

Marketing and Outreach

Dallas, Texas

January 2007



**Marketing and Outreach
Rural Development
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Marketing Rural Development Programs—with results

I. Defining and implementing strategy: the crucial beginning

A. Set goals consistent with the scope of the Rural Development mission and initiate ways to measure results

1. Work with your State Director to ensure that goals are realistic, achievable and support the Rural Development mission
2. Establish tracking systems to measure progress and impact
3. Monitor employee performance and results toward goals. Examples of funding per person
 - a) Increase the number of contacts per employee
 - b) Increase the number of pre applications
 - c) Start to maintain a core of applications in the pipeline prior to each funding cycle

B. Consider Quality of Life issues for each program administered to establish your community targets and focus

1. Remove polluted drinking water and installing public systems
2. Fire protection improvements
 - a) Securing communities
 - b) Type of equipment and public facilities that will affect the insurance premiums in a community
3. Health care facilities
 - a) Increase number of medical personnel per capita
 - b) Handle the number of runs by the first responders

C. Funding Cycle

1. Expend the time and funding October, November and December for outreach
 - a) Spend time on the targeting state program funds we are going to receive than chasing funds that we may not get
 1. Plan for and adjust to the Annual authorizations and compression of time needed to obligate funds
 - b) Conduct seminars focusing on the programs that we anticipate are going to be funded that fiscal year
 - c) Engage partners and co-sponsors from community and economic development organizations for outreach seminars
 - d) Develop mailing lists for your targeted outreach including:
 1. Engineers, Municipal Planners, Mayors, Clerks, Non-profit first responders and Volunteer Fire Companies, Economic Development resources, etc.
 2. Contacts for Value-Added and 9006 Energy Programs
2. Assemble your team early
 - a) Plan your venues and assign topics for public presentations by all members. Mix it up a little.

- b) Determine what state RD S&E funds are needed and have the State Director commit to the resources required at your annual budget meetings
 - 1. Participate in annual events in your State
 - a. Fireman's conventions
 - b. League of Municipalities
 - c. Associations (e.g. water association)
 - d. Engineering conventions
 - 2. Do not ignore important local events sponsored by economic development offices, chambers of commerce, or Small Business Development Centers
 - a. Extends outreach
 - b. Leverages tax dollars
- c) It's all about Showing-up and Following-up
 - 1. Know your community and their needs
 - 2. Make yourself available to your customers; your success rate for marketing your programs and having the desired impact depends on it.
 - 3. Maintain contact with program organizers

II. Developing your resources: formal and informal

A. Training and Continuing Education

- 1. Required
 - a) Budget continuing education for your licensed professionals
- 2. Developmental
 - a) Budget for specialist to expand their field of discipline
 - b) Discuss annual needs and suggestions for training at your October performance rating with your employees
 - c) Find ways to mentor employees

Check your egos at the door not the brains.
- 3. Teambuilding
 - a) Look for opportunities to involve field personnel in community programs
 - b) Field supervisors and/or specialists can attend meetings and seminars in their regions
 - c) Bring supervisors and/or specialists into the area office or state office for extended training if applicable.
 - d) Cross train employees
 - 1. Employees receiving National Office or other prime program training should be required to retrain appropriate employees
 - 2. "Share the wealth". Don't ever let anyone hold onto knowledge.

B. Communicate

1. Do not undervalue effective staff communications as a training and professional development tool
2. Foster a management environment which encourages information sharing

III. Marketing your strengths

Effective marketing is best defined as producing results above expectations for the communities we serve. It is about them; not us.

A. Know your community.

1. Develop contacts and partners in the community.
2. Find out the issues and priorities.
3. Be proactive not reactive. The environment we are operating in has changed.
4. Meet with public officials
 - a) Advance ways to meet when they are most receptive to meetings
 1. We are available to discuss technical issues when they come up
 2. We meet day or night
 3. We meet on the weekends
 - b) Keep information meetings short and informative
 1. One hour
 2. Do not go beyond what you planned for the session
 3. Let individuals know that material is available on the web
 - c) State Director Role
 1. As State Director, I do not attend meetings without key Community Program Staffers
 2. What good am I if I am the personal contact. I don't process loans or grants.....YOU DO!

B. Your team needs to be responsive and creative to the needs of the community.

1. Believe it or not, they know more about what they want than you give them credit.
2. Find ways to say "Yes we can do that"

C. Work with the National Office

1. Understand what is going on in your State
2. Let the appropriate personnel know the issues and impediments to success
3. LAPIS-and Congressional Staffers

D. Work with your State Director

1. Involve the SD in all key group meetings
2. Tie in the S&E funding needed to support your outreach and marketing actions each year

3. Participate in State Office meetings and arrange a Monday Morning Meeting with your staff to ensure they are on track with constant changes
4. Don't forget your funding obligations

E. Establish seminar and outreach venues that people will want to attend.

1. Be sure you can answer the question, "What's in it for them?"
Today's consumers and clients are buried with information.
 - a) Make program informative and practical
 - b) Don't give them what they can read, but what they can use.
 - c) Do not get wrapped up on details but make sure you provide reasonable expectations in your delivery
2. Structure the program
 - a) Make sure you have time for breakout sessions for individual processing of pre-applications and program information exchange.
 - b) Make your specialists part of the program
 1. Community Facilities processing table and specialist to provide personal attention to initiate an exchange of information directly to the potential applicant.
 2. Water and Waste processing table and Specialist.
 3. Environmental Coordinator to assist in the process.
 4. Value added and/or 9006 set up, if appropriate
 - c) Consider the space and setting for your programs
 1. Make sure it is comfortable.
 2. Don't forget the coffee and donuts
 3. Break every hour. The mind can only take so much.
 4. Ensure you have the appropriate hardware and technology support for PowerPoint presentations and web demonstrations
 - d) Be professional and look for ways to improve delivery of services.
Leave your best impression.
 1. Get the legal work in process, Articles of Incorporation and other documents while the environmental and pre application are being evaluated.
 2. Do NOT tell anyone that action on their application is before a reasonable time period.
It is better to let someone know that we will be able to take an action in one month and have it available in three weeks, than tell them that we would have it in three weeks and it not be ready in six weeks. Not good.....
REMEMBER REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS
 3. Some outreach seminars are orchestrated by Congressional Offices with your help.

F. Tell your success story.

1. Don't be shy about your successes. Let all the world know how the Rural Development programs benefited the residents, community and who you worked with to make it happen.
2. Work with your PIC to ensure the press knows what is going on in the communities served. Conduct or manage your media events
 - a) "Big Check" press events
 - b) Ground breaking events
 - c) Ribbon Cutting
3. Publicity and press releases.
 - a) The press can advance your marketing plans.
 - b) Use Testimonials.
 1. Results speak louder than you can imagine.
 2. Adds validity.
 - c) Public Officials know who can assist them and who performs.
 1. Professionals and public officials talking about the Rural Development programs is far better than what public relations we can produce.
 2. Let credit be given to others. It is OK for others to take credit. The community leaders already know that you and your team deserves the credit for giving opportunity to a community that hadn't occurred prior to your initiating action to reach out to the community leaders.

As an aside, one Congressman has said many times publicly, "When I see Andy Law and Rural Development, I know that important projects are going into my District and I also know that Rural Development is playing an important part in sustaining partnerships with local, state and commercial funding sources.

This is exactly the message I want to get out around the state. "We are partners in progress for your community."

IV. Stay current and adaptable to changes

- A. Keep the changing needs of your staff and field offices in front of you**
- B. Pay attention to trends, community needs, and projected projects**
- C. Follow news reports in the community**
- D. Keep contacts current**
- E. Be flexible and community focused.**

V. Summation

- A. Don't be shy about your successes**
- B. Give credit to others**
- C. Be responsive to the community and their needs**
- D. Engage your State Director and your staff in your success**



Rural Development New Jersey State Office and Insurance Services Office Develops Fact Sheet for ISO Members

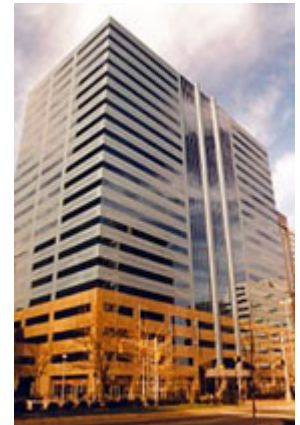
About ISO

ISO is a leading source of information about risk supplying data, analytics, and decision-support services for professionals in many fields, including insurance, finance, real estate, health services, government, and human resources. ISO products help customers measure, manage, and reduce risk.

In the United States and around the world, ISO helps its customers identify, mitigate, and price for risk by providing comprehensive data, leading-edge analytics, and decision-support services. ISO's services help customers protect people, property, and financial assets.

ISO offers:

- statistical, actuarial, and claims data
- insurance policy language
- information about specific locations
- fraud-identification tools
- risk consulting services
- information for marketing, loss control, and premium audit
- advanced statistical modeling systems to help customers assess and manage the risk of natural and man-made catastrophes
- employment-screening services
- criminal records and other public information
- motor vehicle records and related information
- software tools to predict medical costs and improve the financing and organization of health-care services
- tools to help insurers identify and correct rating errors
- specialized consulting, claims-management, and litigation-support services
- rate-quote, underwriting, and policy-management systems for all commercial and personal lines of insurance



ISO Headquarters, Jersey
City, New Jersey

www.iso.com

To facilitate the development of facilities to support fire protection, ISO plans on distributing the following fact sheet to its members across the country.



Community Programs

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COMMUNITY FACILITY LOAN PROGRAMS

Fire and Rescue Loans

Community Facility Loan Program

USDA/Rural Development through the Rural Housing Service (RHS), is authorized to make loans to develop community facilities for public use in rural areas and towns of not more than 20,000 people. Applications will be considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, marital status, age handicap, or national origin of members of the group applying for assistance. Opportunity to construct, develop, and use the facility must be extended on the same basis.

How May Funds Be Used?

USDA/Rural Development loan funds may be used to construct, enlarge or improve public safety facilities such as fire stations and buildings to house fire and/or rescue equipment. Funds may also be used to purchase fire trucks, ambulances, or emergency communications equipment; to buy or build fire and rescue multiservice centers; and to pay necessary costs connected with these facilities. Interim commercial financing will normally be used during the construction, and USDA/Rural development funds will be available when the project is completed. If interim financing is not available or if the project costs less than \$50,000, multiple advances of USDA/Rural Development funds may be made as construction progresses.

Where Will Applicants Obtain Technical Help?

USDA/Rural Development will assist the applicant in making the first determinations regarding engineering feasibility, economic soundness, cost estimates, organization, financing, and management matters in connection with proposed improvements. If financing or loan guarantees are provided by USDA/Rural Development, the Agency will make periodic inspections to see that the funds are used as agreed upon.

How Is An Application Made?

Rural Housing Service programs are delivered by the State Office of the USDA/Rural Development Information can be obtained from any USDA/Rural Development Office. Applications should be made to the USDA/Rural Development State Office. The Community and Business Programs staff will be glad to discuss services available from the Agency and explain how to prepare a written application.

Are Grant Funds Available?

A limited amount of grant funds are available. The Agency has the authority to provide grant funds on a graduated basis to communities with a population less than 20,000. Grant funds are awarded to economically feasible projects in financially needy communities.

Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO) is working with USDA Rural Development on a joint endeavor to provide communities with information regarding Community Loan and Grant Programs that are available through USDA Rural Development that may be used to improve municipal public safety systems.

WATER AND WASTE WATER PROGRAMS

USDA Rural Development administers a water and wastewater loan and grant program to improve the quality of life and promote economic development in rural America. This assistance is available through Rural Development's Rural Utilities programs.

Water and Waste Disposal Direct and Guaranteed Loans

Direct loans

Offered to develop water and wastewater systems, including solid waste disposal and storm drainage, in rural areas and in cities and towns with a population of 10,000 or less. Funds are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, special-purpose districts, and Indian tribes. In addition, funds may be made available to corporations operated on a not-for-profit basis.

Priority is given to public entities, in areas with less than 5,500 people, to restore a deteriorating water supply, or to improve, enlarge, or modify a water facility or an inadequate waste facility. Also, preference is given to requests which involve the merging of small facilities and those serving low-income communities.

Applicants must be unable to obtain funds from other sources at reasonable rates and terms. The maximum term for all loans is 40 years, however, no repayment period will exceed state statutes or the useful life of the facility. Interest rates are adjusted quarterly and may be obtained from any Rural Development office.

Technical Assistance and Training Grants

Made to private nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance and/or training to associations located in rural areas and to cities and towns with a population of 10,000 or less.

Grant assistance is available to qualified applicants to identify and evaluate solutions to water and waste

disposal problems, to improve the operation and maintenance of existing water and waste disposal facilities, and to assist associations in preparing applications for water and wastewater disposal facilities.

Rural Water Circuit Rider Technical Assistance

Provides on-site technical assistance to help assure cost-effective operation of rural water systems. USDA Rural Development Circuit Rider can provide assistance with day-to-day operational, financial and management problems.

The assistance is available at no charge and may be requested by officials of rural water systems or by Rural Development personnel. It complements supervisory assistance provided by Rural Development personnel.

For More Information

For information on all other programs administered by USDA Rural Development, visit the national office website at www.RURDEV.USDA.gov

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Barton Ambulance Squad, Inc.



Gilman Senior Center



Guildhall Library



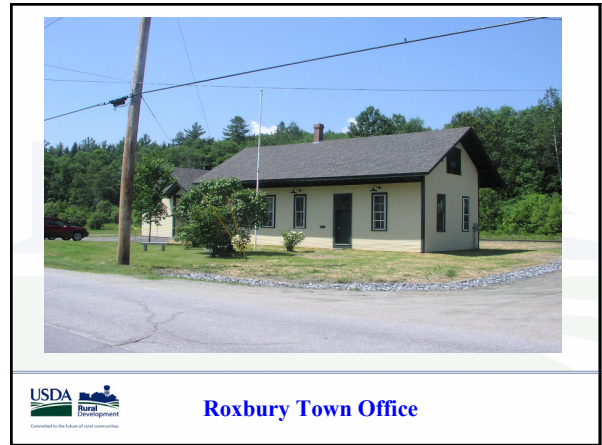
Newport Ambulance Service



Northeast Kingdom Community Action



Norton Town Office (Before)





New Hampshire Humane Society



Mountain View Housing Co-Op



Granite State Independent Living



Kid Works Day Care Center



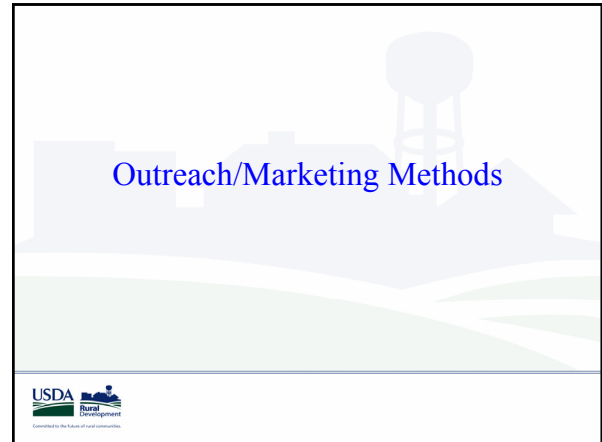
Greater Laconia Transit Agency



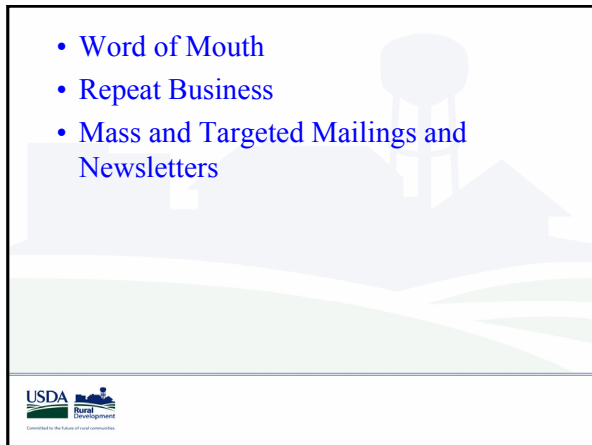
City of Newport



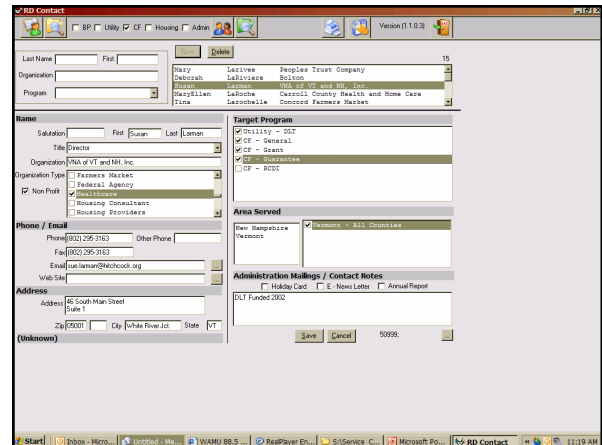
Windsor Fire Department



Outreach/Marketing Methods



- Word of Mouth
- Repeat Business
- Mass and Targeted Mailings and Newsletters



- Word of Mouth
- Repeat Business
- Direct and Targeted Mailings and Newsletters
- Newspapers
- Town Reports
- State Hospital Associations



- Relationship Building
- State Initiatives
- Commercial Lenders
- Funding Partners
- Related Professionals
- Conferences and Trade Shows
- RD Sponsored Program Workshops

- Municipal Associations
- Economic Development Organizations
- State Non-Profit Associations
- Non-Community Program RD and Sister Agency Employees
- Events
- Congressional Referrals



QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/IDEAS?



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Marketing and Outreach

Frank J. Tuma,
Community Program Director
Michigan

How To Market Rural Development Programs

- Develop a State Communication and Marketing Plan supported by State Director
- Every employee has outreach and marketing in their job description.
- Use **Guerrilla Marketing** Techniques
- **Conduct events** for your projects.



How To Market Rural Development Programs

- Train and encourage area office employees to sell programs. Give direction, set tone.
- Your field staff is the key to effective marketing and outreach
- Use **Command Messages**



How To Market Rural Development Programs

- Always be honest and truthful, no false hopes
- Be very responsive to inquires, surprise them with a quick response!
- Pound the pavement. Shot gun specific areas (County, township and city in one town.)
- Build on the relationship with several visits during the year.



How To Market Rural Development Programs

- Learn all the programs and how to use them (new CF programs, initiatives)
- Blanket an area, word of mouth will help “how did Coorsville get their sewer?”
- Communication: visits, phone calls, email, letters, trainer, conference speaker etc.



How To Market Rural Development Programs

- Develop Tools
 - Program specific and general handouts
 - Financing guides
 - Office Maps



How To Market Rural Development Programs

- Develop Tools (continued)
 - Press kits/packs for events, press releases for obligations and events
 - State Annual Report
 - Quarterly Newsletter (2 page only) state and/or area wide



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How To Market Rural Development Programs

- Develop Tools (continued)
 - Detailed yearly activity report of the district for each elected official.
 - Big Checks (produce your own)
 - Media phone and email lists



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How To Market Rural Development Programs

- Develop Tools (continued)
 - Consultant phone and email list
 - Use internet search to find new applicants (State registered day care centers, State Emergency Management Coordinators)



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GUERRILLA MARKETING

- Do it on the Cheap! Get on the agenda of conferences/seminars as a speaker or trainer
- Trade out your services for participation at the conference.
- Information booths at conferences, seminars, trade shows (RWA, Municipal League, Township Association.)



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GUERRILLA MARKETING

- Plan and conduct project events such as closings with Big Check, ground breaking, ribbon cutting, vehicle delivery, dedications.
- Invite newspaper and TV media to events for free coverage.



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GUERRILLA MARKETING

- Subscribe to online newspapers, review for applicants in need of money for project. Call!
- Work with key partners to get word out on programs (CDBG, DEQ, EPA EDA, RCAP will refer applicants to you!)
- Send out quarterly updates to all your consultants.



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CONDUCTING EVENTS

- Avoid too many “Grip and Grin” events if possible, news media have plenty of these.
- Plan ahead; invite elected officials and representatives, news media, TV, community leaders. Involve them in Event.



CONDUCTING EVENTS

- **Make it SEXY.** Tell the human interest story or why this project is important, add a different twist. Be creative!



CONDUCTING EVENTS

- Use of the “Snowbulance” in Michigan’s UP snow country for off road rescues.



CONDUCTING EVENTS

- Home Township fire truck. Michigan built; parts and assembly!



CONDUCTING EVENTS

- Women’s Shelter, battered woman’s story (good TV coverage on this one)



City of Onaway Sewer Ribbon Cutting





CONDUCTING EVENTS

- Coordinate with national events such as Earth Day.
- Tie several events together. 12 events in 2 days. “[USDA Sweeps Across the UP!](#)”
- Have the State Director or Congressman sign the Big Check at the ceremony.



Congressman Ehlers Signs Big Check



COMMAND MESSAGES

- Rural Development a Venture Capital Entity
- This is an investment in the People of this Township
- Rural Development is pleased to help improve the Safety and Well Being of rural residents



COMMAND MESSAGES

- RD’s Mission is to deliver programs that will support economic opportunity and improve quality of life for rural residents.



WORKING WITH PIC’S (Public Information Coordinator)

- Develops communication and marketing plan
- Develops media contact lists
- Deals with media
- Writes stories, press releases



WORKING WITH PIC'S (Public Information Coordinator)

- Puts together press kits, media press packs
- Helps plan events with area office and state director
- Makes contacts
- Makes follow-up calls to press and congressional offices prior to event



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