4 County EPA’s EPIC Low-Income Journey
Our Presenters

Jon Turner has been manager of public relations and marketing at 4 County Electric Power Association since 2009, following 15 years of experience in broadcast television including News Director of WCBI-TV in Columbus, MS.

At 4-County he has overseen the successful implementation of a prepay program, headed a project that was awarded a $3.8 million grant from the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Environmental Protection Agency to implement an energy efficiency program for 265 limited income single family dwellings in the 4-County service territory, and, with Apogee, redesigned 4-County's online presence with an emphasis on member service. Jon is a proud graduate of Mississippi State University, he holds a Bachelor’s degree in communications and currently serves on the board of Seven States Power Corporation and is a graduate of NRECA’s Management Intern Program.

Jim Malcom, is chief operating officer of Apogee Interactive, providing oversight business and financial operations of the company. His senior management experience in the telecommunications and management consulting industries is providing strategic direction for Apogee’s continued growth and success. He is a graduate of the University of Georgia with a bachelor’s and master’s degree in business administration, a certified public accountant, and a chartered global management accountant.

Elizabeth Burroughs is Apogee’s engagement manger. Elizabeth graduated from Georgia State University in 2013 with a BBA in Marketing. Her professional background includes experience with strategic marketing campaigns, communications and sales support. She is currently the Engagement Manager at Apogee Interactive. Her role includes creating and implementing the outbound communication plans for our utility customers.
Agenda

• EPIC Refresh
• 4 County EPA Overview
• Low Income Program
• Pilot Overview, Results and Lessons Learned
• Questions and Answers
Who We Are

Leading the market in sustainability.

25 years in business

Serving hundreds of utilities who serve more than 48% of the US households.

Software as a service provider focused on three major utility initiatives:

- Best in class Data Analytics
- Proven Accuracy. Real Results.
Energy Platform for Information and Communication (EPIC)

Target Customers

→ Low Income
→ Renters
→ Multi-family
→ New homeowners/ relocated/newly independent
- A bit more likely to cite saving money as a reason to save energy.
- Much less likely to cite environmental benefits.
Report on 4 County Electric’s EPIC Program
Conducted by Apogee Interactive, Inc.
4th largest electric co-op in MS (25 electric distribution co-ops)

Largest TVA distributor (28 co-ops and munis)
4-County Service Territory:

- 2500+ square miles
- Major urban areas served by municipals
- Low density
Where we started

- 250 homes
- maximum $11.50/sq. ft. (all-in)
- 20+ year old home
- traditional built
- no gas heat/water heat
- income qualification
- at least 25% reduction in energy use per home
Where we finished

- 265 homes
- $11.10/sq. ft. (all-in)
- 25.7% savings across all homes
- 29% of homes with > 35% savings
- 6% of homes negative savings
Why EPIC?

- Learned a lot about communication issues with this member segment with EEM
- Needed ways to stay engaged with EEM participants
- Wanted to engage significant member that group that couldn’t meet the strict criteria for EEM
- Needed to be proactive with real, actionable messaging
- Apogee was working on a solution
What did we learn?

- It’s the right strategy
- A great way to have a productive, non-adversarial interaction with members
- Members responded well to the platform and messaging
- We need to utilize this method in a planned and focused way
- Simple, cost-effective
- 4-County needs to be better at gathering/interpreting data
Project Overview and Survey Results
Project Overview

• First EPIC program was launched at the end of January 2018 with 4 County Electric Power Association.

• The program consists of weekly targeted text messages. All have a link to a corresponding page on the utility’s website
  • Messages with easy low cost energy saving tips
  • Payment Options and locations
  • Information about programs/rebates
  • Supported by targeted on-line tools
SMS Overall Analytics
Engagement Impact

26,235 texts sent to date
18,265 confirmed received
139 opt-outs

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Top 3 Messages

• We offer many payment and billing options. You can pay based on a levelized amount, your fixed income or you can pre-pay.

• Save big this summer by setting your thermostat a few degrees higher. Each degree higher can save about $80 annually.

• Your dryer uses about 20% of the total power your appliances consume. See how much your dryer usage costs you by filling out an online home profile.
Survey Results
Usefulness
How useful was the information presented?

- **93%** said very or somewhat useful
- **15x** very useful vs not very or not at all

“I love this energy saving program. I use all the tips.”

“Insightful...Helpful...No recommendations”

“The information is helpful because it helps when it comes to using the energy in our home more efficiently”
Survey Results
Frequency and Timing of Messages
How often would you like to receive a text message with energy saving tips?

- Most respondents preferred weekly or monthly messages

“I would like them to come on someday other than Wed. during church”
Survey Results
Effectiveness

Do you feel this an effective channel for communicating saving tips?

- 90% think text messages are an effective way to engage as customers

“Without having to call or read inserts I get quality information here”
Without having to call or read inserts I get quality information. I think it very helpful. The topics have been good. Thank you. I love this energy saving program. I use all the tips. Being able to get information 5 Not sure at this time Not very informative, basic information. Great tips on to conservative on how to keep the high cost down save energy. Dnt change a thing. Just telling everyone how to save money on energy cost. We feel sometime our meters aren't read right cause our cost are so high?? It a good deal Love it I have learn a lot thank you for your help I would like them to come ob someday other than Wed. During church We like that it keeps us closely connected with our utility. That is priceless. Very help tips! Thank you! Nothing right now. Saves me money, and I really need that. The information is helpful because it helps when it comes to using the energy in our homes more efficient At this point i don't have any suggestions. Thank you Very helpful tips These are great Suggest new ways to conserve energy instead of what has been told from past times. This is very helpful cannot think of any improvement Insightful... Helpful... No recommendations Interesting tips
Lessons Learned

• Timing of the message
• Messaging with specific information
• People like the proactive outreach
Are you ready for high bill season?

Contact us:

info@apogee.net
678-684-6801
Coming Soon:

• Webinar: Xcel Energy Case Study

• Conferences:
  • Sept. 20, GMMSCA
  • Sept. 25, AMP/OMEA
  • Oct. 22, Chartwell’s EMACS
  • Nov. 4, APPA Connections
Questions and Answers
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Thank You!