

IX.4 Increasing “H2IQ”: A Public Information Program

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Contract Number: DE-AC01-05EE11118

Project Start Date: January, 2006
Project End Date: Project continuation and
direction determined annually by DOE

Technologies Program Multi-Year Research,
Development and Demonstration Plan:

- **Milestone 12:** Launch “Increase Your H2IQ”
Public Information Program

Accomplishments

- Solid execution on initial research and planning
- Real-world roll-out and use of our messaging tools
- Wrote and produced two 60-second radio spots of national broadcast quality.
- Wrote and produced seven Podcasts.
- Implemented our deliverables in the Orlando Market with a media buy tied to the Orlando Magic (radio spots aired during gameday broadcasts and Stan Van Gundy radio show and print ad ran in gameday program).
- Produced a MySpace page – www.myspace.com/h2iq.



Objectives

The Media Network and the Hydrogen Program of the U.S. Department of Energy are working together to craft and distribute a national messaging campaign to increase public cognizance of hydrogen energy and its benefits.

- Raise awareness of hydrogen among the general public
- Introduce concepts and keywords related to hydrogen to the general public
- Engage the general public by using contemporary messaging techniques

Technical Barriers

This project addresses the following technical barriers from the Education section of the Hydrogen, Fuel Cells and Infrastructure Technologies Program Multi-Year Research, Development and Demonstration Plan:

- (A) Lack of Readily Available, Objective, and Technically Accurate Information
- (B) Mixed Messages
- (E) Regional Differences

Contribution to Achievement of DOE Education Milestones

This project will contribute to achievement of the following DOE milestones from the Education section of the Hydrogen, Fuel Cells and Infrastructure

Introduction

In 2006 the U.S. Department of Energy’s Hydrogen Program began a public information program using strategic messaging and media. The phased communications and outreach effort uses a mix of tactics including radio and new media; the approach allows for greater choice of media and cost structures. Media tactics can be implemented either concurrently for immediate impact, consecutively to build awareness over time, or separately for budget consciousness.

Implementation is based on timing, location or internally generated events. Messaging developed to introduce hydrogen and fuel cell technologies is crafted to de-mystify a complex subject for the general public and engage the public so as to elicit interest in learning more.

Approach

The approach is to transmit our message via communications channels audiences use in their daily lives, and to develop and disseminate resonant messaging that communicates to the general public basic facts about hydrogen as a fuel and form of energy, and fuel cells as an alternative to traditional power technologies.

We coordinate with Hydrogen Program’s Market Transformation and Technology Validation efforts and

focus on early markets while look for opportunities to support hydrogen learning demonstration project areas/ locations. We also identify and coordinate efforts with state initiative partners. Our primary target audience is the general public, and we use simple messaging - bites, not meals, of information, positive messaging only, consistency of brand and message and multiple media.

Our method is to generate interest by increase public requests for more information to help raise knowledge levels to show progress toward education targets. By giving the Hydrogen Program a communications mechanism with a flexible framework (for reasons of timing and budget) we build recognition of hydrogen and fuel cell technologies to support the DOE brand and help position the Program in the mind of the public.

Results

This year we wrote and produced two 60-second radio spots of national broadcast quality, wrote and produced seven Podcasts, implemented our deliverables in the Orlando Market with a media buy tied to the Orlando Magic and aired radio spots during gameday broadcasts and Stan Van Gundy radio show. We also ran a print ad in the gameday program. We also developed a MySpace page – www.myspace.com/h2iq.

Conclusions and Future Directions

Future work will include the continuation and expansion of MySpace page elements and promotion, including adding partner links to the page. We will also perpetuate the MySpace page by tagging it at the end of the radio spots to encourages partnerships and partner support. Additionally, we will roll out radio in at least one more market with DOE funds and identify and engage partners to distribute radio spots. We will also continue to build relationships with potential industry and government partners. In 2008/2009 will also include measure of public response, Web traffic, use of “information toolbox,” Web page usage (hits and time spent), document and audio file downloads, and information center requests.