

PLAN SMART,
RETHINKING
GREEN

COMMUNICATE SMART

STRATEGY

The average adult receives more than 1,300 advertising messages per day! This presents a particular challenge for promoting the benefits of trees. Local decision-makers are often unaware of the connection between trees and improved air and water quality, stormwater control, and improving homeowner safety from wildfire. Effective program results depend on these core strategies.

MESSAGING: Focus on key ideas, supported by specific data. This gives a decision-maker the information necessary to make informed choices – “tell me what I need to know”. New Mexico’s “Trees and People” survey, showed 64% of participants wanted to “strengthen community awareness”. This information translates into an outreach opportunity for key decision-makers.

Highlight the importance of using specific terms that resonate with everyday people and avoid “policy speak”

(The Language of Conservation from The National Research Program, 2004.)

- 1. Water.** Develop and implement landscape design that maximizes the use of natural water sources to grow a healthy Green Infrastructure.
- 2. Fire.** Promote the importance of Firewise practices at the homeowner and community level to minimize impacts from wildfire.
- 3. Planning, Programs, & Funding.** Implement a comprehensive strategy that improves quality of life and livable communities. Use municipal planning, develop community forestry programs, and target funding opportunities.

TOOLS & TACTICS: Managing trees and community forests can be challenging. Try these simple tools and tactics. Use a variety of communications tools to insure that the message is sustained and can be easily accessed by each audience. The industry average for effectively reaching an audience is seven contacts. Develop overlapping and complementary tools, tactics, and media to achieve your goals.

- Develop a portfolio of community success stories, key stakeholder quotes, and data that can be tailored for specific audiences and media. Be a resource.
- Cultivate relationships with key decision makers, a cross section of audiences, and encourage public/private partnerships.
- Use a variety of marketing tools for sustained impact including electronic, print, direct mail, events, training sessions, and one-on-one follow-up.
- Encourage interactive exchange to create a sense of “ownership”. Invite a broad base of participation to carry the “message” far and wide.

Concept highlights from the “Marketing Strategy for Urban & Community Forestry in the West”.

TARGET AUDIENCE & ENGAGEMENT: Carefully identify the audience(s) you want to target and tailor strategies specifically for them. Most important, create opportunities to engage audiences and stakeholders that are not familiar with the importance of trees. “Unless we reach and involve more diverse groups and citizens in our efforts, urban and community forestry programs will cease to be relevant to most Americans even though they live in urban and metropolitan areas.”

USDA Forest Service & Michigan State University National Research on Engaging Non-engaged Audiences.

- **Media:** Think Local, Neighborhood!
- **Business:** Chamber of Commerce
- **Community Groups:** Non-profit & civic organizations, volunteers
- **Statewide Resources:** New Mexico State Forestry, International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), Tree New Mexico

FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.NMFORESTRY.COM