awareness, education and responsibility. The Council recognised this could not be achieved by one method alone and that good environmental and sustainability management requires integrated solutions that can include methods such as regulation, works programmes, education, and incentives.

Key components for achieving this included establishing a supportive and positive relationship between the council and the community; increasing awareness and knowledge about issues and solutions; providing education and skill development within the community; and then supporting and facilitating action and changes in behaviour. These were synthesised as follows:

Awareness and knowledge raising (via communications methods)

Education and skill development (via education and community partnership methods)

Action and behaviour change (via community based social marketing and partnership methods)

The Naturally Smarter campaign has evolved out of the Council's Environmental Awareness, Education and Action Strategy, and is a great example of using an integrated approach and the latest in CBSM techniques to effectively work with particular audiences.

After extensive research, the Sustainable Environment Team created an overarching campaign to support existing CBSM behaviour change programmes and initiatives, and to specifically target North Shore City's unique audience: an educated, largely professional middle class demographic. The campaign utilises different tools and initiatives to engage different sectors of the community. There is the Naturally Smarter website, traditional promotional advertising, celebration and recognition initiatives, community events, hands-on programme facilitators (who connect with different sub-audiences on a more personal level), and viral marketing initiatives.

The Naturally Smarter campaign is held together by a strong communications 'look, tone and feel'. The approach utilises attractive visuals which invoke an emotional response, and a sense of pride and connection to the environment and the city. Facts and figures have



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been used to show progress and outcomes, while personalised stories from residents who are undertaking changes supplement the facts to bring an inspirational 'people like me' component to the campaign. A 'keep it local' feel is also implemented using maps and newsletters that inform people and connect them to local projects; All work is cohesively tied together in collaboration with different departments within the Council, and achieving tangible results is the focus for measuring success.

This is a case study that shows how working with an audience in a targeted, and integrated way is not only very successful, but also very cost effective. The innovative and creative learning guide is focussed mainly on activities that touch and transform hearts and minds at the level of deeper beliefs and values. However we have also emphasised the need for the forthcoming Sustainability Education Strategy to employ a number of different approaches including, very importantly, a strong community based social marketing based component.

References: www.naturallysmarter.co.nz

Environmental Awareness Education and Action Strategy (2008). North Shore City Council – Trish Kirkland-Smith