

2014 Recyclemania Case Study

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Type of Promotion:

Our Recycling Committee team created a communication and marketing outreach plan to help encourage greater participation in our campus recycling programs by positively changing the recycling behavior of students, faculty and staff.

General Description:

Recycling efforts on Morehead State University campus have been waning over the last few years. Our common thoughts about the reasoning behind this downturn were that some people may feel overwhelmed with what is happening to the earth's environment and feel that, as one individual, they cannot make that much of a difference in what may seem like an insurmountable problem for humanity. There have also been some comments that recycling is not convenient enough on campus and people are not sure where to recycle. In order to motivate our campus community to increase our recycling efforts and promote sustainability, our recycling committee decided that we needed a common unifying theme that promoted campus-wide participation. Our school team mascot is the eagle. The eagle is a magnificent creature that bestows a symbol of strength, endurance, and beauty while it possesses very watchful eyes as it soars over the earth. Since we wanted to incorporate these ideals and team behavior, we paired our Eagle team mascot with the words "earth" and "wise" to signify that our team effort would be about watching over our earth, and doing what is wise and friendly for our planet. "Earthwise Eagles" has become our new logo as a way to encourage our campus community to behave and do wisely for the earth as a campus wide team. MSU marketing had always used the "Much More" motto to describe our schools many offerings, so we wanted to incorporate that into our promotion too. We worked with our Communications and Marketing team to design the logo and create posters and stickers. The Earthwise Eagle posters have the "Much More Recycling" motto to encourage the campus community to recycle more items. We strategically placed the posters and stickers on our recycling bins and recycling areas all over campus. This action also had the effect of unifying our many different styles of recycling containers so that people would recognize exactly where they could recycle. We created social media pages for Earthwise Eagles on Facebook and Twitter so that we could share information and promote recycling information, events and competitions. Working with our Information Technology Department, we created a webpage to post information about where to recycle on campus, general recycling information and events such as Recyclemania. Our official kickoff for our website was on America Recycles Day on November 15, 2013 where we started asking for

pledges to recycle. We increased our marketing and communication efforts dramatically for our first campus Recyclemania in January and have continued to reach as many people on campus as possible since then.

Planning steps to prepare for promotion:

- Recycling committee created a common unifying campus logo and theme called “Earthwise Eagles” which promoted “Much More Recycling.”
- Collaborated with our Communication & Marketing Department and our Administration to finalize our logo design, poster and stickers.
- Worked with Document Services to print posters and stickers.
- Recycling committee members distributed posters and stickers to recycling bins and recycling areas on campus.
- Worked with Information Technology and Communication and Marketing to create an Earthwise Eagles webpage, Facebook and Twitter account. We use the hashtag #muchmorerecycling on Twitter to categorize those Tweets and help them show more easily in Twitter Search. .
- Worked with the MSU Bookstore to order merchandise with our new logo such as T-shirts, reusable mugs and water bottles, reusable shopping bags, and other items made from recycled material and that are earth friendly. The items will be sold in the bookstore and used in promotional giveaways and contests.
- The Recycling Committee set up an information booth for three days at the main entrance to the student food service area to promote our new logo/theme, Recyclemania competition and ask students to pledge to recycle much more.
- The Recycling committee continues to maintain the webpage and social media accounts and updates them at least weekly.

Resources and people involved:

The people involved included the Morehead State University Recycling Committee, Administration, Communications & Marketing, Information Technology, Document Services, and the Bookstore.

Results of the promotion:

The results of our promotion have been extremely positive. We believe we are getting “Much More Recycling” awareness and action through our efforts. We believe our efforts are really helping to positively change thoughts and behavior in our campus community so that everyone feels included in the team of “Earthwise Eagles” that are helping to make this world a better place. Through our efforts we have transformed the idea of the individual person making positive behavioral changes to the whole team making positive behavioral changes that benefit us all.

We have witnessed a big increase in participation and enthusiasm when it comes to recycling with recycling bins on campus starting to overflow and facilities staff asking for a full time Recycling Coordinator and more staff to keep up with the increase. During our three day information booth, we had over 50 students pledge to recycle much more. It also gave us the opportunity to showcase our new logo and get more people on campus wanting to join in our efforts. We went from recycling 7% of our waste to 21% and then 49% the third week!

We have also experienced a big increase in support from our administration who recently decided to purchase over \$14,000 worth of new recycling bins for our residence halls, athletic areas and outside areas around campus.

We are receiving a lot of participation on our facebook and twitter accounts (over 150 followers in two months) through various posts about recycling, our Recyclemania photo and video competitions, and other Earthwise Eagle events we are promoting such as the free viewing of the movie "Trashed" on March 5, 2014. We are receiving many clicks on our MSU website too. We have also received outside attention from the local Morehead Sustainability committee and Morehead Recycling Center which have asked us to participate with them on some local projects and grants.

Since we still do not have the merchandise we have ordered with our new logo, we do not have any information on the sale results of those items. We are planning to use some of the items as incentives for upcoming Recyclemania competitions and other activities such as Earth Day when they become available.

What would we do differently in the future?

We would not change anything we have accomplished so far because our feedback has been extremely positive and everyone across campus that we have worked with has been extremely helpful and excited about our project. Going forward, we plan to continue to use our logo and theme to encourage campus wide participation in all of our sustainability efforts including upcoming Recyclemania competitions, Turn Out the Lights competitions and Earth Day activities. We will be giving a presentation at the Kentucky Auxiliary Services Association (KASA) meeting that our campus is hosting on May 16, 2014 about our new logo and theme as well as our campus recycling and sustainability efforts. We hope to be able to hand out a new water bottle with our logo to each incoming freshman this fall as a way to promote reusable bottles and help them feel included in our team effort to be an "Earthwise Eagle."

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/msuearthwiseeagles>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/EarthwiseEagles>

Webpage: <http://www.moreheadstate.edu/earthwise/>

Poster:



Logo:



Our three day information booth setup to promote Recyclemania and our new logo. We applied degradation years to various recyclable items to show how long it would take for them to decompose in the environment.

