Using Social Media and the Web to Promote ENERGY STAR® for Homes

Public Service Company of Oklahoma
2010 ENERGY STAR Utility Sponsor Meeting

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Introduction and Background
Public Service Company of Oklahoma (PSO) has served Oklahoma's electric energy needs since the company's incorporation in 1913.

PSO today serves approximately 527,000 customers in 230 cities and towns across 30,000 square miles of eastern and southwestern Oklahoma. PSO is headquartered in Tulsa, with regulatory and external affairs offices in Oklahoma City.

The company’s distribution operations are organized into three districts: Tulsa, Lawton, and McAlester.
PSO ENERGY STAR Homes Program

- Launched in late 2008
- More than 40 Participating Homebuilders
- Six Participating HERS Raters
- More than 550 ENERGY STAR qualified homes in 2009
- Goal of 500 homes in 2010
- Works with groups like Habitat for Humanity and Extreme Makeover, Home Edition to promote ENERGY STAR qualified homes in Oklahoma
Web 2.0 and Social Media
Web 2.0

- The second generation of the World Wide Web, especially the movement away from static Web pages to dynamic and shareable content and social networking (en.wiktionary.org)
- An umbrella term that is used to refer to a new era of Web-enabled applications that are built around user-generated or user-manipulated content, such as wikis, blogs, podcasts, and social networking sites (Pew Research Center)
Social Media

- A category of sites that is based on user participation and user-generated content. They include social networking sites like LinkedIn or Facebook, social bookmarking sites like Del.icio.us, social news sites like Digg or Reddit, and other sites that are centered on user interaction (en.wiktionary.org)
Social Networking

- Social Networking
  - Using Internet network groups (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to network and communicate using shared interests, related skills, or geographic location between consumers and businesses (*en.wiktionary.org*)
Top Social Networking Sites

- **Facebook.com**
  - Ranked #2
  - Launched in 2004
  - 400M users (Feb 2010)

- **YouTube.com**
  - Ranked #4
  - Online since 2005
  - 375M users per month (2009)

- **Twitter.com**
  - Ranked #12
  - Founded in 2006
  - 75M users (Jan 2010)

Source: Alexa.com, rankings for top 100 sites in the US. Other sites ranking amongst those listed above include Google, Yahoo!, Craigslist, Wikipedia, and Amazon.
SNS/Twitter User Information

- **Online adults**
  - More than 70 percent of online adults say they use social networking sites (SNS)

- **Twitter use among SNS users:**
  - Men: 17 percent
  - Women: 21 percent
  - Adults 18-65+ make up nearly 70 percent of users
  - Adults aged 30-49 are nearly a quarter of users

*Sources: MarketTools Insight Report (2008), Pew Research Center (2009)*
Americans aged 35 to 44 have become the most social age group online.
Why Promote Homes Online?

Nearly 90 percent of home buyers look online when shopping for a home

(National Association of REALTORS, 2009)
Why Promote Homes on SNS?

Many Americans visit blogs, communities, and social networks with the specific intent of researching products:

- More than a third of visitors say they visit these sites to engage in product research before making a purchasing decision.

- Affluent visitors (with annual incomes of more than $75K) are most likely to research products online before buying (43 percent).

- Baby Boomer visitors are significantly more likely than other groups to read or post comments about products and services on these sites (37 percent).

- Baby Boomers (63 percent), along with Generation X (59 percent), are significantly more likely than other groups to visit the corporate Web sites of product or service providers.

Paid Advertising

- Advertiser only pays when a consumer actually clicks on the ad (pay-per-click)
  - Flat Rate
  - Bid Based
- Allows you to target specific ZIP codes, geographic areas, demographics, etc.
- Social Network Advertising - Facebook
- Keyword Advertising - Google AdWords
How to get Started with twitter
Basic Twitter Lexicon

- **Tweet**: Message of 140 characters or fewer
- **Follower**: People who receive your Tweets
- **Retweet**: The act of forwarding someone else’s Tweet to all of your Followers
- **@reply**: A public message sent from one Twitter user to another Twitter user
- **Direct Message**: A private message sent from one Twitter user to another Twitter user
- **#/Hash Tags**: A way to group Tweets into categories easily located via Twitter Search or Trending Topics (example – adding #energystar to a Tweet)
Go to www.twitter.com

Click *Sign up now* to begin setting up your Twitter account.
Enter your basic information

You’ll need to enter your name/program name, chosen username (this will be your @name), password, and e-mail address (be sure to use an e-mail address that you can access).
Twitter Account Setup

Confirm your membership

Twitter will send you an e-mail with instructions on how to confirm your account.
Update your account settings

In the account screen, you update basic information including e-mail and time zone (tweets always list date and time). You can also add your location to your tweets, a new feature Twitter recently added.
Update your profile settings

The most important pieces of your profile are your bio and Web site information.
Twitter Design Settings

Update your design settings

Twitter offers basic design options, or you can upload your own background image to align with your corporate branding standards, match your program Web site, etc.
Locate Contacts and Followers

Locate contacts via e-mail

Currently, Twitter only supports this function with Gmail, Yahoo! e-mail, and AOL e-mail. Generally more helpful for individuals or small businesses who use these e-mail services.
Find followers by keyword

Use the keyword search function to find and follow accounts related to homebuilding, green building, ENERGY STAR, energy efficiency, etc. When you follow an account, they may follow you as well, helping to build your Twitter network.

More followers = more Retweets and more Web site visits
Locate Contacts and Followers

Browse suggestion categories

Browse categories to find more Twitter accounts to follow and continue to build your Twitter network.
Using Your Twitter Account

You’re ready to tweet!

Tweets are limited to 140 characters, including any URLs or hash tags you include. Once you enter your text and click the Tweet button, your message is sent to everyone who follows you, and will also appear in the Public Timeline.
Using Your Twitter Account

Tweeting URLs

URL shortening services such as bit.ly and tinyurl.com provide shortened URLs to help you stay within 140 characters. These services also provide useful information, including tracking how many people click on the URLs in your tweets.
Using Your Twitter Account

Tweeting photographs

By using a third-party application such as Twitpic, you can e-mail photos from your computer or directly from your mobile device to your Twitpic page. Twitpic will automatically add a link to the photo on your Twitter page.
@replies

When you send another Twitter account an @reply, your message is visible to everyone who follows either of your accounts.
Using Your Twitter Account

Retweeting

To retweet, you simply click the *Retweet* icon, and click *yes* to confirm that you want to retweet the message to all your followers.
Using Your Twitter Account

ENERGYSTARtest

That's you!

about 4 hours ago via web
Retweeted by you

@psoenergystar Let's work together to promote ENERGY STAR!
5 minutes ago via web

We are promoting ENERGY STAR programs through Twitter.
34 minutes ago via web
Twitter Tools

- Hootsuite.com
- Klout.net
- Tweetdeck.com
  - Also supports Facebook, LinkedIn, and MySpace; post to multiple sites at one time
- Twitalyzer.com
- BlackBerry/iPhone/Android/etc.
  - Many apps/tools for mobile devices
  - Twitter allows tweeting via text message
Twitter Tips

- Make it personal
  - Keep the tone conversational and engage in conversation with your followers

- Don’t overtweet
  - Too much information will get tuned out
  - Exception for special events/promotions

- Monitor your brand/Twitter mentions
  - Google Alerts
Promoting with Twitter: PSO and Home Creations
PSO promotes the ENERGY STAR Homes Program through many channels, including:

- Advertising
- Bill Stuffers
- Events
- Corporate Web Site
- Program Web Site
- Facebook
- Twitter

After the initial launch of PSO’s ENERGY STAR Homes Twitter page, visits to the Program’s Web site increased by 30 percent – in one month. The same increase occurred in the second month of Twitter use as well; today Twitter continues to drive traffic to the site.
Promoting with Twitter: PSO

- Promoting a participating ENERGY STAR homebuilder each day
- Promoting upcoming ENERGY STAR homebuilder and Program events
- Tweeting live from events where ENERGY STAR is being promoted
- Daily Energy Saving Tips – both to help customers save energy and to keep Followers interested and Retweeting
- Providing notices about ENERGY STAR tax credits and other important information for customers
PSO’s ENERGY STAR Homes Program Web site V2.0 will link to the PSO ENERGY STAR Twitter page.
Home Creations on Twitter

ENERGY STAR Homebuilder Partner Home Creations, based in Oklahoma, uses social media to promote their affiliation with ENERGY STAR, available homes, open house events, availability of tax credits, etc.

Home Creations promotes using:

- Twitter
- Facebook
- YouTube
- LinkedIn
- Flickr
- WordPress Blog

Goal = drive traffic to Web site and make customer connections
Questions?
For More Information

- Courtney Owen, ICF International
  - @pavoreal
  - cowen@icfi.com
  - 469-467-4407

- Lisa Puyear, PSO
  - ldpuyear@aep.com
  - 918-599-2656