

**PROCESS EVALUATION**  
**Marketing and Outreach Activities**

Final Report

Prepared for  
**The New York State**  
**Energy Research and Development Authority**

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## **ABSTRACT**

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This evaluation examines the structure and function of marketing and outreach at NYSERDA at an organization-wide level; it raises key issues about the effectiveness of these activities for the future as the authority enters a new phase of funding, as well as the potential re-entry of utilities as delivery agents for efficiency programs. The study is based upon a review of numerous documents and website content, as well as in-depth interviews with over 40 contacts, including 7 NYSERDA directors, 20 NYSERDA program and project managers, and 15 contractors to NYSERDA who conduct marketing and outreach activities throughout the organization. Three key issues emanated from the research: how to brand and position the authority; how to balance internal and contracted sources of marketing and outreach; and how to reach underserved markets. Recommendations include: having top management launch a process to establish a customer-based marketing philosophy and culture throughout the authority; establishing the central marketing group as the leader for strategic marketing and outreach planning; using the Energy Analysis arm of the authority to assist with setting market goals and overseeing market research; and conducting a best practices study with similar agencies to guide these efforts.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The **New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup>** programs are funded by an electric distribution System Benefits Charge (SBC) paid by customers of Central Hudson Gas and Electric Corporation, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., New York State Electric and Gas Corporation, National Grid, Orange and Rockland Utilities, and Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation. All customers who pay into the SBC are eligible to participate in the programs, which are administered by The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), a public benefit corporation established in 1975.

Since 1998, marketing and outreach have evolved to address needs as they emerged for the **New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup>** programs. Over this decade of growth and change for NYSERDA, many and varied marketing and outreach activities have occurred, using both in-house and contracted resources, and with more or less central guidance and oversight. This process evaluation addresses questions about the clarity and efficacy of these functions across the organization, and whether they can be improved.

This portfolio-level process evaluation focused on two goals:

- To understand how marketing and outreach are defined, structured, guided, implemented, and coordinated at NYSERDA
- To capture key marketing and outreach concerns and opportunities

The process evaluation team conducted a variety of activities to assess marketing and outreach structures and functions. These included a review of numerous documents and website content, including: Statements of Work (SOW) for contractors; budgets for marketing and outreach; market and evaluation research conducted for NYSERDA; and marketing materials. In addition, the process evaluation team conducted over 60 hours of structured interviews, using open-ended questions, with over 40 individuals, including NYSERDA staff<sup>1</sup> members and contractors who oversee and conduct marketing and outreach activities.

### KEY FINDINGS

This research identified three key marketing and outreach issues that NYSERDA should address:

#### **Branding and Positioning**

NYSERDA faces a challenge in how to position the organization in the marketplace and how to establish a unifying presence (or brand) that effectively conveys the organization's purpose and values – and benefits to customers – across all its programs and functions. Limited research has been done to gauge overall customer awareness of and perceptions about NYSERDA, and none of it as part of a strategic and systematic research effort. The New York energy market is getting more complex, with more actors entering the energy market and offering services. Past buy-in from top management for branding and positioning efforts has varied. However, efforts are now underway to develop a central positioning and branding “roadmap.”

In thinking through that roadmap, there were several questions voiced by staff and contractors related to the branding and positioning of NYSERDA services that should be considered:

- Should NYSERDA be marketing single programs, multiple, but interrelated programs, all **New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup>** programs, or broader efficiency and sustainability messages?

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<sup>1</sup> The term “staff” refers to any level of staff member, including directors and program and project managers. In some cases, where it is important to distinguish among these staff levels, more-specific terms are used.

- How do technology-transfer goals for research and development fit?
- What story is NYSERDA trying to tell?
- How well is NYSERDA positioned for the future?
- How can the value of marketing be measured?

Thinking through these questions as part of this effort should result in an overarching and strategic marketing orientation and plan that makes NYSERDA's marketing and outreach function clear and comprehensive, more internally consistent and cohesive, and more able to meet future challenges. These efforts may or may not result in establishing an external common brand, but, internally NYSERDA will be able to better describe its customers and the value of its services to them.

### **Balancing Central and Contracted Marketing Services**

Perceptions vary as to which marketing and outreach activities are best served by a centralized function, rather than at a program level. The Residential Efficiency Affordability Program (REAP) has a strong dedicated market and support team, and an outside contractor with key marketing responsibilities; this group does not tend to rely on central resources for developing materials.

Clean Energy Research and Market Development (R&D) has technical specialists and also relies on internal resources. Energy Efficiency Services (EES) has relied more on internal resources for marketing and outreach services, and has used some contracted assistance. However, the new Energy Smart Focus Program (Focus Program) contractors have been assigned significant marketing tasks.

The core marketing function at NYSERDA has been challenged due to changes in leadership and limited resources, but recently a new marketing department was formed and a new director was hired. A stronger core marketing role and more resources will benefit important points of intersection at NYSERDA, including: the website and other customer service interfaces; perceptions about the worth and role of internal marketing; cross-marketing opportunities; NYSERDA-wide branding and positioning; and tracking marketing and outreach costs.

### **Reaching New and Underserved Markets**

At this juncture for NYSERDA, staff noted that some residential and commercial target markets still might not be well served by current efforts. Marketing and outreach responsibilities often include charting the way to serve new customers and could be a value-added marketing group service.

On the residential side, respondents mentioned targeting neighborhoods in New York City, including lower-income and minority customer groups, and better tailored marketing for New York City and upstate areas. For EES programs, coordinating and tracking the effectiveness of the new Focus Program marketing efforts with existing marketing efforts will be important.

Targeting behavioral change is another new and largely untapped arena for NYSERDA, and the authority has recently begun to explore behavioral issues and research topics in conjunction with the Department of Public Service (DPS).

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In light of the previous discussions, the following conclusions and recommendations are offered.

1. **Conclusion: NYSERDA, while conducting a great deal of marketing and outreach, and caring deeply about serving its customers well, has not embraced a strong organization-wide marketing philosophy and culture.** Top-down leadership will be needed to reach this goal. NYSERDA staff members have many insights about their customers and what they need

and want, but this has not been put within a unified marketing framework that all can understand and act upon. A stronger, integrated marketing orientation – one that embraces customer viewpoints and benefits as drivers of strategic decisions – will improve NYSERDA’s internal operations, as well as its ability to be a leader in providing energy services and influential technical information.

The limited amount of overarching customer research, as well as many staff respondents who freely say they are not “marketers,” has hampered an organization-wide marketing orientation. Customer research can be used to benchmark and track key marketing information, including overall awareness, perceptions, and use of programs and services. It can guide overall direction and specific program and marketing efforts, including what messages resonate with customers. While most staff members do not need to be professional marketers, more training on basic marketing principles and applications, such as community-based social marketing approaches, would enhance their support for a marketing culture.

**Recommendation: Senior management needs to continue to establish a marketing philosophy and culture at NYSERDA.** Senior managers and the leadership team need to show program staff this is a top priority and provide guidance, financial support, and staff hours. They need to support the positioning and branding roadmap that is being prepared. NYSERDA staff and contractors need to be brought into the same marketing fold, both philosophically and practically. A plan to benchmark and track customer insights and indicators should be developed and implemented, and marketing training for program and contractor staff should be encouraged.

2. **Conclusion: The roles, responsibilities, and funding of the many actors involved in marketing and outreach functions at NYSERDA deserve more clarification and coordination, especially those of the new marketing department.** Program staff members, dedicated program teams, outside contractors, and internal marketing and communication staff members all conduct marketing. However, key marketing actors often do not operate as a team and have been physically dispersed. Lack of written guidelines to help staff understand and meet marketing requirements, several of which are in development, have further contributed to confusion. This study revealed that more leadership, expert guidance, and coordination from a central marketing group could increase efficiency and reduce confusion about the role, applications, and requirements of marketing. In addition, the recent move to house a number of marketing and communications professionals together, across organizational lines (including the experienced REAP marketing team), should enhance teamwork.

**Recommendation: Over time, establish the central marketing group as having responsibility for strategic direction, oversight, and guidance for marketing and outreach at NYSERDA.** The central marketing group should lead marketing at NYSERDA for both strategic and practical purposes. Additional staff, skills, and budget will be needed for the group if it is to successfully fulfill this larger and more important role. This group should make the completion and adoption of marketing and website guidelines a priority, especially since this process can serve as an entry point for greater communication between marketers and program staff.

3. **Conclusion: While the Energy Analysis group has concentrated on evaluation tasks, it has many skills and resources that could be a valuable helpmate in NYSERDA’s retooling of its marketing philosophy and approach.** Key ways that this group could be involved include:
  - Helping to define goals and indicators
  - Overseeing baseline and other marketing research
  - Helping Marketing gather information about new and underserved markets
  - Incorporating studies to measure marketing and outreach success

- Highlighting and communicating research findings important for marketing efforts

**Recommendation:** To the extent possible, involve Energy Analysis as the research arm of marketing and outreach.

4. **Conclusion:** A best practices analysis, originally part of this research, could still play a valuable role in the establishing a more active, organization-wide marketing philosophy at NYSERDA. A best practices analysis can compare different ways that organizations structure their marketing departments, it can identify efficient marketing and outreach processes that organizations use, and could explore budgets and allocations of resources to different tactics and strategies. The best practices effort was postponed so that changes in organization and management of central marketing, and the development of a branding and positioning roadmap, could be used to provide guidance to the evaluation team to develop a useful best practices study.

**Recommendation:** Work with the new marketing director to define, time, and implement a tailored best practices analysis.

## SECTION 1:

# INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The **New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup>** programs are funded by an electric distribution System Benefits Charge (SBC) paid by customers of Central Hudson Gas and Electric Corporation, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., New York State Electric and Gas Corporation, National Grid, Orange and Rockland Utilities, and Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation. The programs are available to all electric distribution customers that pay into the SBC. The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), a public benefit corporation established in 1975, began administering the SBC funds in 1998 through NYSEDA's **New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup>** Program.

Since 1998, marketing and outreach have evolved to address needs as they emerged for the **New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup>** Program portfolio. Over this decade of growth and change for NYSEDA, many and varied marketing and outreach activities have occurred, using both in-house and contracted resources, and with more or less central guidance and oversight. The need for this portfolio evaluation of marketing and outreach arose from discussions with key NYSEDA staff members and contractors about the clarity and efficacy of these functions across the organization, and if they might be improved.<sup>2</sup> These discussions focused the process evaluation on three major goals:

5. To understand how marketing and outreach are defined, structured, guided, implemented, coordinated, and assessed at NYSEDA
6. To assess key marketing and outreach issues
7. To analyze how NYSEDA's marketing and outreach structure, and its resources, compare to "best practices" in selected organizations

This report addresses the first two goals. After key NYSEDA staff members review and discuss these findings, and advise on which criteria they would find most useful for a comparative analysis, a follow-up project to assess best practices will be undertaken.

### 1.2 METHODS

Qualitative methods were used to assess marketing and outreach structures and functions at NYSEDA. The goal of this approach was to create a balanced, nuanced picture of the marketing landscape at the organizational level and to identify important issues related to marketing activities. Due to the small, diverse sample, percentages are not used. Evaluation methods included:

- A review and analysis of numerous documents and website content, including: Statements of Work (SOW) for contractors; budgets for marketing and outreach; market and evaluation research conducted for NYSEDA; and marketing materials

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that this evaluation does not assess the effectiveness of individual marketing and outreach activities; however, it did ask respondents to address how they measured success for these efforts.

- An analysis of in-depth interviews, using open-ended questions, with a qualitatively representative set of 40 NYSERDA staff<sup>3</sup> and contractors who oversee and/or conduct marketing and outreach activities

The interviews included 7 directors, 20 program and project managers, and 15 contractors with responsibilities across the organization in:

- External Affairs – where Marketing and Economic Development (M&ED) is housed
- Energy Efficiency Services (EES) – where commercial and industrial programs are housed
- Clean Energy Research and Market Development (R&D)
- Residential Efficiency Affordability Program (REAP)

A summary of these interviews, by type of respondent and programmatic area is shown in Table 1-1 below.

**Table 1-1. Marketing and Outreach Interview Summary**

Role	External Affairs	EES	R&D	REAP	Total
Directors / Assistant Directors	4	1	1	1	7
Program / Project Managers	1	7	3	9	20
Contractors	1	8	1	5	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>42</b>

### 1.3 REPORT ORGANIZATION

The sections that follow this introduction include:

- *Section 2: NYSERDA's Marketing and Outreach Landscape*
- *Section 3: Key Marketing and Outreach Issues*
- *Section 4: Conclusions and Recommendations*
- *Appendix A: NYSERDA Marketing and Outreach (M&O) Actors and Activities Summary* – contains a list of respondents by program or function, accompanied by a summary of marketing and outreach activities carried out by contractors
- *Appendix B: Interview Guides* – for directors, program managers, and implementation contractors

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<sup>3</sup> When the term “staff” is used in this report, it refers to any level of staff member, including directors and program and project managers. In some cases, where it is important to distinguish among these staff levels, more-specific terms are used.

## SECTION 2:

# NYSERDA'S MARKETING AND OUTREACH LANDSCAPE

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## 2.1 PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION

This section addresses the first research goal:

- To understand how marketing and outreach are defined, structured, guided, implemented, coordinated, and monitored at NYSERDA

All respondents were asked to address a series of topics about marketing and outreach at NYSERDA, including:

- Definitions of Marketing and Outreach
- Marketing and Outreach Structures and Goals
- Policies and Procedures for Marketing and Outreach
- Marketing and Outreach Implementation
- Tracking Marketing Costs and Outcomes
- Measuring Marketing and Outreach Success

In the next section, respondent views of each of these topics are covered in turn, highlighting similarities and differences among respondents from External Affairs, EES, R&D, and REAP.<sup>4</sup> The implications of these findings are reserved for *Section 3: Key Marketing and Outreach Issues*.

## 2.2 DEFINITIONS OF MARKETING AND OUTREACH

Interviews began by explaining to respondents that they were contributing to a process evaluation that was exploring “how marketing and outreach activities are structured across NYSERDA’s **New York Energy \$mart**<sup>SM</sup> programs.” First, respondents were asked to provide their own definition of marketing and its activities. While definitions vary, the American Marketing Association’s (AMA) Board of Directors in 2007 defined *marketing* as “the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.”<sup>5</sup> While not explicit in this definition, the AMA and individual leaders in the marketing field agree that effective marketing hinges, first and foremost, on customer knowledge and insights.

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<sup>4</sup> In the 1990s, the Communications group contained marketing, publications, public information, and events, but these functions have been reorganized over the years. Currently, these functions are housed under External Affairs. Marketing and Communications were the focal units for this evaluation because they are the centralized service for marketing and outreach. A new, separate Events unit was just being formed at the time of this evaluation. Economic Development and External Affairs were not included in this analysis.

<sup>5</sup> The American Marketing Association is the largest professional marketing organization in North America and is recognized as a standard resource for marketing resources and training. This definition can be found on their web pages: <http://www.marketingpower.com/AboutAMA/Pages/DefinitionofMarketing.aspx>.

Thus, marketing is not a “make it and they will come” philosophy. Rather, it is a “know your customer well enough” philosophy, so that “the product or service fits him and sells itself.”<sup>6</sup>

Notably, the “society at large” aspect of the AMA’s definition is especially relevant to public benefit organizations like NYSERDA. The AMA more recently added this phrase to acknowledge the growing number of public and non-profit organizations that are using traditional marketing approaches for causes that benefit society, such as protecting public health or saving the environment. Philip Kotler and Nancy Lee, two leaders in the “social marketing” field, say that social marketing “takes the marketing concept one step further. It holds that organizations should develop and deliver superior value to customers in a way that maintains or improves the consumer’s *and* society’s well-being.”<sup>7</sup>

When respondents to this research were asked to define marketing, most described it as a “one-to-many approach,” with the goal of reaching and informing the greatest number of relevant audiences about program opportunities – “what you have to offer customers” and “telling our story to the public in terms of our programs.” Most also mentioned different media and methods that can be used for marketing, including mass media, websites, advertising, events, point-of-purchase displays, brochures, and other collateral. They tended to speak of marketing in terms of outward, “one-way” communication. Only one respondent talked about marketing as understanding customer needs and then meeting those needs.

Some respondents also described marketing as a tool that can be used to meet program or organizational goals – “understanding what the business goals are and doing an evaluation of how we can use...all of the marketing elements to help an organization reach those goals.” Some also drew distinctions between “corporate” marketing of NYSERDA’s overall messages and marketing to meet program goals. A few mentioned that marketing can be used to brand and position an organization.

Respondents were then asked to define *outreach* and how it might differ from marketing. Unlike marketing, no nationally recognized organization has established a definition for outreach. However, public organizations, such as universities, tend to define outreach as services that engage them in mutually beneficial exchanges with external constituencies, often through education. Thus, outreach has a very similar goal of *exchange* between the sponsoring organizations and their customers, although the tactics of outreach tend to be more personal and interactive.

Still, many saw outreach as narrower in scope and more specialized than marketing – more targeted, tailored, focused on particular needs, and using more one-to-one and relationship-building approaches. Quite a few thought of it as an educational effort, and some included training and development under outreach activities. These ideas are consistent with the definition presented above, although, again, the *exchange* aspect of the definition was still not prominent.

While some respondents thought it was important to distinguish between marketing and outreach, seeing them as complementary functions with different tactics, others saw outreach as a component of marketing – “marketing is the umbrella and outreach is a subset.” When contractors were asked if they had to distinguish between marketing and outreach for their tasks, most said they did not do this. Non-residential contractors did note that most of what they did would be considered outreach.

Overall, while definitions and understanding of the terms *marketing* and *outreach* can differ somewhat, respondents did not emphasize two key components of a marketing (and outreach) philosophy:

- The importance of understanding customers

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<sup>6</sup> Peter F. Drucker, *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 64-65. Peter Drucker is widely acknowledged as the founder of modern management principles.

<sup>7</sup> Philip Kotler and Nancy Lee, *Marketing and the Public Sector* (New Jersey: Wharton School Publishing, 2006), p. 26.

- The focus on an exchange of mutual benefits between NYSERDA and its customers

The implications of these two missing elements are discussed in *Section 3.1: Establishing a Marketing Culture*.

### 2.3 MARKETING AND OUTREACH STRUCTURE AND ROLES

Marketing and outreach is accomplished under a variety of auspices at NYSERDA and these structures have shifted over time.<sup>8</sup> (Please see *Appendix A: NYSERDA Marketing and Outreach (M&O) Actors and Activities Summary* for a list of key marketing activities, staff, and contractors.)

Staff within the Marketing Unit and the Communications Unit, both of which are housed under Marketing and Economic Development (M&ED), currently provide the bulk of centralized marketing and outreach support for **New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup>** programs. While these units have considerable responsibilities, they have limited independent funding; most marketing and outreach funds are embedded in program budgets. The Marketing Unit, currently with a staff of four, supports a variety of efforts including: helping NYSERDA staff members identify and define audiences; creative design of print and other collateral materials; review and editing of marketing materials developed by others at NYSERDA or by program contractors; website development; management of in-house printing and printing contracts; and special marketing support requests from the governor. Marketing is also responsible for maintaining stylistic and logo standards across the organization.

Staff members in the Communications Unit handle all press inquiries, send out press releases and solicitations for funding, and coordinate press events, whether in conjunction with a contractor or for the authority. This group works with the Marketing Unit to create materials for press kits and information used for “advertorials,” and may be called upon to edit marketing materials.

Outside contractors are extensively used for marketing and outreach activities at NYSERDA. Contractors may be mostly focused on these functions or these functions may be combined with (or subsumed under) other program implementation tasks. Outside contractors may be highly specialized, as is the case with the contractor for the Environmental Monitoring, Evaluation, and Protection program (EMEP), or they may be energy efficiency generalists, such as Energy \$mart Communities Program coordinators. Finally, NYSERDA program staff members create marketing and outreach materials, and conduct face-to-face outreach; the amount of this varies greatly by program. Outreach may include meeting with potential program participants to discuss program options and presenting program opportunities at events and conferences.

Marketing is designed and implemented through a wide variety of mechanisms at NYSERDA. Some programs use contracted marketing and outreach services almost exclusively, while others combine contracted and internal marketing resources, and still others primarily use internal resources. For example, R&D does not have dedicated marketing and outreach staff, while EES has one “centralized marketing person” whose role is to ensure consistency and deal with cross-program marketing efforts, such as the website. Both EES and R&D staff members tend to work closely with internal marketing and communications staff on program brochures, fact sheets, reports, Public Opportunity Notices (PONs), and press events. They tend to contract out for specialized expertise requiring both technical acumen and marketplace savvy, such as the *Power Naturally* website for the Clean Energy, PV, and Wind programs, and for the new Focus Program (e.g., Hospitality, Municipal Water, and Wastewater).

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<sup>8</sup> For the rest of this document, *marketing* and *outreach* will often be used together. If only the term *marketing* is used, the reader should assume that outreach is subsumed under marketing. *Outreach* is rarely used by itself except initially to explore how respondents defined it.

REAP's market and outreach structure is entirely different from R&D and EES. REAP does a great deal of marketing itself, has a dedicated Market and Support Unit comprised of five staff, and maintains a website identity (GetEnergySmart.org) that is separate from, but connected to, NYSEDA's main website (NYSEDA.org). Staff members in REAP's Market and Support unit are assigned to specific REAP programs and act as liaisons among contractors, program staff, and the Marketing and Communications staff members. REAP works with NYSEDA's central marketing services on a limited basis (approval of marketing materials); they frequently work with NYSEDA's Communications staff members on press events. REAP contracts for comprehensive marketing services, including strategy development, partner support, public relations services, creative direction, media outreach, special events, and market research.

## 2.4 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR MARKETING AND OUTREACH

To gather perceptions about the clarity of NYSEDA policies, procedures, and guidelines for marketing and outreach, respondents were first asked if such policies were in place, whether formally or informally. Most respondents were not aware of formal policies or procedures that were actively used, while the remaining respondents offered a diverse set of answers. A few who had worked for or with NYSEDA for a long time suggested the organization's "operations manual" might address marketing and outreach. Several others thought written guidelines might be "in the works" and marketing staff confirmed that a style guide, including a guide to changing website content, was being developed. Another small group, mostly members of the Marketing Unit, thought the on-line work-order system should be mentioned as a standardized procedure to submit marketing requests. Finally, a few REAP and R&D respondents cited NYSEDA's standard program development process, where new program designs are vetted by major groups within NYSEDA, including M&ED.

While formal guidelines and procedures are not in place, many respondents noted informal guidelines do exist, especially regarding the Marketing Unit's review process for promotional materials, including review of content, use of the logo (*e.g.*, consistency of style and placement), and design of the materials. NYSEDA staff members were more aware of these requirements and this process than were NYSEDA contractors, since staff members primarily handle the internal review steps. Staff and contractors both noted that informal guidelines also exist about style and terminology within specific programs. For example, in the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR<sup>®</sup> program, customers are told they will receive a "comprehensive energy assessment," not an "energy audit," and the word *rebate* is never used.

When asked if NYSEDA's marketing policies and guidelines were effective, most respondents agreed that NYSEDA lacks a cohesive, organization-wide communications strategy linked to program marketing, and that this can create confusion and inconsistency. Some program staff members and contractors cited improvements in procedures (such as the on-line work-order system) and in working relationships, saying that the Marketing Unit had become more collaborative, responsive, valuable, and timely, but others thought more improvements were needed.

REAP respondents articulated the most specific requests for improvement; they said they would benefit from more expert internal marketing staff, a faster review process, fewer changes in guidelines (such as use of the **New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup>** logo), and more guidance on how to present NYSEDA's overall role and mission to a wider group of stakeholders than their specific target audiences. Staff members providing central marketing and outreach services believe they offer strong skills and support, but acknowledge they have too few resources. These staff members would like to see stronger efforts to have the whole organization function together in terms of marketing and outreach. They pointed out that the NYSEDA website became very difficult to navigate and grew to 15,000 pages, in large part, due to a lack of centralized oversight. A recent project under their purview has instituted improvements and is developing guidelines.

## **2.5 IMPLEMENTING MARKETING AND OUTREACH**

### **2.5.1 Perceptions of the Marketing Unit and Communications Unit**

#### Overall Perceptions

Across NYSERDA, respondents varied in their views of the roles and responsibilities of the two units providing central marketing services – the Marketing Unit and the Communications Unit. Some respondents simply said they were confused about the roles of these units due to recent organizational changes and were somewhat unsure how to work with the units. Others were unsure how to differentiate the services that the units provide. Still others wondered how Economic Development fits in with marketing and communications. Almost all respondents thought that central marketing is understaffed and overwhelmed with requests.

#### Working with the Marketing Unit

According to Marketing Unit staff, their responsibilities focus on creative development, review and approval of marketing materials, maintaining graphic and website standards, managing printing contracts, and other related functions. R&D, EES, and REAP all had somewhat different relationships with the Marketing Unit and what it provided their program area, as described below.

Most R&D respondents tended to see the role of the Marketing Unit as helping them achieve their program goals; one R&D respondent thought Marketing was also responsible for educating consumers on broader themes consistent with NYSERDA's goals, such as using better and more efficient technologies. Overall, relationships between R&D and the Marketing Unit were positive, although there were some concerns about timeliness and inappropriate edits.

Among EES respondents, most thought the Marketing Unit was responsible for: maintaining a consistent image for NYSERDA and its programs; providing minimum standards for style and formatting; making programs easily understood; maintaining control over web content; providing or editing written marketing materials; and providing support for events, fairs, and conferences, as well as “helping to fill the seats.” Several EES respondents wanted marketing staff to do more, including taking on more responsibilities for originating collateral materials and helping staff to develop marketing strategies.

REAP staff and contractors saw the Marketing Unit more narrowly than other groups – primarily as maintaining NYSERDA's image through monitoring of the logo and other style/graphic components, and managing printing. Some REAP and some contractor staff members said they saw the services that Marketing provides as more of a hurdle than a help to their marketing efforts. They said: that Marketing lacked the appropriate software to work effectively with their contractors; that they go beyond monitoring logo use and style to significantly edit REAP's work; and that their review may delay production. REAP staff members also wanted Marketing staff members to know more about the REAP programs and to have a broader range of skills.

#### Working with the Communications Unit

The Communications Unit describes itself as being focused on press-related services, although they collaborate with the Marketing Unit. The role of the Communications Unit is generally clearer to NYSERDA staff; they are seen as the staff that reviews press releases, drafts speeches, and organizes speakers for public events. Program staff members also refer journalists, students conducting research, and sensitive issues to the Communications Unit. Some confusion has occurred when Communications staff members edit marketing materials; this occurs when the Marketing Unit does not have staff available to cover the work. Program staff and contractors work closely with Communications on press-related issues, and Communications may also ask program staff to review draft press content to ensure accuracy

from the program perspective. There is a consensus view that Communications provides careful review of the public face of NYSERDA.

### **2.5.2 Using Contractors for Marketing and Outreach**

NYSERDA programs make extensive use of external contractors for marketing and outreach tasks. Respondents who use outside contractors for marketing and outreach offered various reasons for doing so, including:

- Too few in-house resources for the volume of work
- The need for “state-of-the-art” skills not available in-house, such as specific areas of technical or graphic/creative expertise
- Satisfaction with the same contractor in the past
- The market connections of contractors
- The inability of in-house staff to meet needed schedules
- The desire to consolidate media buys
- Improving the consistency in look and messages
- Taking advantage of cross-marketing opportunities
- Getting a fresh, non-NYSERDA perspective
- The ability to ramp resources up and down, depending upon demand

#### Challenges of Using Contractors

While the advantages of using contractors outweighed not using them, NYSERDA staff also noted some challenges when hiring contractors for marketing and outreach. They pointed to issues that arise when contractors do not understand the organizational culture well enough, which can lead to marketing approaches and products that do not fit the authority. As one director said, “... we are a state authority, we are conservative. Even though sex sells, you won’t see it in our ads.” Another director noted that it can be hard for non-marketers to give marketers direction. As he put it, contractors try to put together “what they perceive we want,” but this assumes “that we know and that we have marketing experience.”

Respondents also pointed out that contractors need to understand internal marketing and communications requirements and procedures, and that review by the internal marketing and communications staffs needs to be factored into their work. Both staff and contractors noted that these requirements are not always clear, which can lead to frustrations and time delays.

In addition to being outsiders to NYSERDA’s culture and procedures, contractors often act as extensions of NYSERDA staff – especially regional community coordinators and those working for EES programs who have face-to-face contact with customers or mid-market actors. Thus, they may be asked to represent a broad range of programs. Contractors report it can be tricky to negotiate these situations, but they have tried to develop a good basic knowledge across NYSERDA’s programs so that they can refer people to the appropriate resources. Staff respondents agree that contractors representing NYSERDA “need to stay up to date on programs and need to know when to hand off a question to NYSERDA and not give out bad information.”

Overall, staff respondents agree it is an ongoing educational process to ensure that outside contractors understand and remember NYSERDA norms, procedures, and programs. They noted that not doing so can mean increased costs.

### Coordination Among Contractors

The degree to which R&D, EES, and REAP contractors communicate or collaborate with one another about marketing and outreach issues varies across NYSERDA programs. For R&D programs, contractors do not communicate with the general public; they also have circumscribed audiences and a limited need to coordinate with one another. For programs within EES, the Outreach Program Consultants (OPCs), which for years have represented an array of commercial programs, stay in touch with each other on an informal basis to make sure their approaches are consistent. OPCs and contractors working with the new Energy Smart Focus Program noted that they would like to be able to coordinate better with each other; this would help them refer potential customers to the appropriate programs, avoid confusion, and minimize duplication of effort.

Both REAP staff and contractors agree they make a strong team. All contractors meet with REAP staff on a monthly basis to discuss any activity that could affect marketing strategies and activities. During marketing campaigns, coordination is more frequent. Contractors also reported they share information with each other on how to work effectively with NYSERDA.

### **2.5.3 Partnership Marketing**

For many of its programs, NYSERDA works with market actors, organizations, and advisory groups to extend its marketing and outreach efforts. These are important partnerships for NYSERDA. R&D programs are closely tied with the technical and scientific communities, and these relationships offer avenues for marketing and outreach about program opportunities. EES programs work with mid-market actors to promote higher efficiency products, such as motor and lighting vendors. They also work with a wide range of organizations, such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA), U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE), and local government agencies and offices interested in promoting energy efficiency. Elements of the new Focus Program, such as the one targeted to municipal water and wastewater, have formed an infrastructure alliance of “25 different organizations – public, private non-profit technical assistance providers... reaching ...water wastewater engineers, [and] elected officials.”

REAP has a variety of actively cooperative efforts that promote its programs. For example, the Consumer Education Program for Residential Energy Efficiency (CEPREE) is a joint program between the Department of Design and Environmental Analysis at Cornell University and NYSERDA. CEPREE disseminates information through 30 Cornell Cooperative Extension educators, who participate in regular in-service training from Cornell faculty and NYSERDA project officers. In the EmPower program, outreach to Departments of Aging, Social Services, and utilities provides an ongoing source of customer referrals.

### **2.5.4 NYSERDA Program Staff as Marketers**

When asked how well equipped NYSERDA program staff is at making decisions about marketing and outreach efforts, many agreed with a statement by a colleague in R&D: “I know enough to know that I don't know how to do it.” Overall, but with some exceptions, NYSERDA staff members know they are technical people with technical orientations and that they are not marketers living in a “marketing world.” As one person put it: “These folks are engineers. . .while they are brilliant, when it comes to marketing they are not innovative, creative, not designers.” Across the board, respondents acknowledged they need marketing leadership and expertise, whether in-house or through contractors, even though experienced staff members across all the programs tended to have many valuable industry contacts. Even REAP, which has some staff members with marketing or educational degrees, tends to rely primarily on marketing contractors. On the outreach side, particularly for EES programs, interpersonal skills are strong, especially for “getting your foot in the door”; staff members are hired, in part, for their ability to

do outreach. However, they tend to lose clients “when we are too busy to do any follow-up after the initial contact.”

### 2.5.5 Coordination and Cross-Marketing

Overall, more exchange about and coordination of marketing efforts goes on within program areas (*i.e.*, R&D, EES, and REAP) than among them. Informal strategies, including office discussions and e-mails, are often relied upon and used on an as-needed basis to explore marketing and outreach approaches, and as opportunities for cross-marketing. Staff respondents report they have a comfortable level of camaraderie that encourages these exchanges.

Programs also have more established mechanisms for cross-marketing. OPCs are responsible for representing the gamut of EES programs. For instance, the Loan Fund is included in any discussion of the New Construction Program, and the Small Commercial Lighting Program has a newsletter that covers other EES opportunities and news. While there are many opportunities for cross-marketing, some respondents noted that their programs are getting larger and more complex. They say this makes it more difficult to see how everything fits together and how best to take advantage of cross-marketing opportunities. For instance, one respondent said “[There are] so many different matrices in EES – how do you approach that – by technology, by type of buildings, or by sector focus? This is a dilemma – seems to be a shift to where the Focus [Programs] have a more cohesive marketing strategy.”

The organization of REAP with its Market Support Unit appears to enhance attention to cross-marketing REAP programs. REAP program managers meet regularly to review these opportunities and the Market Support Unit also discusses cross-marketing in monthly meetings. REAP’s primary contractor and media buyers also hold monthly “traffic” meetings to ensure efforts are coordinated and opportunities to present multiple messages are reviewed. REAP’s searchable events calendar, as well as NYSERDA’s overall calendar, are tools that can help staff identify cross-marketing options. For instance, the calendar shows when various events will occur, when media is being bought or when ads will be run, and when training will occur. Program staff admits, however, that these sites are only effective for cross-program marketing if they are kept up to date and if staff uses them to learn about activities.

Cross-marketing does occur outside of program areas, but, to a somewhat lesser extent, in part because there is less regular communication across the areas. Regional Energy Smart Community coordinators are trained to refer customers to the correct programs, but their funding by the residential sector leads to a more focused marketing of those programs. The most convenient and consistent efforts at cross-marketing occur when programs formally intend to be marketed together or use the same contractor. For instance, both R&D and REAP staffs mentioned they use the same contractor to provide services for some programs and this engenders cross-fertilization. For instance, they recently prepared a press release about a house where the owner installed solar technology through the photovoltaic (PV) program and also used Home Performance incentives. Other examples include: R&D conducting 50 solar panel presentations in schools and posting follow-up lesson plans online so the EES Energy Smart Schools program participants and others could access them; coordination between REAP and the EES buildings programs to provide building employees with tips on how to save energy at home; and cross-marketing commercial programs with R&D daylighting and solar technologies.

Across respondents, most believe there is little duplication of marketing and outreach efforts. Most note that more coordination across technical areas would be good.

## 2.6 TRACKING COSTS AND OUTCOMES

The vast majority of marketing and outreach costs are tracked through detailed contractor invoices. These invoices delineate marketing and outreach tasks and charges, and provide supporting information for sub-contractors and other expenses. Program staff members who manage these contractors then carefully

review the invoices before sending them for processing and payment. The number of hours that staff members spend on marketing and outreach is not tracked to specific programs. As one respondent described it for EES: “Right now the programs do their own marketing and [costs are] just buried in the cost of program administration.”

While the data submitted for invoices are detailed and checked for correctness, both mathematically and against budgets, the level to which invoice data are tracked within programs varies. REAP's comprehensive system tracks detailed costs and generates monthly reports that identify marketing costs by program for each strategy, media contracts, local TV, the hotline, fulfillment services, special promotions, public service announcements (PSAs), website development, and other marketing activities. REAP staff members are also working to develop a system to better track marketing and outreach activities by budget source. For R&D and EES, some invoices are stored in electronic databases, while others are not, and there is some debate about how much tracking and reporting, aside from the data and records contained in NYSERDA's financial systems, is needed. At this time, NYSERDA directors agree it would be challenging to pull out detailed marketing and outreach costs by individual programs or tasks.

## 2.7 MEASURING MARKETING AND OUTREACH SUCCESS

Measuring the cost-effectiveness and success of marketing investments is challenging for all program areas. Most staff members are not satisfied with how well they define and measure the success or value of marketing and outreach efforts. This holds true for NYSERDA as a whole and for individual programs. As one EES respondent expressed it: “I don't know that we have, or have ever had, a way of attributing program success specifically to a marketing activity. We know the programs are successful, but we can't point to specific marketing efforts to account for these successes.”

Based upon a review of market assessments sponsored by Energy Analysis and market research from REAP, most surveys have focused on participants. However, some limited information has tracked non-participant awareness of NYSERDA and its programs. A 2007 market effects study reported that 38% of non-participating commercial and industrial customers were generally familiar with the **New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup>** Program, but that fewer knew about specific efficiency programs for existing buildings.<sup>9</sup> This report also suggests familiarity with the overall program and several specific programs decreased between 2005 and 2007, although this could be due to relatively small sample sizes. Another market characterization and assessment study in 2008 of the New Construction Program shows that awareness of the program among non-participants (*e.g.*, developers and design teams) has increased significantly, and also provides insights about market barriers and effective marketing strategies for energy efficiency.<sup>10</sup>

Current market-level data is also available for the residential market. Two recent evaluations have looked at market characteristics for the ENERGY STAR<sup>®</sup> Labeled Homes and Home Performance with ENERGY STAR<sup>®</sup> programs. These studies provide important marketing insights, such as awareness levels among program actors and target audiences, how participants found out about the program, the reasons to participate, and the barriers to participation.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Summit Blue Consulting, LLC, *Commercial and Industrial Market Effects Evaluation*, prepared for NYSERDA, October 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Summit Blue Consulting, LLC, *New Construction Program (NCP) Market Characterization and Assessment*, prepared for NYSERDA, August 2008.

<sup>11</sup> GDS Associates, Inc. and Summit Blue Consulting, LLC, *New York Energy Star<sup>®</sup> Homes Program Market Characterization and Market Assessment Evaluation*, prepared for NYSERDA, February 2009; and GDS Associates, Inc. and Summit Blue Consulting, LLC, *New York Home Performance With Energy Star<sup>®</sup> Program Market Characterization And Market Assessment Evaluation*, prepared for NYSERDA, February 2009.

Few program marketing plans have identified goals, coupled with methods to measure success toward those goals.<sup>12</sup> Many program staff respondents appear unsure how to best “translate their business goals into what marketing can deliver.” They offered a variety of ideas of what would indicate success for marketing and outreach efforts, including quantitative ones (*e.g.*, the number of contacts made or participants reached, participants at events, website hits, journal citations) and qualitative ones (*e.g.*, feedback from advisors, progress on legislation).

Still, respondents gave these examples of successes that are helping them move toward better measurement of the value of marketing and outreach:

- EMEP tracks hits to web pages, so they know which pages generate the most interest and what information is being downloaded. EMEP also has tracked how often the technical papers they support are cited in legislation and scientific articles, and has surveyed some target audiences to get feedback on the effectiveness of communication strategies.
- The Communications Unit tracks daily newspaper clippings, logs phone calls for press inquiries and information, and tracks the amount and type of attendance at outreach events (*e.g.*, conferences and trainings) that they support.
- REAP appears to have the most well-formed approaches to analyzing response rates and costs. Website and call center surveys asked customers how they found out about REAP programs. REAP also looks at the “click-through” rate on their website to see if the rate changes in response to major ad campaigns. Some campaigns include the ability to track response directly (*e.g.*, using coupons with codes), allowing cost-effectiveness estimations. REAP also does the more typical tracking of the number of press inquiries, and media reach and impressions, as well as attendance at outreach events. Finally, REAP tracks if major campaigns result in more jobs for their program partners and in easier recruitment and retention of partners. REAP’s primary marketing contractor then uses these various sources of data to analyze and report on media and marketing costs, and achievements, on a quarterly basis.

An effort is also underway to construct a database that will allow reports to better reflect uptake in program activity related to specific events, ads, or other marketing efforts. Information from the REAP calendar, the cost of media buys, participation rates, and other data are being entered into the database, with the hope of getting more insights about cost-effectiveness and timing. For instance, REAP hopes that if they have the right data in the system, they will be able to determine if seasonal uptakes for the Home Performance program are due to cold weather or because advertising began, or both

- While EES staff said they did not have a clear way of matching marketing efforts to specific program successes, they believe program marketing is effective. They review marketing efforts with contractors and conduct “spot surveys” to follow-up with participants on customer satisfaction. They are also exploring how to use a Geographic Information System to track locations of projects throughout the state.

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<sup>12</sup> Logic models developed by Energy Analysis contractors do provide some insights about measurable indicators for marketing and outreach.

## SECTION 3:

### KEY MARKETING AND OUTREACH ISSUES

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This section addresses the second goal of this research:

- To assess key marketing and outreach issues raised by this research

#### 3.1 ESTABLISHING A MARKETING CULTURE

For at least 60 years, embracing a strong marketing orientation has been a cornerstone of businesses throughout the United States. In the past several decades, pioneering books have specifically addressed social or “cause” marketing that uses marketing principles to help governments and non-profit organizations advance products and services that benefit society.<sup>13</sup> This portion of NYSERDA’s mission statement shows that it is in the business, among other things, of social marketing:

- [NYSERDA is using] innovation and technology to solve some of New York’s most difficult energy and environmental problems in ways that improve the State’s economy. We place a premium on objective analysis, as well as collaboration, reaching out to solicit multiple perspectives and share information.

Research shows there is a strong relationship between having a marketing “culture” and conducting effective marketing.<sup>14</sup> While there is no one “best” way to define marketing, most definitions emphasize the importance of two things:

- Knowing customers’ needs and preferences, so that customers want an organization’s products or services
- Understanding the value that customers contribute to the marketing “exchange” – *i.e.*, while an organization may think it’s providing all the “value” through services and incentives, customers may think they provide equal, or more, value to the organization in their willingness to learn program requirements, change habits, and take the time to participate

Many respondents to this research didn’t focus on these aspects of marketing. Rather, they focused on its activities and channels (*e.g.* TV advertising, program brochures), and the value of the services they were offering to customers. They tended to see marketing as more of an “outward” and one-way type of communication – developing the right “silver bullet” – rather than as an interaction between them and their customers. Definitions often showed a greater focus on NYSERDA efforts than on customer needs and insights, and few described marketing that suggested it as an “exchange of mutual value.” No one mentioned market research as a key component of marketing and outreach activities.

This is not to say that NYSERDA does not value its customers. It clearly does. But rapid growth, oversubscription of key programs, lack of competition, and organizational changes may have

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<sup>13</sup> For example, Philip Kotler, Nancy R. Lee, *Social Marketing: Influencing Behaviors for Good*, Third Edition (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2008); Doug McKenzie-Mohr and William Smith, *Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community Based Social Marketing*, (Gabriola Island, B.C.: New Society Publishers, 1999); Richard Earle, *The Art of Cause Marketing: How To Use Advertising to Change Personal Behavior and Public Policy*, (New York: McGraw Hill, 2000).

<sup>14</sup> See Cynthia Walker, “Marketing Culture and Marketing Effectiveness In Service Firms,” *The Journal of Services Marketing*, 1995.

overshadowed the need to continuously address this central marketing question: “*What’s in it for the customer?*” As savings goals increase and the competition to deliver efficiency services grows, it will become more important to solicit feedback from target audiences and use this feedback to improve marketing efforts.

The AMA sees market research as a crucial component of effective marketing: “Marketing research is the function that links the consumer, customer, and public to the marketer through information – information used to identify and define marketing opportunities and problems; generate, refine, and evaluate marketing actions; monitor marketing performance; and improve understanding of marketing as a process.” Market research – both quantitative and qualitative – is limited at NYSERDA. When the idea of doing more market research and tracking was discussed with management, they questioned whether its costs would justify its benefits. In addition, while NYSERDA systematically gathers other rich sources of information that could inform marketing efforts – such as the results of ongoing evaluation research and the regular and substantial face-to-face interactions that NYSERDA staff have with their constituencies – these resources are often not mined for marketing insights, shared across staff members and program areas, and incorporated at a formal level into marketing and program efforts.

Most staff members freely admit they are not “marketers,” but most feel able to oversee marketing functions. They do not have a shared understanding of key marketing precepts, especially the level of effort that is needed to have customer insights that will contribute to effective marketing. In addition, leadership and internal support for marketing functions, including staff and budget, have varied over time at NYSERDA. In general, however, NYSERDA staff perceives internal marketing resources as inadequate to serve all the marketing needs of all the programs. They don’t believe marketing staff is able to provide strategic advice and some wonder about their applied marketing skills as well. This has lead many program staff members to go outside of the organization for marketing expertise.

### 3.2 POSITIONING AND BRANDING

Staff and contractors voiced these types of questions related to branding and positioning of NYSERDA services:

- Should NYSERDA be marketing single programs, multiple but interrelated programs, all **New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup>** programs, or broader efficiency and sustainability messages?
- How do technology-transfer goals for research and development fit?
- What story is NYSERDA trying to tell?
- How well is NYSERDA positioned for the future?
- How can the value of marketing be measured?

NYSERDA faces a challenge in how to position the organization in the marketplace and how to establish a unifying presence (or brand) that effectively conveys the organization’s purpose and values – and benefits to customers – across all its programs and functions. While some research has been done to gauge overall customer awareness of and perceptions about NYSERDA, it doesn’t appear to be widely known or used. In addition, this research has been part of a strategic and systematic effort, where results become a guiding force across the organization. The information that does exist suggests that awareness of NYSERDA programs and services among commercial and residential customer segments needs to be bolstered, and that beyond awareness, a larger share of customers need to understand they can rely on NYSERDA when they need assistance saving energy.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Acadia Consulting Group, *NYSERDA Communications Research*, prepared for NYSERDA, May 17, 2007.

Support from top management for branding and positioning efforts has also varied in the past. However, efforts are now underway to develop a central positioning and branding “roadmap.” This effort should result in an overarching and strategic marketing orientation and plan that makes NYSERDA’s marketing and outreach function clear and comprehensive, more internally consistent and cohesive, and more able to meet future challenges. These efforts may or may not result in establishing an external common brand, but internally NYSERDA will be able to better describe the needs of its customers and the value of its services to them.

A lack of positioning and branding in an increasingly complex New York environment – where utilities may again be providing energy services, where local governments are getting more active, where more actors are being targeted, and where there are many “green” messages and companies – makes NYSERDA vulnerable to questions about its role and value. As one respondent put it, “I think we have an incredible story to tell, but we don’t do that as well as we could.”

*But what is that story and why is it valuable to customers? What tools should be used to convey the story? What are the services and benefits that can distinguish NYSERDA from other energy efficiency organizations?* All these questions suggest a need for a stronger marketing orientation at NYSERDA – one that puts the needs, wants, and requirements of customers first. A shared marketing orientation is important because organizations that best understand how to serve their customers will be the ones that customers turn to first.

An issue that kept emerging from interviews for this project was how to measure the success and value of marketing efforts. Most staff is not equipped to determine how to measure the success of individual program marketing and outreach, much less organization-wide branding and positioning efforts. In-house leadership will need to come from the new Marketing Director; the Energy Analysis group may also be a strong ally in helping to identify success indicators and how they can be measured, but outside resources may be needed as well. Finally, while baseline and ongoing market research is a valuable tool in measuring effective marketing, as well as program progress, it does not have established value for top management.

### **3.3 ACHIEVING THE RIGHT BALANCE OF CENTRAL AND CONTRACTED MARKETING SERVICES**

Perceptions vary as to which marketing and outreach activities are best served by a centralized function, rather than at a program level. REAP has a strong dedicated market and support team, and an outside contractor with key marketing responsibilities; this group does not tend to rely on central resources for developing materials. Clean Energy Research and Market Development (R&D) has technical specialists and also relies on internal resources. EES has relied more on internal resources for marketing and outreach services, and has used some contracted assistance. However, the new Focus Program contractors have been assigned significant marketing tasks, substantially expanding the use of contracted marketing.

The core marketing function at NYSERDA has been challenged due to changes in leadership and limited resources. A stronger core marketing role and more resources will benefit important points of intersection at NYSERDA, including: the website and other customer service interfaces; perceptions about the worth and role of internal marketing; cross-marketing opportunities; NYSERDA-wide branding and positioning; and tracking marketing and outreach costs.

Whether REAP’s approach – including its Market Support unit and designated marketing contractor – remains intact, or whether it is absorbed into a marketing center, the whole organization will benefit if all get behind a single marketing philosophy. This approach does not preclude sub-branding, but it does mean that the NYSERDA brand – its overall statement of value and benefit to customers – must take precedence.

This approach also does not preclude the use of contractors, but the question is how to effectively integrate a central marketing function with the work of contractors. One idea would be to increase internal marketing capabilities as a strategic program presence, providing valuable and expert insights about customers and programs to outside contractors. However, given that the usual view of the role of the Marketing Unit is as creators of collateral materials, and the overseers of graphic and editorial standards, it would take time and resources to change both perceptions and reality.

Still, an enhanced marketing department at NYSERDA could orchestrate a common vision and a unified look, consolidate marketing budgets, consolidate websites, and support in-house development of ads and other collateral, where review could be done face-to-face. One model might be that each area – REAP, EES, and R&D – would be assigned at least one dedicated marketing staff person to provide both strategic guidance and marketing support. These market specialists would come to know their areas well, be a bridge to other NYSERDA program areas, and yet be strongly tied to the centralized marketing unit as well. Another approach might be to structure central marketing around service specialties, such as having a web marketing specialist that is available NYSERDA-wide.

A newly formulated, stronger marketing center has appeal, but, given the history of this function at NYSERDA, and perceptions about its lack of ability to do the job, the transition may not be easy. Support for this change would need to come from top management, to have a well-thought-out plan of action, and to have adequate funding.

### 3.4 REACHING NEW AND UNDERSERVED MARKETS

NYSERDA staff noted that some residential and commercial target markets still might not be well served by current efforts. Overall, NYSERDA continues to face challenges with how best to serve a large, diverse state. For instance, a recent headline in *The New York Times* proclaimed, “Census Shows Growing Diversity in New York City”; the article cited findings that showed “some of the clearest statistical evidence of trends involving race, ethnicity, education, housing costs and other subjects” in the city.<sup>16</sup>

Marketing and outreach responsibilities often include following trends, such as those mentioned in the above article, and charting the way to serve new customers. An enhanced marketing orientation should include this type of monitoring and strategic analysis. This type of expertise could be housed with the Marketing Unit or in other areas, but it would be important that this type of information feed into marketing strategies.

On the residential side, respondents mentioned targeting neighborhoods in New York City, including lower-income and minority customer groups, as well as better tailored marketing for upstate areas. REAP-sponsored research suggests that New York City (NYC) and upstate customers differ significantly in their response to advertising. NYC consumers prefer more edgy TV spots and upstate consumers prefer stories about real people. Focus groups have shown that customers want a local feel to program materials, a simple message, catchy phrases, and clear messages about how money can be saved. Partners (builders, contractors, developers, architects, retailers, and renewable energy installers) similarly want a message that compels them, from a business standpoint, to be excited about the programs.

In New York City, residential programs are also doing more outreach in neighborhoods with large ethnic populations, but the support functions at NYSERDA (e.g., phone lines) cannot be accessed in multiple

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<sup>16</sup> Sam Roberts, *Census Shows Growing Diversity in New York City*, New York/Region, December 2008. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/09/nyregion/09census.html?scp=1&sq=Census%20shows%20growing%20diversity%20in%20New%20York%20City&st=cse>.

languages. Only some print materials are available Spanish (but no other languages). Staff and contractors will need more training to understand cultural issues that might occur – for example, when entering certain households or approaching certain customers. Addressing cultural diversity may require hiring local outreach workers who know a given community.

To target untapped commercial and industrial markets, EES has developed its Focus Program. Attention needs to be paid to integrating new contractors and new marketing approaches with existing, but wider, program marketing, and how to track Focus Program progress toward transforming target markets. For instance, as one long-time contractor put it, how do the components of the new Focus Program that are targeted to buildings (e.g., Hospitality or Real Estate) work with contractors doing outreach for new construction projects?

R&D programs continue to grapple with how to use their research to affect and change policy – that is, how to use marketing services to most effectively do technology transfer. Several respondents suggested that technology transfer might best be accomplished by a stronger public relations approach, where NYSERDA's R&D findings and successes are strategically placed in influential media. Another high-priority marketing question for R&D is how to inform citizens about key issues such as climate change.

Targeting behavioral change is another new and largely untapped arena for NYSERDA, although the authority has recently begun to explore behavioral issues and research topics in conjunction with the Department of Public Service (DPS). While assumptions about behavior change may be embedded in many of NYSERDA's programs, this source of energy savings is fast becoming a target for efficiency agencies throughout North America. New avenues of social science, such as "behavioral economics" present evidence that people make many decisions without adhering to the "rational" economic model of decision-making that assumes people consider all their options and then choose the one that is in their own best interest. If some of these "non-rational" concepts are right, they could profoundly change marketing assumptions about energy decisions.<sup>17</sup> Pursuing behavior change demands more and better research, marketing, outreach, and communications skills.

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<sup>17</sup> For instance, Dan Ariely, *Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions*, (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2008) and Thaler, Richard H. and Cass R. Sunstein, *Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).



## SECTION 4:

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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In light of the previous discussions, the following conclusions and recommendations are offered.

1. **Conclusion: NYSERDA, while conducting a great deal of marketing and outreach, and caring deeply about serving its customers well, has not embraced a strong organization-wide marketing philosophy and culture.** Top-down leadership will be needed to reach this goal. NYSERDA staff members have many insights about their customers and what they need and want, but this has not been put within a unified marketing framework that all can understand and act upon. A stronger, integrated marketing orientation – one that embraces customer viewpoints and benefits as drivers of strategic decisions – will improve NYSERDA’s internal operations, as well as its ability to be a leader in providing energy services and influential technical information.

The limited amount of overarching customer research, as well as many staff respondents who freely say they are not “marketers,” has hampered an organization-wide marketing orientation. Customer research can be used to benchmark and track key marketing information, including overall awareness, perceptions, and use of programs and services. It can guide overall direction and specific program and marketing efforts, including what messages resonate with customers. While most staff members do not need to be professional marketers, more training on basic marketing principles and applications, such as community-based social marketing approaches, would enhance their support for a marketing culture.

To establish a marketing culture, an organization must focus, first and foremost, on a thorough understanding and appreciation of customer needs and wants. A quote from the management sage, Peter Drucker, exemplifies this approach:

“Marketing is not . . . a specialized activity at all. It encompasses the entire business. It is the whole business seen from . . . the customer's point of view. Concern and responsibility for marketing must therefore permeate all areas of the enterprise.”<sup>18</sup>

It is fair to ask why this effort is needed. The answer is that this approach will build an organization that is better positioned to serve and be identified as an asset by New York citizens, justify resources, make service delivery more efficient, lessen confusion about marketing activities, and build a more viable central marketing core. The following factors are needed to avoid failure for this endeavor:

- Top-down support and direction
- Greater internal marketing resources, including market research
- A process to ensure communication/buy-in from staff
- A process to ensure communication/buy-in from contractors
- Clarification of roles, structures, and procedures for conducting marketing at NYSERDA
- Acknowledgement and use of existing staff and contractor skills

**Recommendation: Senior management needs to continue to establish a marketing philosophy and culture at NYSERDA.** Senior managers and the leadership team need to show

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<sup>18</sup> Drucker, Peter, *The Practice of Management*, 1954, Harper & Row, New York and Evanston, p. 39.

program staff this is a top priority and provide guidance, financial support, and staff hours. They need to support the positioning and branding roadmap that is being prepared. NYSERDA staff and contractors need to be brought into the same marketing fold, both philosophically and practically. A plan to benchmark and track customer insights and indicators should be developed and implemented, and marketing training for program and contractor staff should be encouraged.

2. **Conclusion: The roles, responsibilities, and funding of the many actors involved in marketing and outreach functions at NYSERDA deserve more clarification and coordination, especially those of the new marketing department.** Program staff members, dedicated program teams, outside contractors, and internal marketing and communication staff members all conduct marketing. However, key marketing actors often do not operate as a team and have been physically dispersed. Lack of written guidelines to help staff understand and meet marketing requirements, several of which are in development, have further contributed to confusion. This study revealed that more leadership, expert guidance, and coordination from a central marketing group could increase efficiency and reduce confusion about the role, applications, and requirements of marketing. In addition, the recent move to house a number of marketing and communications professionals together, across organizational lines (including the experienced REAP marketing team), should enhance teamwork.

**Recommendation: Over time, establish the central marketing group as having responsibility for strategic direction, oversight, and guidance for marketing and outreach at NYSERDA.**

The central marketing group should lead marketing at NYSERDA for both strategic and practical purposes. Additional staff, skills, and budget will be needed for the group if it is to successfully fulfill this larger and more important role. This group should make the completion and adoption of marketing and website guidelines a priority, especially since this process can serve as an entry point for greater communication between marketers and program staff.

3. **Conclusion: While the Energy Analysis group has concentrated on evaluation tasks, it has many skills and resources that could be a valuable helpmate in NYSERDA's retooling of its marketing philosophy and approach.** Key ways that this group could be involved include:

- Helping to define goals and indicators
- Overseeing baseline and other marketing research
- Helping Marketing gather information about new and underserved markets
- Incorporating studies to measure marketing and outreach success
- Highlighting and communicating research findings important for marketing efforts

**Recommendation: To the extent possible, involve Energy Analysis as the research arm of marketing and outreach.**

4. **Conclusion: A best practices analysis, originally part of this research, could still play a valuable role in the establishing a more active, organization-wide marketing philosophy at NYSERDA.** A best practices analysis can compare different ways that organizations structure their marketing departments, it can identify efficient marketing and outreach processes that organizations use, and could explore budgets and allocations of resources to different tactics and strategies. The best practices effort was postponed so that changes in organization and management of central marketing, and the development of a branding and positioning roadmap, could be used to provide guidance to the evaluation team to develop a useful best practices study.

**Recommendation: Work with the new marketing director to define, time, and implement a tailored best practices analysis.**

## APPENDIX A:

# NYSERDA MARKETING AND OUTREACH (M&O) ACTORS AND ACTIVITIES SUMMARY

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### MARKETING AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Conduct market research/assessment/segmentation
- Design marketing/outreach strategies, including branding
- Develop website information/design
- Develop collateral materials including brochures, fact sheets, case studies, newsletters, podcasts *etc.*
- Develop advertising, including co-op advertising
- Develop press kits/work with media
- Present at conferences, meetings, *etc.*
- Train audiences about marketing and outreach
- Develop lists and contacts
- Build key market relationships/recruit for programs
- Coordinate awards
- Evaluate marketing/outreach activities

### Notes:

1. Respondents for the Marketing Support Process Evaluation are in **boldface**. Other contacts are listed where available. Please note that this listing shows contacts, responsibilities and job titles at the time the interviews were conducted.
2. Table A-1 shows the scope of the Marketing and Outreach Process Evaluation. While it represents the major marketing and outreach actors, and contracted activities at NYSERDA, it is not comprehensive.

**Table A-1. NYSERDA Marketing and Outreach (M&O) Actors and Activities**

<b>Programs/Units</b>	<b>Staff Contacts</b>	<b>Contractors with M&amp;O Responsibilities</b>	<b>Contractor M&amp;O Tasks</b>	<b>Affiliates with M&amp;O Responsibilities</b>	<b>Affiliate M&amp;O Tasks</b>
<b>External Affairs, Marketing &amp; Economic Development</b>	<b>Tom Lynch,</b> Director				
Marketing & Economic Development	<b>Susan Moyer,</b> Director				
	<b>Paula Rosenberg,</b> Senior Project Manager	Documentation Strategies – <b>Jeff Klein</b>	Redesign NYSERDA web structure into customer sector-based approach; create clear and distinct paths to solutions; improve navigation; increase user appeal	Various printing contractors	Printing and reproduction services
Events	<b>Don LaVada,</b> Director (Previous Director M&ED)				
Communications	<b>Colleen Ryan,</b> Acting Director				
<b>Clean Energy – Research and Market Development (R&amp;D)</b>	<b>Janet Joseph,</b> Director				
Clean Energy – PV & Wind	<b>Jeff Peterson,</b> Program Manager	IREC	Redesign website (Power Naturally) Develop podcasts		
Distributed Generation/ Combined Heat and Power	<b>Dana Levy,</b> Program Manager				
Environmental Monitoring, Evaluation, and Protection (EMEP)	<b>Mark Watson,</b> Program Manager	PACE – <b>Zywia Wojnar</b>	Develop communications materials, website content Edit technical reports Evaluate outreach Conduct meetings and workshops		
Continued					

Programs/Units	Staff Contacts	Contractors with M&O Responsibilities	Contractor M&O Tasks	Affiliates with M&O Responsibilities	Affiliate M&O Tasks
<b>Energy Efficiency Services</b>	<b>Tom Barone</b> , Director				
Enhanced Commercial Industrial Performance	<b>Todd Baldyga</b> , Senior Project Manager				
New Construction Program	<b>Chris Reohr</b> , Senior Project Manager	Outreach Project Consulting (OPCs represent various EES programs – see next column)  SAIC – <b>Liz Donati</b>  Sustainable Performance Contracting – <b>Carlos Dachary</b>	Explain NYSERDA NCP and related programs (Loan Fund, Peak Load Reduction, Enhanced Commercial Industrial Performance, Multi Family Buildings)  Outreach to prospective participants on an as-needed “pre-approved” basis		
Multifamily Building Performance Program	<b>Jim Reis</b> , Program Manager	TRC – Mark Lorentzen	Recruit and manage program partners (No specific M&O tasks in SOW, but work with CSG and with program partners)	Program Partners (52 engineers & consulting firms)	Meeting/selling the program to owners and managers  Presentations
				DHCR – NY Department of Housing and Community Renewal	Competitive solicitation gave extra points for NYSERDA program participation
				Housing Preservation & Development	Any rehabbed unit will be “high performance”
				Housing & Urban Development	Work with ESCO’s serving Housing Authorities
Continued					

Programs/Units	Staff Contacts	Contractors with M&O Responsibilities	Contractor M&O Tasks	Affiliates with M&O Responsibilities	Affiliate M&O Tasks
<p><b>New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup></b> – Business Partners</p>	<p><b>Priscilla Richards,</b> Senior Project Manager (has moved to be NCP manager)</p>	<p>Applied Proactive Technologies (APT) – <b>Ed Evans</b> (Motors was only Business Partners SOW done at time of study; others were being developed – <i>i.e.</i>, for Lighting, HVAC)</p>	<p>Design information, tools and strategies for general and targeted market efforts, including standard NYSERDA Participation Agreements, templates for marketing and communication materials, web-based protocol for program web pages.  Conduct targeted market efforts, or subprograms – Motor Systems Subprogram</p>	<p>Program targeted to mid-stream actors (<i>i.e.</i>, motor vendors, manufacturers)  Wide range of energy efficiency allies, including USDOE, NEMA, <i>etc.</i></p>	<p>Mid-stream actors take lead in marketing to end users, with support from NYSERDA contractor  Energy efficiency allies supply tools</p>
<p>Multifamily Building Performance Program</p>	<p><b>Jim Reis,</b> Program Manager</p>	<p>TRC – Mark Lorentzen</p>	<p>Recruit and manage program partners (No specific M&amp;O tasks in SOW, but work with CSG and with program partners)</p>	<p>Program Partners (52 engineers &amp; consulting firms)</p>	<p>Meeting/selling the program to owners and managers  Presentations</p>
				<p>DHCR – NY Department of Housing and Community Renewal</p>	<p>Competitive solicitation gave extra points for NYSERDA program participation</p>
				<p>Housing Preservation &amp; Development</p>	<p>Any rehabbed unit will be “high performance”</p>
				<p>Housing &amp; Urban Development</p>	<p>Work with ESCO’s serving Housing Authorities</p>
<p><b>New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup></b> – Focus</p>	<p><b>Greg Lampman,</b> Former Project Manager (has moved to Municipal Water and Wastewater)</p>	<p>Malcolm Pirnie, Inc.(Red Oak Consulting) – <b>Amy Santos</b></p>	<p>Design web-based tools, newsletters and publications, best practices fact sheets, and marketing materials  Conduct outreach to smaller and larger facilities  Present at conferences/events</p>		
<p>Continued</p>					

Programs/Units	Staff Contacts	Contractors with M&O Responsibilities	Contractor M&O Tasks	Affiliates with M&O Responsibilities	Affiliate M&O Tasks
<p><b>New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup></b> – Focus (cont.)</p>	<p><b>Susan Andrews,</b> Senior Project Manager (Hospitality)</p>	<p>RLW Analytics – <b>Ed Smyth</b></p>	<p>Conduct baseline assessment Conduct statewide program development (lists, actors) Conduct outreach to market actors Disseminate information Develop presentations, promotions, co-op marketing, communications</p>		
	<p>Kimberlie Lenihan, Project Manager (Commercial Real Estate)</p>	<p>Hamilton, Rabinowitz &amp; Alschuler (HR&amp;A)</p>	<p>Develop market segmentation criteria and assess market Build relationships with key New York City real estate actors through meetings, presentations, seminars, and sponsorships Develop/implement “One Stop Shop” approach, including branding, marketing tool kit, and press strategies Develop web strategy Create labeling approach linked to benchmarking Recruit owners and managers Educate broker networks</p>	<p>Leadership Panel of owners and managers of commercial real estate  New York City offices and other efficiency entities, such as BOMA</p>	<p>Coordinate with NYSERDA efforts to provide unified services to target audiences</p>
	<p><b>Matthew Brown,</b> Project Manager (Institutional)</p>	<p>TRC Engineers</p>	<p>Coordinate recognition/awards/ENERGY STAR<sup>®</sup> building labels Prepare/participate in conference/event presentations</p>		
	<p><b>Jessica Zweig,</b> Project Manager (Industrial)</p>	<p>Lockheed Martin</p>	<p>Build industrial web-page content Build/maintain program partners Develop program collateral and educational materials</p>		
<p>Continued</p>					

Programs/Units	Staff Contacts	Contractors with M&O Responsibilities	Contractor M&O Tasks	Affiliates with M&O Responsibilities	Affiliate M&O Tasks
<p><b>New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup></b> – Loan Fund</p>	<p><b>Marilyn Dare,</b> Project Manager</p>	<p>Anchin Economic Development LLC – <b>David Meade</b> <b>(3 associates interviewed in his stead)</b></p>	<p>Develop strategic recruitment/education plan Develop marketing materials/presentations Meet with lenders Network with other financial actors (e.g., development agencies) Developing content for website and case studies</p>		
<p><b>Peak Load Management Program</b></p>	<p><b>Pete Savio,</b> Senior Project Manager</p>				
<p><b>Technical Assistance &amp; Focus Program</b></p>	<p><b>Brian Platt,</b> Program Manager</p>				
<p><b>Residential Efficiency and Affordability Program (REAP)</b></p>	<p><b>Karen Villeneuve,</b> Director</p>	<p>CSG – <b>Linda Russo</b></p>	<p>Conduct market research Plan marketing strategy Planning/implementing advertising and creative services (image, brand identity, and materials for programs/ campaigns) Support co-op advertising Conduct public relations PROVIDED TO ALL REAP PROGRAMS</p>		
<p>REAP, Market Community Support Team</p>	<p><b>Adele Ferranti,</b> Program Manager, Market and Community Support <b>Jamie Lalos, Lori Clark, Ryan Moore,</b> Associate Project Managers</p>				

Continued

<b>Programs/Units</b>	<b>Staff Contacts</b>	<b>Contractors with M&amp;O Responsibilities</b>	<b>Contractor M&amp;O Tasks</b>	<b>Affiliates with M&amp;O Responsibilities</b>	<b>Affiliate M&amp;O Tasks</b>
<b>Assisted Single Family Performance and Residential Loan programs</b>	<b>John Ahearn,</b> Program Manager	NYSBA-REF			
EmPower New York <sup>SM</sup>	<b>John Ahearn,</b> Program Manager	Honeywell International, Inc. – Carol Sweeney	Refine program procedures and design Qualify service providers and build capacity Customer referral Deliver energy efficiency services Educate about energy use management and financial topics	Cornell Cooperative Extension	Coordinate with workshops, media releases, events, and exhibits
Multifamily Building Performance Program	<b>Jim Reis,</b> Program Manager	TRC – Mark Lorentzen	Recruit and manage program partners (No specific M&O tasks in SOW, but work with CSG and with program partners)	Program Partners (52 engineers & consulting firms)	Meeting/selling the program to owners and managers Presentations
				DHCR – NY Department of Housing and Community Renewal	Competitive solicitation gave extra points for NYSERDA program participation
				Housing Preservation & Development	Any rehabbed unit will be “high performance”
				Housing & Urban Development	Work with ESCO’s serving Housing Authorities
Continued					

Programs/Units	Staff Contacts	Contractors with M&O Responsibilities	Contractor M&O Tasks	Affiliates with M&O Responsibilities	Affiliate M&O Tasks
Energy Smart Communities	<b>Peggie Neville,</b> Project Manager	Lockheed Martin – Mel Powers	Conduct regional characterization Conduct regional planning (including partnership development, marketing) Coordinate with mid-stream partners Promote energy-efficient transportation Conduct communications (includes website) Recruit statewide Partners		
Consumer Education Program for Residential Energy Efficiency (CEPREE)	<b>John Ahearn,</b> Program Manager	Cornell Cooperative Extension	Increase consumer awareness of the importance of energy efficiency and of programs available through <b>New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup></b> to make single homes and multifamily buildings more energy efficient  Workshops Media releases Public exhibits/events		
Energy Smart Schools	<b>John Ahearn,</b> Program Manager <b>Peggy Neville,</b> Project Manager	Gove Group	With CSG support, extend outreach to teachers, market workshops		
ENERGY STAR <sup>®</sup> Products, ENERGY STAR <sup>®</sup> Marketing	<b>Mark Michalski,</b> Project Manager	Lockheed Martin – Duane Baldwin	Conduct program assessment and planning Coordinate marketing, communication, and outreach Conduct midstream market activities (includes retail and manufacturer partner recruitment, training, support) Operate Hotline Conduct <i>Be Cool</i> program		
Continued					

Programs/Units	Staff Contacts	Contractors with M&O Responsibilities	Contractor M&O Tasks	Affiliates with M&O Responsibilities	Affiliate M&O Tasks
Single Family Performance (ENERGY STAR <sup>®</sup> Labeled Homes & Home Performance with ENERGY STAR <sup>®</sup> )	<b>Jim Quirk</b> , Senior Program Manager	CSG (Implementation contractor with some marketing and outreach tasks) NYSBA-REF – Program Outreach & Support Contractor	Provide marketing assistance to program actors Train builders how to sell & market ENERGY STAR <sup>®</sup> homes Coordinate with NYSBA-REF & BPCA-NYS/provide training to their members Coordinate with program marketing contractors	BPCA-NYS (Building & Performance Contractors of New York State)	



## APPENDIX B:

# INTERVIEW GUIDES

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## PROCESS EVALUATION: MARKETING AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES FINAL INTERVIEW GUIDE – DIRECTORS AND ASSISTANT DIRECTORS

### Introduction

As we discussed in scheduling this time to talk, this interview is part of a process evaluation to explore how marketing and outreach activities are structured across NYSERDA's **New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup>** Programs. As we go along, please feel free to tell me if you don't feel you can answer a question or if there is another person we should talk with about a question. As always, none of your responses will be attributed to you in our analysis and reporting.

[IF NECESSARY CLARIFY: I also understand that you participated in one or more interview(s) with Research Into Action for their work specifically related to New York City. To clarify, this interview is intended to explore more general views on NYSERDA's marketing and outreach.]

Do you have any questions before we begin?

### Concept & Definition

1. First, I'd like to ask you some questions about your views on marketing and outreach.
  - A. When you think about marketing, what types of things or activities do you include? (Probe: What do you think are the most important aspects of marketing?) How do you define *marketing*?
  - B. How is outreach similar to or different from marketing? (Probe: Is it important to distinguish between the two?)

INTERVIEWER TEXT: *While we know that people have different definitions for marketing and outreach, please think about both activities as you answer the rest of my questions.*

### Overall Views

Now I'd like to know more about your views on marketing and outreach at NYSERDA.

2. What organizational procedures, guidelines, customs, or structures – formal or informal – affect how marketing and outreach are done at NYSERDA? (Probe: How clear and effective are they? Are they used consistently? Are any of these written down that we should review?)
  - A. How do you interact with staff about marketing and outreach activities?
  - B. What types of advice or guidance do you give them? (Probe: What informs that advice and guidance?)
  - C. How well equipped do you think your staff is for the marketing and outreach responsibilities they have for their programs? Could staff benefit from skill building in these areas?
3. Contractors conduct many marketing and outreach activities for NYSERDA. What do you see as the pros and cons of using contractors for these functions? (Probe: What is important for contractors to know about marketing and outreach at NYSERDA?)

**Internal Tracking**

4. How are marketing and outreach costs tracked?
5. Is there a standard accounting approach across programs?
6. How do you measure the success of various marketing and outreach activities in your division? (Note: measures of success may vary from program to program.)
7. Does the way marketing and outreach costs and outcomes are tracked present any challenges for better planning or coordination of these efforts?

**Centralized vs. Program Efforts**

8. (If oversee programs add this phrase: *For the programs you oversee. . .*) What is the current role of Marketing & Economic Development in terms of marketing and outreach?
9. How effective is the coordination between M&ED and programs for these activities? (Probe: How might coordination be improved?)
10. (If oversee programs add this phrase: *For the programs you oversee. . .*) What is the current role of Communications for marketing and outreach?
11. How effective is the coordination between Communications and programs for these activities? (Probe: How might coordination be improved?)
12. How do you or your staff decide which marketing and outreach activities should be handled by M&ED or Communications, and which are best handled at the program level?
13. What marketing and outreach activities do you think are best handled through a centralized function at NYSERDA? (Probe: Why? What should be the role of M&ED and Communications?)
14. What marketing and outreach activities do you think are best handled at the individual program level, with limited central oversight? (Probe: Why?)
15. Do you see any unnecessary duplication of marketing efforts at NYSERDA? How about marketing gaps?

**Future Challenges**

16. What do you currently see as key challenges to program marketing and outreach efforts?
17. What about challenges for marketing NYSERDA overall?
18. What changes, if any, would be needed for marketing and outreach if NYSERDA program efforts increase substantially in the next several years?
19. What changes in marketing and outreach, if any, are currently under consideration at NYSERDA (or in your area)? What factors are driving these changes?
20. Do you have any other suggestions for making marketing and outreach structures and functions more effective at NYSERDA?

**PROCESS EVALUATION: MARKETING AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES  
FINAL INTERVIEW GUIDE – PROJECT MANAGERS**

**Introduction**

As we discussed in scheduling this time to talk, this interview is part of a process evaluation to explore how marketing and outreach activities are structured across NYSERDA’s **New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup>** Programs. As we go along, please feel free to tell me if you don’t feel you can answer a question or if there is another staff person we should talk with about any question. As always, we do not intend to report your responses in any way that would reveal your identity.

[IF NECESSARY CLARIFY: I also understand that you participated in one or more interview(s) with Research Into Action for their work specifically related to New York City. To clarify, this interview is intended to explore marketing and outreach for your program(s) throughout New York State.]

Do you have any questions before we begin?

If a SOW exists: As we also discussed, I’d like to talk with you about the Statement of Work for \_\_\_\_\_, your program contractor. Do you have a copy of the SOW available for our call today?

**Concept & Definition [Ask Of All]**

1. First, I’d like to ask you some questions about your views on marketing and outreach.
  - A. When you think about marketing, what types of things or activities do you include? (Probe: What do you think are the most important aspects of marketing?) How do you define marketing?
  - B. How is outreach similar or different from marketing? (Probe: Is it important to distinguish the two?)

INTERVIEWER TEXT: While we know people have different definitions for marketing and outreach, please think about both activities as you answer the rest of my questions.

**Review Current Marketing Efforts**

*[If SOW, ask questions below. If no SOW skip to q. 9]*

2. Now I’d like to talk about the Statement of Work. First, if you could quickly walk me through it and tell me which items are marketing or outreach activities?
3. Why did you choose these marketing approaches for your program?
4. Why did you decide it was best to have a contractor conduct these activities as opposed to doing them in-house?
5. How have these marketing activities evolved over time – let’s say the past five years? Why?
6. Are there any marketing and outreach activities for your program that are not included in this SOW?
7. Are there other documents that describe marketing efforts or report on them that would help us understand the marketing for your program?
8. How is marketing for your program coordinated with other program marketing efforts at NYSERDA, *i.e.*, with that done for other programs? How effective is this coordination?

*[Ask If No SOW – Confirm There Is None Before Proceeding]*

9. Now could you tell me about the marketing and outreach approaches you use for your program? How are these documented (if no SOW)?
10. Who is involved in developing and implementing marketing and outreach?
11. Why did you choose these marketing approaches?
12. How have these marketing activities evolved over time – let's say over the last five years? Why?

**Internal Tracking [Ask Of All]**

13. How do you track marketing and outreach costs? Where is this information stored?
14. How do you measure the success of various marketing and outreach activities for your program? (Probe: If they are different for different activities, could you identify for each?)

**Overall Views [Ask Of All]**

Now I'd like to get your views on some other aspects of marketing and outreach at NYSERDA.

15. What organizational policies, procedures, guidelines, or customs – formal or informal – affect decisions you make about marketing and outreach for your program? (Probe: How clear and effective are these guidelines? Are they used consistently? Are there any written guidelines that apply to marketing and outreach?)
16. How well equipped do you feel for making decisions about marketing and outreach efforts? (Probe: Why or why not?) Are there things NYSERDA could do to equip you better for marketing and outreach efforts and decisions?
17. What are the criteria that you use when you decide whether to use internal resources or hire outside contractors for marketing and outreach?
18. What do you think is important for implementation contractors and others involved in delivering your program to know about marketing and outreach at NYSERDA? [If a SOW, ask if there is further communication beyond that document]

**[Ask those dealing with Contractors, including Communications and M&ED]**

19. Do you think your contractors have a clear understanding of NYSERDA's marketing and outreach policies? Do they understand how their tasks fit into NYSERDA's general marketing efforts?

**Centralized vs. Program Efforts [Ask of All]**

20. What do you see as the role of Marketing & Economic Development at NYSERDA, specifically in marketing and outreach?
21. How do you currently work with them on marketing and outreach? (Probes: How effective is this relationship? How might coordination be enhanced?)
22. What do you see as the role of Communications at NYSERDA? Do you see them as involved in marketing and outreach?
23. How do you currently work with Communications? Do you see this as assisting with your marketing and outreach efforts? (Probes: How effective is this working relationship? How might coordination be enhanced?)

24. Are there any marketing and outreach activities that might best be done through a centralized function at NYSERDA, such as Marketing and Economic Development or Communications? (Probe: What would they be and why are some marketing activities best suited for a centralized function?)
25. What marketing and outreach activities do you think are best handled by individual programs? (Probe: Why are some activities suited for the program level?)
26. Currently, what guides which activities for a given program are handled by M&ED or Communications and which by the program staff?
27. Do you think there is any unnecessary duplication of marketing at the program level? Can you give me some examples?
28. How about unnecessary duplication between program-level efforts and those of M&ED and Communications? Can you give me some examples?
29. To what extent do you think there are missed opportunities for cross-program marketing and outreach? Would you provide some examples?
30. How do you and other staff assess where opportunities for cross-program marketing and outreach exist?
31. To what extent do you and other managers communicate/coordinate when expanding or revising marketing and outreach activities for your programs?
32. What efforts are currently being effectively coordinated across programs and program groups? Would you provide some specific examples?

**Future Challenges**

33. What do you currently see as the biggest challenges to marketing and outreach for your program?
34. What do you see as the biggest challenges to marketing and outreach for NYSERDA as a whole over the next few years? (Probe: If NYSERDA's responsibilities grow, will there be added challenges for marketing and outreach?)
35. What suggestions do you have for making marketing and outreach structures and functions more effective at NYSERDA?

**PROCESS EVALUATION: MARKETING AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES  
FINAL INTERVIEW GUIDE – IMPLEMENTATION CONTRACTORS**

**Introduction**

I'm part of the Research Into Action consulting team that's conducting process evaluations for NYSERDA. Process evaluations examine how well programs or activities are operating within an organization, capturing what is working well and what might be improved. In this case, we are exploring how marketing and outreach activities are structured across NYSERDA's **New York Energy \$mart<sup>SM</sup>** Programs and the role contractors play in these activities.

**If contact for only one program:** As we discussed, today we are talking about marketing and outreach for NYSERDA's \_\_\_\_\_ program.

**If contact for multiple programs:** (Note: Through discussions with implementation contractor contacts, we will determine ahead of time how best to handle one contact/multiple programs contacts.) As we discussed, you are the contact for marketing and outreach for these NYSERDA programs: \_\_\_\_\_. That means I need to ask you some specific questions for each program's marketing and outreach efforts as well as some general questions that I will ask once.

As we go along, please feel free to tell me if you don't think you can't answer a question or if there is another person we should talk with about a question. As an independent consultant, RIA does not intend to report your responses in any way that would reveal you or your company's identity.

**[If Necessary Clarify:** I also understand that you may have already taken part in interviews that covered marketing and outreach specifically related to New York City. To clarify, this interview is intended to explore marketing and outreach only for the NYSERDA program(s) you work with throughout the state and to gather more general views on NYSERDA's marketing and outreach.]

Do you have any questions before we begin? Also, as we discussed, since part of this interview will be about your company's role in marketing and outreach for the \_\_\_\_\_ program, as outlined in the Statement of Work, do you have that SOW handy so we can refer to it? **[Note:** We will attach the SOW when we send them their email confirmation of the interview date and time.]

**Note:** *Questions with \* are asked only once if one person is the contact for multiple programs.*

**Concept & Definition**

1. First, I'd like to ask you some overall questions about your views on marketing and outreach. We are asking these general questions of everyone we are interviewing.
  - A. When you think about marketing, what types of things or activities do you include? (Probe: What do you think are the most important aspects of marketing?) How do you define *marketing*?
  - B. How is outreach similar to or different from marketing? (Probe: Is it important to distinguish between the two?)
  - C. In your work with NYSERDA, are you asked to distinguish between outreach and marketing efforts? If so, what have NYSERDA staff told you about the differences between the two activities?

**INTERVIEWER TEXT:** *While we know that people have different definitions for marketing and outreach, please think about both activities as you answer the rest of my questions.*

2. What NYSERDA organizational procedures, guidelines, customs, or structures, if any – whether formal or informal -- affect how you work with NYSERDA on marketing and outreach activities? (Probe: How clear and effective are they? Are they used consistently? Are any of these written down that we should review?)
3. When you work on marketing and outreach activities called for in your scope of work, how do you coordinate these activities with NYSERDA program staff? (If multiple programs: Is this similar or different across the programs you work on?)
4. Do you work with other NYSERDA departments, such as Marketing and Economic Development or Communications, in your marketing and outreach work? (If multiple programs: Is this similar or different across the programs you work on?)
5. **If Yes to Q4:** Now let's refer to the tasks in the SOW (if needed: for X Program). Which tasks, if any, do you work on with Marketing and Economic Development and/or Communications? (Go down the list) **For tasks where there are working relationships:** How do you work with Marketing and Economic Development and/or Communications on this task? How effective is this working relationship? Why or why not?

### Program Implementation

I'd like to talk a bit now about how things work in the field. (This section goes one program at a time unless scopes of work are very similar.)

6. How well does your current Statement of Work (if needed: for X Program[s]) reflect what you do in the field to conduct marketing and outreach? (Very, somewhat, not much, not at all) Why do you say (fill in rating)? **If reality and SOW differ:** Does the difference between the SOW and what you do in the field affect your working relationships with NYSERDA or getting the work done in any way?
7. **If different target audiences are listed in the SOW:** I notice you do marketing and outreach to different types of audiences (fill in audiences). How well is the program reaching each of these target audiences? Why do you say ( )?
8. Are there any other target audiences that the program should be reaching that aren't included in marketing and outreach efforts?
9. How do you define success for marketing and outreach activities? What successes have you seen in these areas so far? What produced these successes?
10. What barriers have you faced in your marketing and outreach efforts so far, either related to internal NYSERDA processes or during implementation?
11. Do NYSERDA staff know about these barriers to marketing and outreach? What are you or NYSERDA doing to address these barriers?
12. Are other contractors involved in marketing and outreach for this program?
  - A. **If yes:** How do you coordinate with them?
  - B. How has having multiple contractors affected your marketing and outreach efforts?
13. Are any other governmental agencies or non-governmental organizations involved in marketing and outreach for this program?
  - A. **If yes:** How do you coordinate with them?
  - B. How has having other agencies or organizations affected your marketing and outreach efforts?

**Familiarity with Other NYSERDA Programs**

14. How familiar are you with other NYSERDA programs besides those that your company specifically works on – in particular their marketing and outreach efforts? How have you learned about other programs?
15. **Do you think it would help** your marketing and outreach efforts to be more familiar with other NYSERDA programs and their marketing and outreach efforts? Why or why not?
16. **If familiar:** Does the marketing and outreach for your program overlap with marketing and outreach for other NYSERDA programs? **If yes:** How does this overlap affect your marketing and outreach efforts?
17. **If familiar:** Have you been able to cross-market your program with other NYSERDA programs? Are there opportunities to for cross-marketing that you haven't taken advantage of? Why is that?

**Tracking**

18. How do you measure the success of various marketing and outreach activities for this program? (**If needed:** Let's refer again to the SOW.).
19. How are marketing and outreach costs tracked? Where is this information stored?
20. Does the way marketing and outreach costs and outcomes are tracked or evaluated present any challenges for you and your staff?

**Use of Contractors Versus Internal Marketing Resources**

21. **If Contractor works with Marketing and Economic Development and /or Communications:** Contractors, central NYSERDA staff in Marketing and Economic Development and Communication Departments, and program staff may all get involved in marketing and outreach activities. Based on what you know, what do you think is the best role for each of these entities for marketing and outreach activities?
  - A. Outside contractors? Why?
  - B. Central NYSERDA staff (*e.g.*, Marketing and Economic Development and Communications) Why?
  - C. NYSERDA program staff? Why?

**Future Challenges**

22. What do you see as the key challenges to marketing and outreach efforts for this program at NYSERDA?
23. What changes, if any, are being considered for this program's marketing and outreach efforts in the next few years? Why? [Provide examples?]
24. If NYSERDA's goals for participation and energy savings were to increase substantially, what changes, if any, would need to be made to marketing and outreach for this program?
25. Are you aware of how this program fits in with overall marketing efforts for NYSERDA? **If yes:** Do you think marketing and outreach for this program is consistent with NYSERDA's overall image and messages? Why or why not?
26. Do you have any other suggestions for making marketing and outreach more effective at NYSERDA, either for this program or overall?