



# 2009 Iowa Water Conference Engaging the Public

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# Engaging the Public

- Building Trust with Today's Consumers
- Values-Based Approach to Messaging
- Iowa Minute
- Using a Layered Approach to Reach Consumers

# Building Trust with Iowa's Consumers

## Center For Food Integrity (CFI) research

You are 5-times more likely to influence a consumer when your message is based on values, rather than your technical skills.

**So, what do you value?**

# Building Trust with Iowa's Consumers

## Consumers share our values:

Family (children, education)

Choice (food safety, affordability)

Quality of Life (clean air, water)

Community (neighbors, rural vitality)

# Building Trust with Iowa's Consumers

**What is top of mind for Iowa consumers?**

- 1) Rising energy costs (8.49)
- 2) Rising cost of food (8.06)
- 3) The U.S. economy (8.04)

# Building Trust with Iowa's Consumers

Asked ag, non-ag Iowans to rank issues of concern:

- 1) Rising energy costs
- 2) Healthcare
- 3) Education
- 4) Air and Water Quality**

# Building Trust with Iowa's Consumers

## Who do you Trust in Environmental Protection?

“People like me” 7.56

“Farmers/Producers” 6.47

“Advocacy Groups” 5.87

“State Regulatory agencies” 5.58

“Federal Regulatory agencies” 5.51

# Building Trust with Iowa's Consumers

## Who is *Responsible* for Environmental Protection?

“People like me” 18.5

“Farmers/Producers” 16.1

“Advocacy Groups” 6.2

State Regulatory Agencies 14.4

Federal Regulatory Agencies 17.1

# Values-Based Messaging

**How do you make them care about the environment today?**

For Starters.....know your audience/speak their language

*“Think like a wise man, but communicate in the language of the people.”*

*William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)*

# Values-Based Messaging

**Consumers & Media will tune in to your message if it's:**

- #1 timely (new?)
- #2 has proximity (my backyard?)
- #3 has impact (*how* will it affect me?)
- #4 has currency (*how long* will it affect me?)

# How to Talk about Water Quality

**We all live in a watershed....**

How we all live our lives has an impact

Do you fertilize your lawn?

- Do you live in unsewered community?
- What do you wash, dump, dispose, *flush*?
- Do you drink from the tap?

# Iowa Minute

What is your vehicle for reaching public?

What segment of public do you desire?

Who is your spokesperson?

What images will resonate with public?

What message do you want them to hear?

# Iowa Minute



# Iowa Minute

# Iowa Minute



# Reaching Consumers

## Consumers are changing the way they get news

- 37% of Americans get their news online regularly.
- 34% read a newspaper
- 30% watch the nightly network news

You need a layered approach: face-to-face, TV, radio, print, Internet

# Reaching Consumers

- Popular news sites are digital versions of old brands
  - CNN, MSNBC, Fox News
  - Cedar Rapids Gazette, Des Moines Register
- People are becoming their own reporters/editors, sharing with friends and strangers:
  - Blogs, Facebook, You Tube, Twitter, Digg, Linked-In, My Space, Flickr, Delicious,

# Using a Layered Approach to Reaching Consumers

**Also consider...**

News releases (if newsworthy)

Email 'pitches'

Letters to the editor

**JUST MAKE IT RELEVANT TO  
CONSUMERS**

# Working Together is Crucial Because...

**Water is the lifeblood of our  
environment, our bodies, our  
future.**

- 61.8% water in human body
- 70% of Earth in water-3% is freshwater
- Average American drinks 159 gallons of water a year

# THANK YOU!

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