

Loveland Water and Power Messaging Assessment

Presentation to Loveland Utility Commission

November 20, 2013



Initial Questions

- Is Loveland Water and Power effectively communicating with customers?
 - What are the messages that Loveland Water and Power is currently communicating to its customers?
 - Does the current information distributed by Loveland Water and Power communicate the intended goals effectively to customers?
- Do customers associate any of the current messages or visual images communicated from Loveland Water and Power with the utility?
- Are customers generally happy with what they know about Loveland Water and Power? How much do they generally know about the utility?

Approach

- Complete an initial messaging assessment of the current messaging and content associated with Loveland Water and Power.
- Conduct a customer survey at various events and online to gather a general understanding of customers satisfaction and knowledge of LWP.
 - Conducted between May and July 2013
 - 87 customers responded to the survey
- Conduct focus groups with customers to drill down deeper on their understanding about Loveland Water and Power.
 - Two Focus Groups were conducted with 14 Loveland Water and Power customers (6 women and 8 men) on August 1, 2013
- Create recommendations for next steps to allow for more effective customer communication.

Initial Messaging Assessment

- There is an abundance of information, which seems to be overwhelming to the customer.
- There is not one clear statement or message that describes each program. Rather, many different messages attempting to describe each program exist in various materials, from marketing pamphlets to the website.
- Having the large array of messages and content makes it difficult for customers to navigate, and difficult to “sell” the programs, as it is arduous for customers to identify with any one message.
- As the information presented is not always consistent, it can cause some confusion for the customer.
- There is not one constant image that is seen in any of the materials created for Loveland Water and Power.

Survey Results

- 85% of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with **communication of program options** from Loveland Water and Power
- 84% were very satisfied or satisfied with Loveland Water and Power **meeting growing environmental demands**.
- 81% were very satisfied or satisfied with the **rates** of Loveland Water and Power.
- 74% of respondents were very satisfied with the **reliability of service** from Loveland Water and Power
- Overall, 82% of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with the **overall service** of Loveland Water and Power

Focus Group Results

- Customers are generally happy with the service provided by Loveland Water and Power and they have trust in the utility. They feel that the utility's service and rates are reliable and competitive.
- The majority of customers would like to know more about conservation programs. The opportunity to save money and resources is appealing.
- The majority of customers do not know about any of the programs offered by Loveland Water and Power, but would be interested in knowing more and participating.
- The majority of customers feel that Loveland Water and Power is doing good things to plan for the future and to keep rates low. In fact, they feel the utility could put more emphasis on their good work and low rates in their communications.
- There is too much information about programs and services coming from Loveland Water and Power. Because of the oversaturation of content, customers often stop responding to the information at all. When looking at what to communicate to customers, less is more.

Focus Group Results cont.

- The majority of customers believe that education aimed at children is one way to spread the message about conservation efforts. They did feel “Glow,” the current icon for these programs, helped to communicate this message. However, customers could not identify “Glow” with anything specific from Loveland Water and Power.
- Customers want to make sure problems with the utility and/or changes in utility policies are communicated accurately and timely, e.g. possible water quality problems or potential smart grid integration.
- Customers believe it is difficult to communicate fully about the work and programs of Loveland Water and Power due to the numerous forms of communication available. However, making sure as many tools as possible are utilized (newsletter, email, social media, newspaper, etc.) is important.
- Customers generally found words and messages appealing that make the utility sound more community oriented and less bureaucratic, e.g. Community Utility over Municipal Utility
- None of the images that come from the current Loveland Water and Power marketing materials or pamphlets are identifiable to customers. Some are slightly familiar, but not automatically associated with the utility.

Focus Group Results cont.

- The words *environmental* and *green* can sometimes be politically charged, thus words like *conservation* and *save* seem to be more resonant when messaging these efforts.
- Loveland Water and Power has created a great deal of trust with its customers through reliable service and rates, because of this, customers generally trust the information that is shared with them whether it be about new programs, conservations efforts, future planning etc.
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- Customers do not distinguish a difference between water and power. In fact they incorporate additional programs, such as recycling, into the services they think their utility provides. Customers see Loveland Water and Power as one entity.

Streamlining Content

- Once the main focus areas have been identified, rewrite/condense the web content, and use that for all subsequent communications. Streamline the content to be concise, create key phrases and talking points for each area, and most importantly, create content that will be consistent across all other forms of communication.
- Be consistent when referring to Loveland Water and Power as such, and create one consistent way to present Loveland Water and Power in conjunction with the City of Loveland's logo. The following is a good example:



- Create templates that can be used with each identified focus area. These templates can have slight modifications for each targeted focus area, but should be consistent in the visual presentation that runs through all materials coming from Loveland Water and Power.

Increasing Community Outreach

- Identify targeted groups of customers and tailor messages and images to relate to them. Suggested target groups, based on the likelihood of their being interested in current and future Loveland Water and Power programs, are as follows:
 - Families with children
 - All customers age 18-45
 - Customers who currently have opted in or participate in at least one program of Loveland Water and Power
 - Customers who opt into digital options to receive information from Loveland Water and Power
- Create targeted messaging focused on encouraging these groups of customers to engage in additional programs and services from Loveland Water and Power
- Create a digital outreach plan to engage that targeted group. Include email and social media in the plan
- Create a targeted community outreach plan that includes direct mail, digital options, targeted outreach and education to engage specific customers in Loveland Water and Power's programs.

Next Steps

- Rework all content in The Loveland Water and Power area of the website, to ensure it is clear, concise, and incorporates the findings of these efforts based on what appeals to customers. This content can then be used in all other marketing materials.
- Work with a graphic designer to create templates that can be used for all communications from Loveland Water and Power that give it a consistent, professional look and feel.
- Create a community outreach plan incorporating the outlined objectives above to increase participation in programs and services provided by Loveland Water and Power.
 - Goals for increased participation in 2014:
 - 3% increase in participation in the Home Energy Assessments
 - 5% increase in participation all other programs
 - 1% increase in participation in commercial program
 - Goals for increased community outreach and awareness in 2014:
 - Increase Social Media reach by 500 likes on Facebook
 - 10 % increase in community outreach—including schools, community events, and direct customer outreach
 - Create email opt-in that allows customers to get information from Loveland Water and Power in a form other than paper mail.