



Marketing Evaluation

The purpose of this service is to evaluate your marketing efforts to educate and promote the adoption of geothermal heat pump (GHP) technology to your membership. When conducting the survey you will review the following areas:

Website | Social Media | Digital News | Printed Materials | Other Methods | Employee Education

The following covers the areas checked in each category listed above. The questions being asked are meant to stimulate conversation on best practices for marketing a program and make you think about how effective your methods are.

YES / NO

Your Website -

Y / N

Do you give specific information about your GHP incentive (either on its own page or included with other rebates)?

Suggestion: List your program incentives for easy reference. If a consumer goes to your site looking for numbers, they may be discouraged from further considering GHP as a reliable savings investment.

Y / N

Does your incentive information give details about what the requirements are to qualify?

Suggestion: All program requirements should be listed so your consumer (and contractor) knows what is expected to qualify.

Y / N

Do you have a dedicated page giving information about GHP technology (not just incentive information)?

Suggestion: GHP technology is not as well known as other HVAC systems. Not only does having a dedicated page help inform the consumer about technology, but it also shows that you value it enough to give more information.

Y / N

Is your website mobile friendly?

Suggestion: The likelihood of someone's first connection to your cooperative will be through their phone.

Y / N

Does it take more than one or two clicks to reach the information on your incentive program?

Suggestion: The fewer the number of clicks needed to reach the information the better. People in general are easily discouraged if they have to 'search' for information.

Y / N

Do you list the benefits of GHP technology for the consumer and the utility?

Suggestion: Listing the benefits in an easy-to-read manner is a good way to catch the attention of your member.

Y / N

If your goal is to have higher adoption rates of GHP technology over ASHP technology, do you emphasize its importance vs other technology? (Ex: Do you have more information about GHPs and list it at the top of the incentive page compared to other incentives available.)

Suggestion: Listing order may not seem important but think of it like a Google search. The listing at the top shows that it gets more attention and therefore may be considered a 'better' link. People also read from the top down, so if you list another technology other than GHPs first, that may be the only thing they read.

Y / N

Is there a share button option on the site to share the page with someone else?

Suggestion: Adding a share button will allow you to easily pass on information to someone or allow your consumers to 'market' for you.

Y / N

If your loading page scrolls down, is your GHP program listed as an option to click? These are areas of 'importance.' If you are giving information about multiple types of technology, you can combine technologies under 'efficiency,' or some other title if you don't want the page to scroll too far.

Y / N

Do all your links work and are they distinguishable?

Suggestion: Having bad links will reduce credibility and having links that aren't easily noticed serve no purpose.

Y / N

If you have a video, is it prominently placed next to or at the top of detailed information?

Suggestion: People are more attracted to videos and are more likely to watch something than to read it. Having the video located at the top will increase the likelihood that a person will review the information.

YES / NO

Social Media -

Y / N

Are you using Social Media Platforms to promote cooperative programs and incentives, such as GHPs?

Suggestion: If you are utilizing a social media platform to deliver cooperative messages to your member base, adding GHP ads will give your rotation fresh material.

Y / N

Are your ads for your GHP program being run frequently?

Suggestion: As with any marketing campaign, if you want people to recognize and remember something, you must expose them to the information multiple times.

Y / N

Are you highlighting the different benefits of GHP technology to your members?

Suggestion: Build your advertisement of the program around the many different benefits of the technology (financial, environmental, etc.). This will target more of your diverse membership and appeal to their individual needs and goals.

Digital Newsletters -

Y / N

If you have a newsletter at your cooperative, are they sent out more than once per year?

Suggestion: If you are using your newsletter to inform your membership about your GHP program, it needs to be done more than once or twice per year, or it needs to be in conjunction with other media platforms to reinforce the message.

Y / N

Is your GHP program information mentioned in the newsletter each time it is sent?

Suggestion: If you have a newsletter that goes out to your membership, consider including information about your GHP in every copy. This can be included with other rebates, or you can highlight a different benefit of technology for each issue.

Y / N

Have you ever used the newsletter to highlight an individual home or business installation or benefit of a GHP system?

Suggestion: Giving details of a successful installation or use of GHP technology is a great subject to use in a cooperative newsletter. It can help answer questions

people may have and show them that this technology can do for them like it did their neighbor.

Printed Materials -

Y / N

Do you have flyers available to members in the lobby of the cooperative?

Suggestion: Have an array of one-page flyers and/or full-page brochures on GHPs so if your member has questions, they can take the information home. This will keep them interested and hopefully keep the interest going. You should consider displaying lobby flyers so the members can take them without needing to ask anybody.

Y / N

Do you send flyers out to members (printed or emailed) when they have questions?

Y / N

Do you include an information flyer about GHPs in a new member packet?

Suggestion: The flyers can be mailed or printed, so having them available is a good first step in informing your members about the technology.

Y / N

If you have regular access to a statewide cooperative magazine, does your content ever cover a GHP related subject or story?

Suggestion: Many statewide cooperative magazines are read by a large portion of the membership. This is a good platform to discuss your GHP program or highlight a specific project. Not only will this be another way to reach your target audience, but it is another option when looking for content to fill the pages each month.

Other Methods -

Y / N

Have you ever held an open house or tour at an installation site or at your office (if your building has GHPs)?

Suggestion: Holding open houses or tours of a residential or commercial installation can be very eye-opening for some people. Getting a firsthand look at just how simple the equipment and loop system is can alleviate buyer anxiety.

Y / N

Have you ever had a contractor meeting to discuss your GHP program?

Suggestion: Holding contractor meetings is valuable in many ways. Your contractors get to know your program so there are less issues on meeting incentive requirements and you get to know what contractors are in the area and the level of experience each has.

Y / N

Have you ever presented your GHP program with any organizations in town (Builder's Associations, Realtor groups, etc., Neighborhood Association)?

Suggestion: Presenting or contacting groups that aren't directly involved with GHP installation, but are in fields that the technology could be used, will help promote your program to a wider audience than you could reach alone.

Y / N

Do you have a rebate or some other type of incentive to encourage a member to choose a GHP over other conventional systems?

Suggestion: Having an incentive of some kind is almost necessary if you want more members to choose a GHP. While the members will see more savings with the GHP unit versus other systems, the upfront cost can discourage adoption.

Y / N

Is your GHP incentive impactful enough (especially compared to other technologies you might also promote) to show that it is more valuable to the member and to the utility?

Suggestion: An aggressive incentive will accomplish multiple things at the same time. First, it will show that you value this technology enough that you are willing to make an investment in having it installed. Second, when you bring the upfront cost down and properly educate the member on all the benefits, you make the choice easier to make.

Y / N

Do you have any programs involving loop leasing or system financing?

Suggestion: Having methods that can reduce the initial upfront cost and increase adoption of these systems significantly. *Refer to CKEnergy Loop Program PDF in the Education section.

YES / NO

Employee Education -

Y / N

Do all the employees at your cooperative generally know the details of your GHP program?

Suggestion: All employees should have minimum knowledge of your GHP program, but any employee that answers phone calls or interacts with the membership daily should be very knowledgeable of the program details.

Y / N

Do you have any employees that have a deeper understanding of GHP technology; how it works, loop types, comparisons to other HVAC systems, etc?

Suggestion: Any employee that does work involving your GHP program (Member Services and Communications) should have basic technical knowledge of GHPs. This will allow them to answer questions from members and adds credibility to the program. Other departments such as Engineering and Operations would also benefit as they interact with new members and load distribution and demand needs of the grid.

Y / N

Have any of your employees been through a GEO 101 training offered by IGSHPA/GeoExchange?

Suggestion: IGSHPA offers a GEO 101 course specifically designed for the needs of rural electric cooperatives with GHP incentive programs. This course gives the perfect level of knowledge to confidently interact with members looking for a new HVAC system in their home or business.



GEOFORCO-OPS
A GEOEXCHANGE INITIATIVE

Results

There is no 'score' with this evaluation, though answering YES more than NO would likely move your program forward a bit more effectively. The suggestions given after each question are meant to make you think about strategies that best promote your program to reach maximum adoption of the technology in your service territory.

There is no strategy that fits all utilities, but many of these suggestions are seen throughout most successful programs to some degree.

If you have any questions about the information covered, or if you would like to sit one-on-one and discuss marketing strategy, please contact GeoExchange to set up a meeting. You can also find marketing resources at GeoExchange.org/Geo-for-Co-op/.

