



Better Buildings Residential Program Peer Exchange Call: *How Can the Network Meet Your Needs?*

Call Slides and Meeting Summary

February 27, 2014

Better Buildings Residential Network

- **Better Buildings Residential Network**: Connects energy efficiency programs and partners to share best practices to dramatically increase the number of American homes that are energy efficient.
 - Membership: Open to organizations committed to accelerating the pace of existing residential upgrades. Commit to providing DOE with annual number of residential upgrades, and information about benefits associated with them.
 - Benefits:
 - Peer Exchange Calls
 - Tools, templates, & resources
 - Newsletter updates on trends
 - Recognition: Media, materials
 - Optional benchmarking
 - Residential Solution Center

For more information & to join, email bbresidentialnetwork@ee.doe.gov.

- **Better Buildings Residential Network Group on Home Energy Pros**

Join to access:

- Peer exchange call summaries and calendar
- Discussion threads with energy efficiency programs and partners
- Resources and documents for energy efficiency programs and partners

<http://homeenergypros.lbl.gov/group/better-buildings-residential-network>

Better Buildings Residential Network Group on Home Energy Pros Website

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the 'Better Buildings Residential Network' group page on the Home Energy Pros website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: homeenergypros.lbl.gov/groups/group/show?groupUrl=better-buildings-residential-network. The page features a header with the Better Buildings logo and a description of the network's purpose. Below this, there are sections for 'Helpful Links', 'Discussion Forum', 'Members (39)', 'Home Energy Pros', 'Latest Activity', and 'Pages (13)'. The 'Discussion Forum' section contains three posts with titles like 'Show Your Customers How Much You Love Energy Efficiency' and 'Invite Your Colleagues to Join Home Energy Pros'. The 'Members' section shows a grid of 39 member avatars. The 'Home Energy Pros' section provides information about the organization and its partnership with Home Energy magazine. The 'Latest Activity' section shows recent group actions, such as 'Elizabeth Snyder joined James Sayers's group'. The 'Pages (13)' section lists various resources available to group members. The browser's status bar at the bottom indicates 'Main Room' and 'Members Online (5)'.

Firefox Better Buildings Residential Network - H...
homeenergypros.lbl.gov/groups/group/show?groupUrl=better-buildings-residential-network
Most Visited

The Better Buildings Residential Network connects energy efficiency programs and partners to share best practices and learn from one another to dramatically increase the number of American homes that are energy efficient.

Better Buildings
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Website: <http://betterbuildings.energy.gov/bbm>
Members: 39
Latest Activity: 6 hours ago

Join the conversations in the discussion forum below. Open the table of contents below and follow the links to access topical materials and resources.

Helpful Links

- Table of Contents
- Better Buildings Residential Network
- Better Buildings Neighborhood Program Website
- Home Performance with ENERGY STAR
- Home Energy Score

Discussion Forum

Show Your Customers How Much You Love Energy Efficiency
Valentine's Day is February 14. Is your organization celebrating the day with any thematic marketing campaigns? If you are looking for tips on using events to garner program interest, check out the Peer Exchange Call from November 2013, "Leveraging Holidays and Other Events."
[Continue](#)
Started by Better Buildings Support 6 hours ago.

Invite Your Colleagues to Join Home Energy Pros
We look forward to your participation in the Better Buildings Residential Network group. If you haven't already, [invite your colleagues](#) to join the conversation too.
[Continue](#)
Started by Better Buildings Support on Tuesday.

Help Your Customers Understand Heating Systems With Infographic
DOE's latest [Energy Saver 101 infographic](#) helps you share with your customers everything they need to know about home heating—from how heating systems work and the different types on the market to what to look for when replacing a system and proper maintenance....
[Continue](#)
Started by Better Buildings Support Jan 31.

Attend "Overcoming Persistent Barriers to Energy Efficiency in Multifamily Housing through Partnerships" Webinar
DOE's Technical Assistance Program is hosting a webinar addressing how through partnerships state energy offices can play a key role in enhancing and supporting

Leave Group

Members (39)

Home Energy Pros was founded by the developers of Home Energy Saver Pro (sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy,) and brought to you in partnership with Home Energy magazine.

Latest Activity

What brings you here?

140 Share

Elizabeth Snyder joined James Sayers's group

Social Media and Energy Efficiency
Tell us how you reach customers, contractors and others using online social media.
[See More](#)
52 minutes ago
19

Elizabeth Snyder joined Evan Mills's group

Home Energy Ratings
Calculating them; visualizing them; explaining them; selling them ... there is a lot to discuss...
[See More](#)
52 minutes ago
9

Elizabeth Snyder joined Diane Chojnowski's group

Pages (13)

Tools
Better Buildings Network
[View](#)
Peer Exchange Call Schedule and Archive
Peer Exchange Archive:
Market

Main Room Members Online (5)

Peer Exchange Call Series

- There are currently 6 Peer Exchange call series:
 - Data & Evaluation
 - Financing & Revenue
 - Marketing & Outreach
 - Multi-Family/ Low Income Housing
 - Program Sustainability
 - Workforce/ Business Partners
- Calls are held the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month at 12:30 and 3:00 ET
- Upcoming calls:
 - Program Sustainability Mastermind Session (March 13)
 - Loan Programs for Low and Moderate Income Households (March 13)
 - Better Building Residential Network Orientation (March 27)
 - Quality Control, Standardization of Upgrades, and Workforce Expectations (March 27)
- Send call topic ideas or requests to be added to additional call series distribution lists to peerexchange@rossstrategic.com.

Agenda

- Call Logistics and Agenda Overview
- Initial Polls: Participant Characteristics and Interests
- Brainstorming Discussion
 1. If you and BBRN peers were to participate in a voluntary initiative, what would it be?
 2. If you could request a case study and/or lessons learned on any topic, what would it be?
 3. What type of materials from other energy efficiency programs or DOE would be useful to you?
 4. What innovative or effective approaches would you be interested in sharing with peers?
- Final Polls: Priority Focus Areas for the BBRN

Poll: Where on the spectrum is your program regarding level of experience? (Pick one)

- Established program, but still a lot to learn (75%)
- Other (17%)—not specified
- Veteran program (8%)
- New program/just starting up (0%)

Poll: Which topical areas are of most use to you? (Pick one)

- Marketing and outreach (67%)
- Data and evaluation (58%)
- Financing and revenue generation (50%)
- Workforce/job creation (25%)
- Other (25%):
 - Recognition of energy efficiency in home valuation
 - Educating homeowners by leveraging home inspectors

Brainstorming Question 1: If you and BBRN peers were to participate in a voluntary initiative, what would it be?

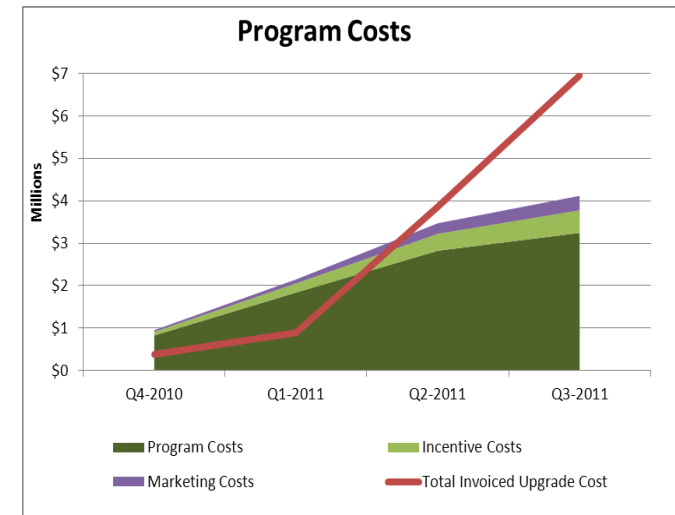
Example: Voluntary Program Benchmarking

Definition:

Tracking your program's performance over time, or comparing to achievements of other programs.

Value:

- 1) Communicate progress
 - Policy goals are being achieved (energy savings, jobs, etc.)
 - Spending of public funds is effective
- 2) Assess when and where to make program design changes
 - Updating programs is informed by experience and performance
- 3) Justify continued or additional investment



- Better Buildings Residential Network (BBRN) plans to develop a Guide for optional Residential Program Progress Benchmarking
- The Guide will include:
 - Information on the value and uses of benchmarking, and how it fits into your broader program planning
 - Action steps and templates for developing and implementing a Benchmarking Plan
 - Information on useful outcome metrics
 - Definitions and protocols for measuring
 - Uses and value of each metric
 - Challenges of collecting data
 - Examples of benchmarks from current programs
- Members will be engaged in the Guide's development



Examples of Outcome Metrics

Outcome to Measure	Question to Answer
Annual Energy Saved by energy type	Were estimated energy savings realized?
Life-time Energy Saved by energy type	Are more participants or deeper savings per participant needed to achieve energy savings goals?
Percent Energy saved	How much energy was saved compared to the total energy used? Was it a significant change?
Buildings Upgraded	What percentage of the market/available stock was improved?
Buildings Audited, Benchmarked, Scored or Rated	How many homeowners were made aware of their homes' energy efficiency or performance?
Invoiced Project Cost	Did the total investment in building improvements exceed the amount invested to encourage those improvements?
Loan Amount	What is the average or total amount loaned?
Loan Defaults	Do loans have lower risk?
Certified Individuals (assessors, raters, contractors)	Is the professional workforce growing? What is the supply of active workforce?

Brainstorming Question 1: If you and BBRN peers were to participate in a voluntary initiative, what would it be?

- Program benchmarking on:
 - Marketing costs per homeowner (including cost of rebates)
 - Relationship between rebate costs and marketing costs (e.g., if rebates are higher, is less investment in marketing needed?)
- Strategies for packaging and promoting deeper retrofits, including target market demographics and incentives
- Strategies for public education and volunteerism to promote energy efficiency
- Best practices and/or training on customer service and the role of energy concierges (e.g., right mix of pestering and supporting homeowners)
- Effective approaches for providing non-financial incentives for homeowners
- Strategies for enhancing the role of home inspectors in energy efficiency

Brainstorming Question 2: If you could request a case study and/or lessons learned on any topic, what would it be?

2) Offer what people want and value (not necessarily energy efficiency)—and offer it when they want it



- Take advantage of seasonal opportunities to give homeowners what they need, when they need it

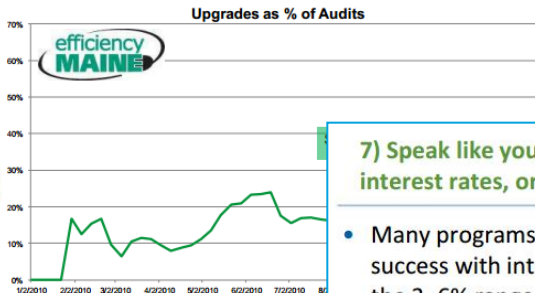
NO MORE ICE DAMS



4) Contractors are your front-line sales force



...empower them with sales training



...and make sure the product is something they want to sell

- Get contractor input on product
- Ensure that the program is something contractors and their customers want
- Understand your contractor's needs

See BBNP case study: [Maine – Contractor Sales Training Boosts Energy Upgrades](#)

7) Speak like your customer—low payments, low interest rates, or more lattes?



- Many programs have had success with interest rates in the 3–6% range

0% = 1.99% = ?

- <3% is expensive and hard to sell on secondary markets
- Customers haven't shown much preference between 3% and 6%

How you sell it matters



- Low monthly payments may be more important than specific loan terms and interest rates
- Translate for customers: number of lattes or movies per month

Brainstorming Question 2: If you could request a case study and/or lessons learned on any topic, what would it be?

- How to reflect energy efficiency upgrades in home values
- Effective engagement with the home appraiser community
- Strategies for improving contractor sales pitches—what has worked? (e.g., sales training)
- Examples and lessons related to working successfully with utilities and their regulators
- Lessons about the effectiveness of different financing program designs, such as comparing loan-loss reserves to revolving loan funds
- Case studies and or lessons about how contractors have changed or improved their business models

Brainstorming Question 3: What type of materials from other energy efficiency programs or DOE would be useful to you?

Model RFPs?

Example press releases?

Marketing materials?

Calculation tools?

Brainstorming Question 3: What type of materials from other energy efficiency programs or DOE would be useful to you?

- A pre-packaged randomized QA/QC program that would be recognized by utilities and regulators and satisfy rigorous EM&V requirements
- A collection of flyers, handouts, or other materials for K-8 grades to educate the public over the long term
 - *Resource:* link to Energy Education links for K-12 educators: http://www.uspartnership.org/main/show_passage/48
 - *Resource:* Kansas City's residential energy efficiency program has engaged youth, including through a coloring book for kids
- Photos that programs can use for marketing
- Reporting templates for post-Better Buildings grant data collection
- Information on how to incorporate Health Homes in to energy efficiency programs

Brainstorming Question 3: What type of materials from other energy efficiency programs or DOE would be useful to you? (Con't)

- User evaluations of available software tools for analyzing the energy savings from energy efficiency measures
- Shared findings about actual savings outcomes (e.g. based on energy bills)
- Information about regional variability in energy savings from energy efficiency measures

Brainstorming Question 4: What innovative or effective approaches would you be interested in sharing with peers?

- Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (Chicago): Certificate of completion following home upgrade
- Elevate Energy (Chicago): Community-based outreach (e.g., house parties)
- Spirit Foundation (Austin, TX): Working with Wounded Warriors and veterans organizations
- Kansas City, MO: Work on energy efficiency and healthy homes with Children's Mercy Hospital
- Kansas City, MO: Experience with a business incubator for small businesses and local hires for energy efficiency

Poll: Which of the following voluntary initiatives is of interest? (Pick all that apply)

- Volunteer network/ public education (83%)
- Benchmarking for marketing costs (67%)
- Customer service best practices or web-based training (58%)
- Packaging deeper retrofits (42%)
- Integration with home inspections (33%)

Poll: Which of the following proposed topics for case studies and/or lessons learned are of interest? (Pick all that apply)

- Changes in home values from energy efficiency upgrades (100%)
- Strategies for improving contractor sales pitches (54%)
- Comparison of financing programs (54%)
- Appraiser community role and engagement (45%)
- Working with utilities and regulators (36%)

Poll: Which of the following Peer Exchange call series would be of interest? (Pick all that apply)

- Leaders forum for experienced programs (90%)
- Residential Energy Efficiency "101" for new programs or personnel (40%)
- Other (10%):
 - Series for small-scale programs

Thank you!

Please chat in ideas for future calls or send them to peerexchange@rossstrategic.com