

THE CURBSIDE VALUE PARTNERSHIP

## USING EDUCATION TO BOOST RECYCLING PARTICIPATION

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### Presentation Overview

#### Curbside Value Partnership

- Who we are
- How we work in communities
- National best practices

#### Why boost participation?

- Two issues to consider
- Lowest hanging fruit

#### What we have learned:

- Findings Overview
- Partner Success Stories

#### Measuring success



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## CVP – Who we are -- and why?

CVP is a national program begun by the Aluminum Can Council

1. Improve **participation** levels in curbside programs
2. Drive recycling of the most valuable commodities
3. Help communities improve the **efficiency** of residential curbside programs
4. Create a **self-sustaining** initiative over 5 years where municipalities are leading and running more economically efficient curbside programs



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## Why grow participation?

- You can't afford not to
  - There is head room
  - Dis-connect between what people *say* and what they *do*
  - \$6.3 BILLION worth of recyclables trashed in 2005
- You can do it
  - Increased communications has **proven** to increased participation and yield more materials recycled
  - It's not rocket science... PR 101

Sources:  
Aluminum Can Council 2005 Municipal  
survey

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## Two issues to consider FIRST

- However... consider this:
  - Can you AFFORD to grow participation?
    - Cost of bins
    - Cost of added pick ups
    - Contract language
    - Cost of success?
  - Can you COMMIT to seeing it through?
    - Ongoing and consistent campaign required
    - Buy-in for future campaigns

Sources:  
Aluminum Can Council 2005 Municipal  
survey

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## Target the lowest hanging fruit



Prioritize your goals

- City-wide vs. one population segment
- Getting the “biggest bang” for your buck

Prioritize your budget

- Don't spend all your money in one place
- What has worked in the past?

PLAN, PLAN, PLAN

- Spend the time up front
- Get buy-in early
- Gauge success along the way

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## Findings and conclusions

Three years of research and partnerships have told us...

- “Get a bin” messaging most effective
- Residents don’t want to be “marketed to”
- Also touch on “the basics” such as how, when and where to recycle
- Factoids help - the more local the better
- Parents want to set a good example



## What NOT to do

- Try to make everyone happy
- Look for a “magic bullet”
- Go at it alone (i.e. not involving your MRF, hauler, city communications staff, etc.)
- Cram everything in to a tight timeframe (i.e. into one quarter, for America Recycles Day, etc.)
- Spend all your money in one place (advertising, expensive direct mail, etc.)
- Stick to the status quo (the BIGGEST mistake you can make)

## Where we have worked



### Cities:

- Charlotte, NC
- **Denver, CO**
- Omaha, NE
- Orlando, FL
- **Kansas City, MO**

### Counties:

- Arlington County, VA
- Brevard County, FL
- Burlington County, NJ
- Centre County, PA
- Crawford County, PA
- **Indian River County, FL**

### Pending:

- Boulder, CO
- Baton Rouge, LA
- Clearwater, FL
- Milwaukee, WI



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## CVP by the numbers

### THE RESULTS ARE CLEAR.

CVP COMMUNITIES EXPERIENCE INCREASES ACROSS THE BOARD IN THEIR CURBSIDE RECYCLING PROGRAMS:

194%

MORE BIN ORDERS\*

194%

\*Denver, CO; Boulder, CO; Arlington County, VA

8%

MORE BINS AT THE CURB\*

8%

\*Arlington City, VA; Burlington County, NJ

20%

INCREASE IN AVERAGE CURBSIDE RECYCLING VOLUME\*

20%

\*Harrisburg, PA; Brevard County, FL; Indian River County, FL; Kansas City, MO; Denver, CO



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## Spotlight on: Denver, CO

**ReThink Recycling.**  
Easier Than Ever



### Activities:

- Secured sponsors: ACC, Coke, Dex Media, etc.
- Hired PR/marketing agency
- Developed “ReThink Recycling” theme and look
- Developed launch and roll-out plan (one-year)
- Developed Web site and program materials
- Kick-off event at MRF with Mayor
- Phased roll-out of carts with materials
- PSA with Mayor
- Community ads

### Results:

- 24% increase in recycling volume
- 6% increase in aluminum
- 9,000 new residents asking for service
- 122% increase in Web traffic; 95% increase in emails

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## Spotlight on: Kansas City, MO



### Activities:

- City-wide launch of program and local retailer sponsorship of bin distribution
- “Urban core” focus groups and phone survey
- Development of key messages and program materials
- In-depth media relations city-wide
- Partnership with utilities to promote messages
- Increased participation in school events
- Re-vamped Web site content
- PR training for city recycling staff

### Results:

- Curbside recycling volume increased by 36 percent.
  - Saved the city over \$390,000 in waste disposal fees.
- Pounds per household increased by an average of 20 pounds per month.
- Favorable news stories and program participation continues to climb.

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## Spotlight on: Indian River County, FL



### Activities:

- County-wide education effort
- Utilized on-site staff at Convenience Centers to distribute educational flyers
- Joined forces with Keep Indian River Beautiful
- Conducted ongoing media outreach and secured Op-ed placements and several print stories
- School visits and special guest appearances from "Garby," the county's recycling mascot
- Recycling messages conveyed at the L.A. Dodger's Spring Training Games

### Results:

- A 22% lift in beverage containers recycled at the curb
- 37% lift in fiber
- Notable increase in new bins at the curb (County did not have capability to measure new bins on the street)

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## Measuring success

- With no measurement in place ... what's the point?
- Measurement options:
  - MRF data - VOLUME and VALUE (by month, year-over-year)
  - Set out counts (pre and post)
  - Surveys (pre and post)
  - Web site traffic
  - Phone calls
  - Bin requests
  - Media coverage
  - Other measures

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## Contact Us

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