

**Jose Villa, Sensis**

**Title:** Putting the brakes on burning: Using effective marketing techniques to raise awareness and improve regional air quality.

**Abstract:** The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCQAMD) the air pollution control agency for all of Orange County and urban Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino counties needed to boost public engagement and compliance in the region's "Check Before Your Burn" program. The goal was to increase email signups for notifications of burning restrictions but to do it in a way that didn't seem as if the government was imposing restrictions on wood burning. The SCQAMD engaged the cross-cultural marketing agency Sensis to craft a campaign promoting a universal message about the harmful health effects of wood burning and smoke. The agency built a consumer-facing brand as opposed to a government-branded message to get the public behind the no-burn day cause. Sensis developed a two-pronged campaign that included an ongoing, pre-planned "Check Before You Burn" awareness campaign and a real-time "No Burn Day" campaign that was pushed daily, based on air quality conditions. Multiple channels were used to support the campaign such as digital and social media, out-of-home, television, radio and public relations which included partnering with two local radio stations to conduct weekly community engagement events to drive email alert sign ups and website traffic. The first year of the three-year campaign resulted in adding 1,923 new subscribers, a 70 percent increase from the same period a year prior. The initial "Check Before You Burn" campaign drove 26,418 unique page views to the site and 92 percent of the traffic was generated from external sources. Public relations efforts secured more than 260 media placements reaching a potential audience of more than 52.3 million Southern California residents. The agency's participation and partnership with radio stations at 56 events reached an estimated audience of 60,000 attendees. An online awareness survey showed that 68 percent of respondents exposed to the SCAQMD creative rated the agency very high in helping them breathe easier compared to unexposed respondents. It was also determined that three to four exposures to the digital ad resulted in the highest brand lift. People attending this session will learn how to create engaging campaigns that go beyond "government lecturing." Attendees will also learn the best channels to use for creating meaningful engagement with their target audience. After the session, attendees will be armed with ideas to make their mission personal for their audience, improving the potential to create lasting change. <http://www.sensisagency.com/what-we%27ve-done-South-Coast-AQMD>