Beyond the CFL:
Winning Imagery for Energy Efficiency

Behavior, Energy & Climate Change Conference

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resource media
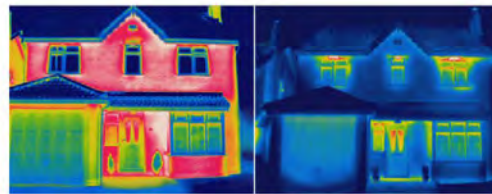Unlock the Power of Communication

What works for energy efficiency?

Imagery research project: Day 1

Imagery research project: Day 2

Imagery research project: Day 3

Overall observations

- Mostly non-politicized

- People stayed engaged throughout the study

- People draw on their personal experiences

- People got excited when talking about things they have done/could do to their homes to save energy

Perceptions of energy efficiency

- Positive and personal

- Why? Save money, stop waste & do the right thing

- People see it as a question of personal responsibility, not government mandates or programs

EE is great, but don't tell me what to do, and I won't tell you what to do either.

People easily relate and engage

But, be careful with the CFL

"This image brings to mind how we as consumers are being treated like a bunch of children. The fact that the standard light bulb has basically been outlawed is something that really infuriates me."
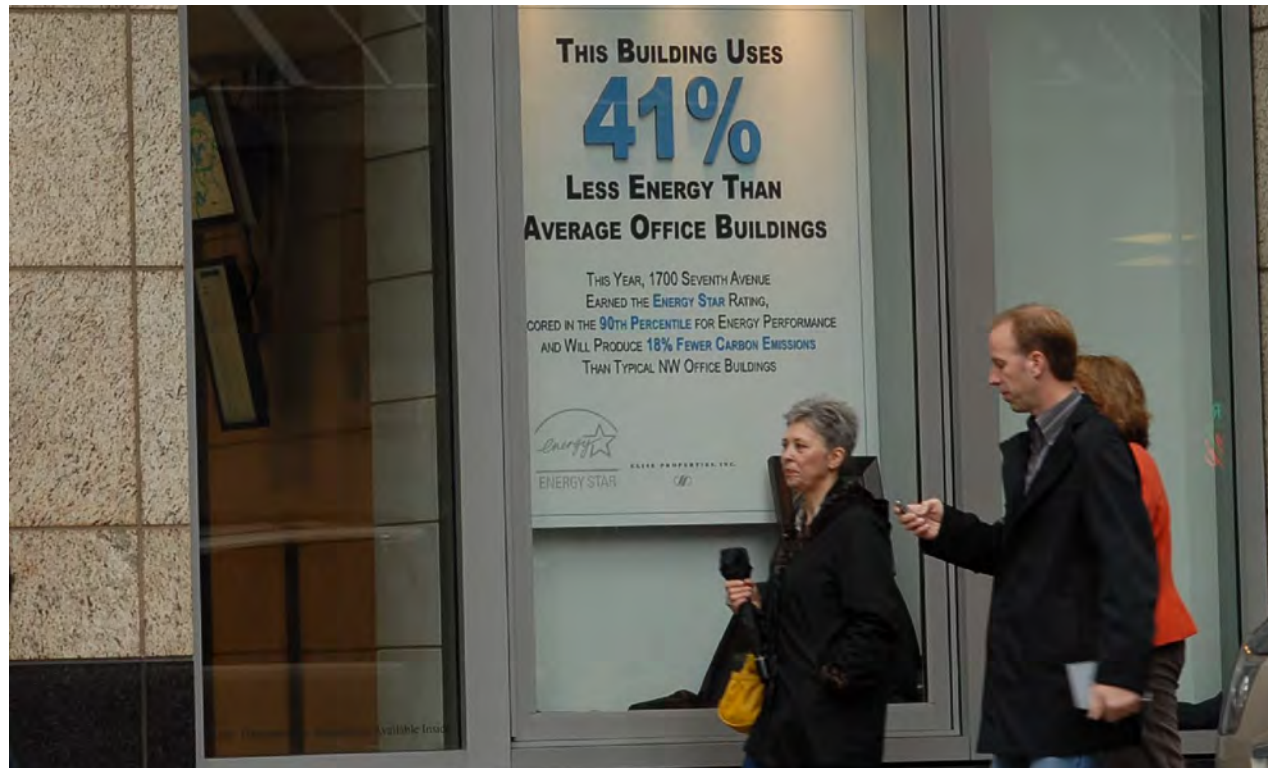
Waste is impactful, but not motivating

"Fire the building manager!"

"It makes me feel sick to see all of our precious resources going to waste for nothing."

I want to know more

"Seeing this poster would immediately make me want to know how they are using 41% less energy. It looks like a major office building, which can have massive energy bills. I would want to implement some of their energy saving ways into my home and every day life."

Comfort/discomfort images distracting

"I think the little boy wishes he could go out and play in the snow. Makes me feel like when I was young , I liked to play in the snow."

"If her furnace is not working she should get it fixed. If she is behind on her bills she should try to make payment arrangements with her utility company."

Strongest photos: relatable & revealing

Big findings

- The role of government is our vulnerability

- EE = virtuous self-interest: save money while stopping waste and doing a good and moral thing

- Images make EE personal for people

- We don't use imagery enough; what is out there is abstract & technical

- Images help normalize EE as something everyone is doing and should do

Top Recommendation

Use images of people and businesses embracing energy efficiency as a way to introduce programs and policies that drive energy efficiency improvements.

Thank you!

Tipsheet: http://bit.ly/eeimagetips

Report: http://bit.ly/eeimagereport

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