

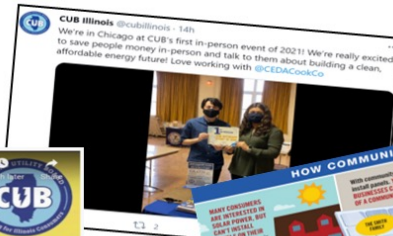


Illinois CUB

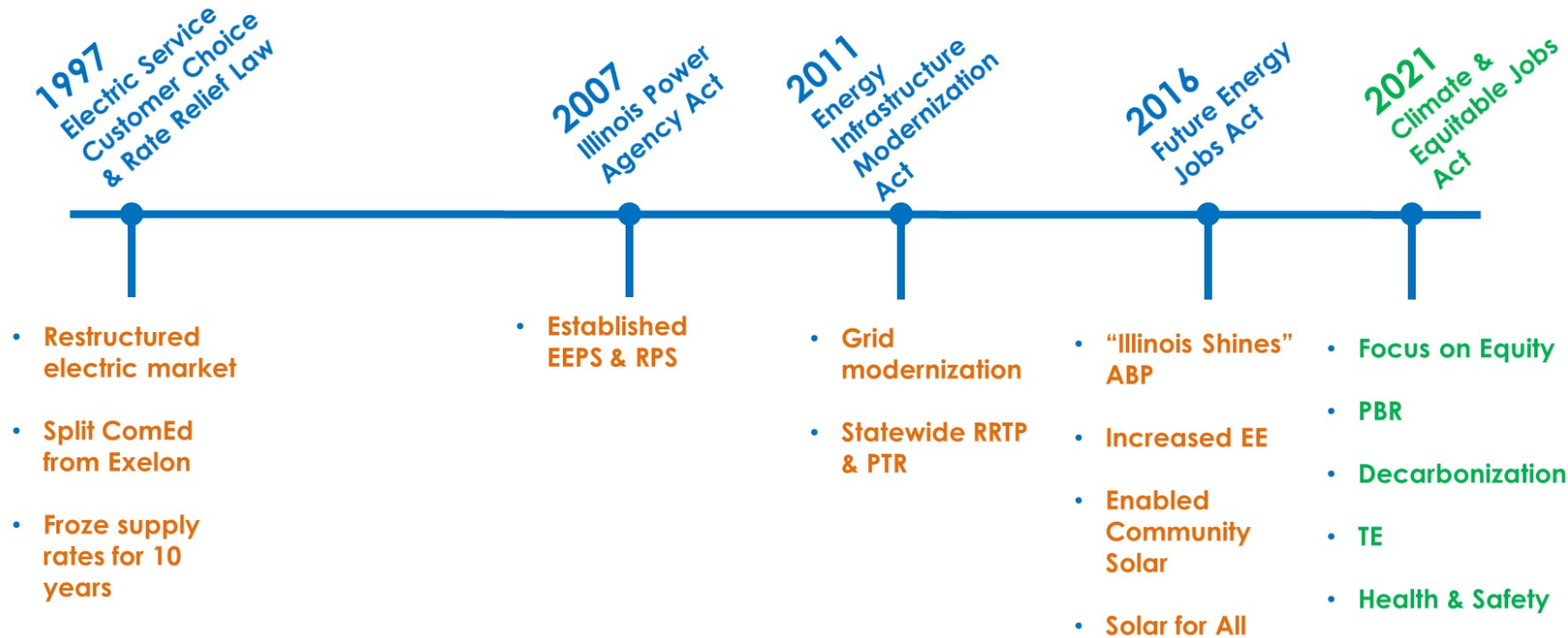
- Nonprofit, nonpartisan ratepayer advocate
- Created by the IL General Assembly in 1984
- Gets involved at ICC, General Assembly, Courts
- Helps individuals (hotline, website)
- Conducts consumer education
 - Grassroots outreach, media & publications
- Research
- Member & Grant-Supported

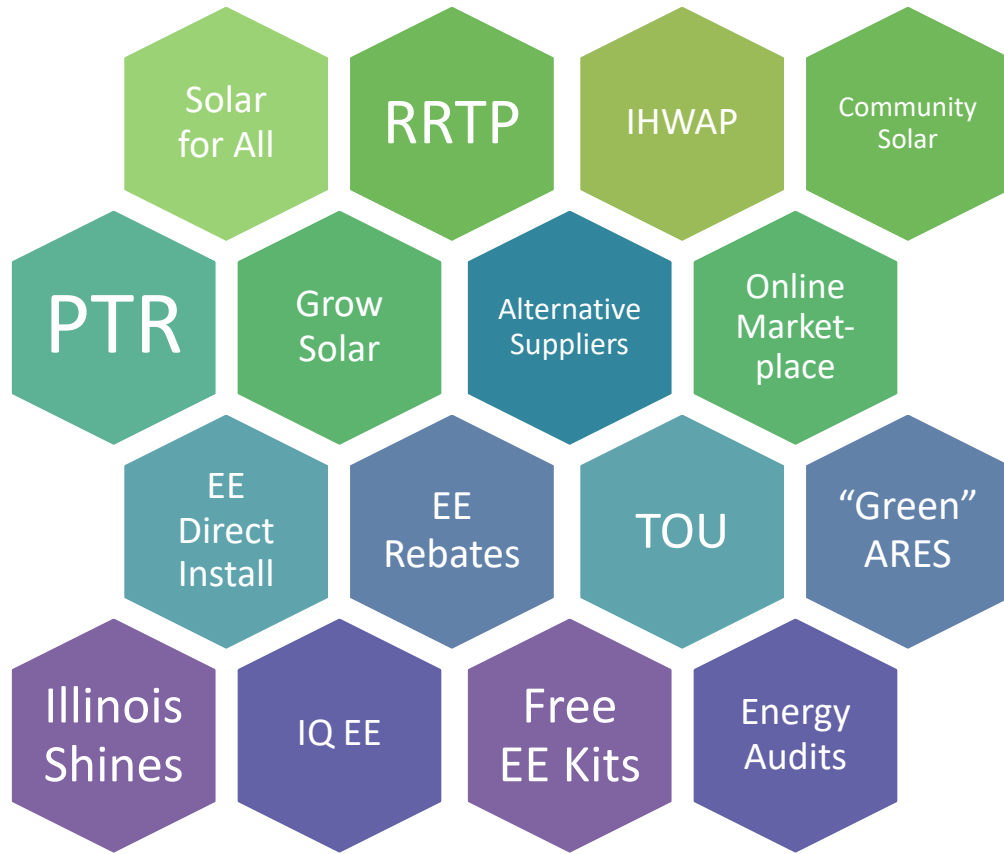
More About Illinois CUB

- ~ 35,000 members
- ~500 grassroots community events/yr
- Reach >20,000 people in-person annually.
- Help ~6000 hotline callers per year.
- Heavily visited website, FB, and Twitter profiles in English and Spanish
- Conduct customer signups for utility programs in person and on the phone



The Illinois Story





The result?

Sooooo
many
options

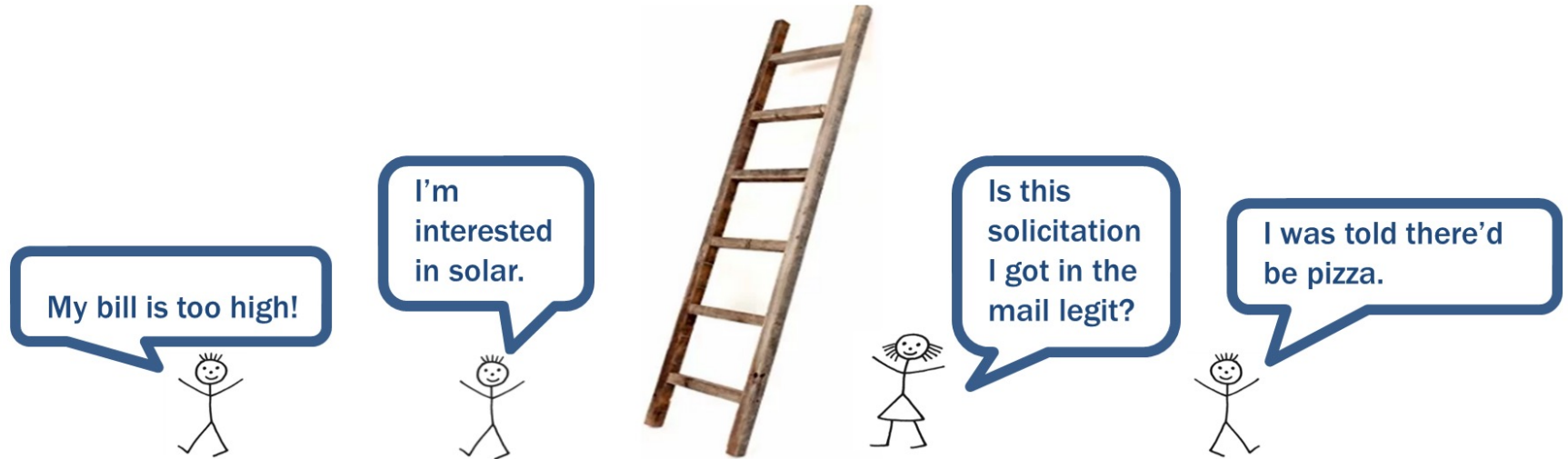


Structural Silos: different vendors, different goals, different pots of money

But how do we fix this without creating an administrative nightmare for all involved?

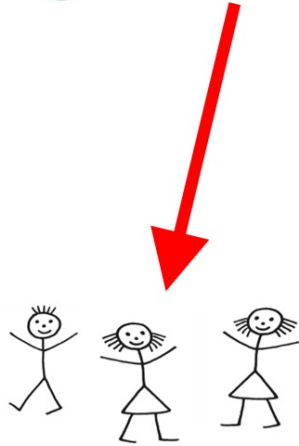
“Ladder of Engagement” approach to organizing

- ✓ In which you ask someone to take increasingly substantial actions.
- ✓ Useful way to think about getting utility consumers to take action.



“Ladder of Engagement” approach to organizing

Where are folks starting from?



What's the goal?

How do we get folks there?

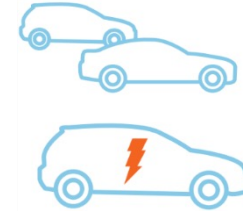
What do people CARE about?



nope



not really



that's more
like it



Ooooo!



of course



yes, actually!

Approaches to Consumer Education & Engagement

**ALL ARE
NECESSARY!**

Media

- Traditional
- Digital

Human Interactions

- One-on-one conversations
- Presentations

Tools

- Online calculators
- Customer portals
- Shadow bills

Stakeholder Processes

- At PUCs, other state agencies
- In communities

Community Outreach: what it is

- Presentations
- Tables at public places or service fairs
- One-on-one consultations (e.g. CUB's signature "utility bill clinics")
 - ✓ LIHEAP intake offices, special events
- "Tag-along" and partnership approach (building a well-attended event from scratch is difficult. Building a well-attended event geared toward learning about utility rates is nigh impossible)

Community Outreach: who's doing it

- Utility/utility-branded contractor
 - ✓ This works for many consumers
 - Nonprofit organization/social service agency/community group
 - ✓ Better for consumers who may not trust utility or be difficult to reach for other reasons (language, etc.)
 - ✓ Non-utilities often have more freedom to experiment with new education strategies and respond more nimbly when particular methods succeed or fail
- ✓ Community-based organizations can be key, but need **ample** support (financial and educational)



Customer Service

Human capacity to work with consumers on their own terms, taking the time to answer all of their questions and concerns.



- ✓ Phone, in-person, snail mail, email, FAX, social media direct messaging, etc.
- ✓ Does not have to be the utility, but whoever's doing it must be equipped with extensive, specific knowledge.
- ✓ Related: the “concierge” approach

Customer Service

Start where the consumer is:

- “My bill is too high”
- “I want to install solar”
- “Someone came to my door & tried to get me to sign a contract.”

ANSWER THE PHONE, EMAIL BACK, RESPOND
INTELLIGENTLY TO SOCIAL MEDIA,
BE REACHABLE & RESPONSIVE

Example: Rooftop Solar Group Buy

- People have lots of questions, few places to go where they can talk to an unbiased human about solar in Illinois
- Even when CUB was no longer administering a solar group buy, we still had an in-house solar expert fielding consumer inquiries about rooftop and community solar
 - ✓ Consumers turn to us again and again, years later
 - ✓ Consumers refer others to us

OCTOBER 2023

GET SMART BY GETTING CREATIVE:

How to educate the next generation and inspire new energy consumption habits



OCTOBER 2023

What questions do we want or wish that consumers would ask?

- What is “electrification”?
- Why do we need EV’s?
- What is “Net Zero”?
- How do we get to “Net Zero”?
- How do I create a positive relationship with my utility?
- How can I make a difference?



OCTOBER 2023

What questions do we hear utilities asking us?

- Do you do workforce development?
- Do you offer EE kits?
- Is your education digital?
- How do you measure behavior change?
- How do you teach “electrification”?
- Do you reach LMI communities?
- How can we make a difference?



OCTOBER 2023

What questions do we *actually* hear consumers ask us?

- What are peak hours, and why should we be mindful of them?
- What are renewable energy sources, and how do they work?
- Are there any government incentives for energy efficiency?
- How can we reduce water consumption at home and in school?
- What is my carbon footprint, and how do I reduce it?
- How can I monitor our electric usage?
- What's a "smart home"?
- How do I tell others about being energy efficient?

OCTOBER 2023

- What is “electrification”?
- What is Net Zero?
- Why are EV’s so expensive?
- Are there even enough chargers to drive an EV?
- How can we reduce our energy bills at home or in school?
- How can I make a difference?



Sources:

- [Energy.gov - Energy Efficiency Tips](https://www.energy.gov/energy-efficiency-tips)
- [Carbon Trust - Carbon Footprint](https://www.carbontrust.com/carbon-footprint)
- [U.S. Department of Energy - Smart Meters](https://www.energy.gov/smart-meters)

THE PROBLEM

**ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS ARE
VALID.**

**IDENTIFIES A DISCONNECT AND
LEADS TO ONE ULTIMATE
PROBLEM..**

THE PROBLEM

**PEOPLE NEED TO BE EDUCATED TO
BE ABLE TO ADOPT NEW,
SOMEWHAT UNKNOWN SOLUTIONS,
EN MASSE.**

AND QUICKLY.

THE PROBLEM

AND BEFORE ADOPTION CAN TAKE PLACE - TRUST MUST FIRST BE BUILT, IN ORDER TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, TO BE ABLE TO EDUCATE AND ULTIMATELY IMPLEMENT, TO REACH THE TIPPING POINT.

“The tipping point is that magic moment when an idea, trend, or social behavior crosses a threshold, tips, and spreads like wildfire.”

-Malcolm Gladwell

THE PEOPLE PROBLEM

How to Create Smart Consumers **BUILD TRUST FOR LATER**

Edelman Trust Barometer 2022 Report -

#1 - Distrust is now society's default emotion

Nearly 6 in 10 say their default tendency is to distrust something until they see evidence it is trustworthy. Another 64% say it's now to a point where people are incapable of having constructive and civil debates about issues they disagree on. When distrust is the default – we lack the ability to debate or collaborate.

We would not be paying attention to the market to expect consumers to adopt new energy habits, solutions, or consumption when they don't know, like, or trust them.

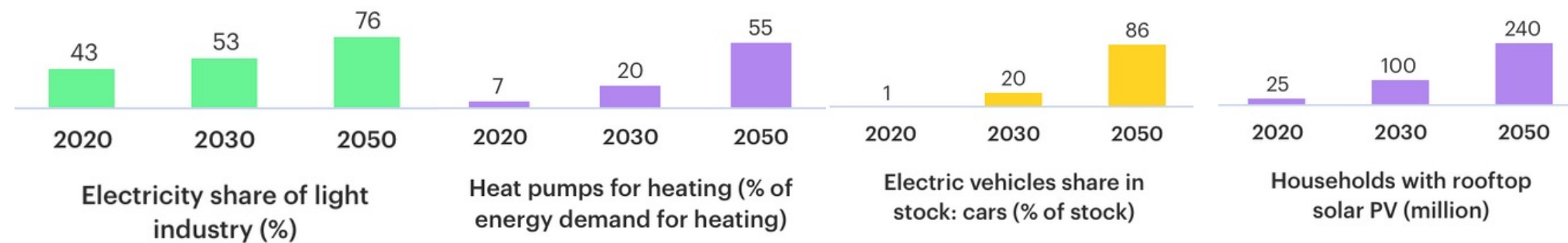
Relationships like habits must be built.



THE PEOPLE PROBLEM

BEHAVIOR CHANGE = AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS NOW

Many of the technologies being introduced in the clean energy and electrification are too new for many people to **know/like/trust**. Campaigns for awareness have to start now.



Engaging communities in behavior change is an active, immediate step to take for today's energy consumption that will also build your pipeline of energy-aware consumers capable of adjustment.

THE PEOPLE OPPORTUNITY

HOW TO GENUINELY ENGAGE YOUR COMMUNITY TO MEET NEW ENERGY INITIATIVES

- **GET CREATIVE.** Digital burnout is real. 333.2 billion emails are sent a day. (35% get opened.)
- **GET SPECIFIC.** There is no such thing as one size fits all for a program recruitment plan. Your outreach plan needs to be connected to who it's recruiting.
- **GO LOCAL.** Utilize community hubs to serve as influencers of your outreach programs. Schools, community centers, churches, well-known programs.
- **KNOW YOUR AUDIENCES.** Segment your audiences for the energy goals your company has and choose accordingly.

THE ACTUAL OPPORTUNITY IN FRONT OF US

TODAY'S YOUTH ARE THE KEY CONSTITUENTS THAT UTILITIES NEED TO ACTIVATE TO MAKE SMARTER ENERGY CONSUMERS.

- **THEY ARE ALREADY INVESTED IN THE BIG PICTURE CAUSE FOR THE ENERGY SECTOR TRANSFORMATION.**
 - Today's youth are [more exposed to climate damage than their parents](#), motivating many of them to tackle the challenge of reducing CO2 footprints.
 - Adolescents are engaging with climate science and policy [more actively than previous generations](#)
 - Children understand that the climate impact is going to be one of the greatest challenges of their generation, and they want to be part of the solution

THE ACTUAL OPPORTUNITY IN FRONT OF US

TODAY'S YOUTH ARE THE KEY CONSTITUENTS THAT UTILITIES NEED TO ACTIVATE TO MAKE SMARTER ENERGY CONSUMERS.

- **THEY HOLD MASSIVE INFLUENCE IN BOTH THE RESIDENTIAL SECTOR AND THE CULTURAL RECEPTION OF NEW IDEAS**
 - In a study by Procter & Gamble, [90% of parents](#) responded that their children are most likely to influence them to be more sustainable.
 - 9 in 10 parents say that their kids greatly influence their purchase decisions with translates into a potential \$1.3 trillion spending power. (Fall Consumer View 2021)
 - Like Reduce/Reuse/Recycle, if they always knew about EVs for instance, it's not as much of a perception conversion.

THE ACTUAL OPPORTUNITY IN FRONT OF US

TODAY'S YOUTH ARE THE KEY CONSTITUENTS THAT UTILITIES NEED TO ACTIVATE TO MAKE SMARTER ENERGY CONSUMERS.

- **TIME FLIES IN A HIGHLY REGULATED INDUSTRY & THERE ARE A LOT OF STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS GATHERING/MATRICULATING IN THE MEAN TIME.**
 - There are about 129,000 schools in the US and 48 million K-12 students in them.
 - By connecting to state and national standards, you can reach students with a high impact, highly memorable program during the school day - in a way that you cannot mirror in adult workforce or residential programs.

THE SOLUTION

**HOW MEMORIES OF EXPERIENCES INFLUENCE BEHAVIOR (OR)
SOCIAL NORMING ON THE GYM FLOOR**



How we get there

THE RESULTS

A HUGE BENEFIT OF SCHOOL PROGRAMS IS THE SIZE OF THE FUNNEL THEY CAN CREATE FOR BEHAVIOR CHANGE - ESPECIALLY IN YOUR LMI COMMUNITIES.

SINCE 2017, NTC HAS REACHED:

- 18,779 SCHOOLS
- 7,059,062 STUDENTS
- 10,797,018 PARENTS/GUARDIANS
- Saved 144,419,322 kWh (through end of CY22)



Our most sustainable habits start when we are young.

OCTOBER 2023

GET SMART BY GETTING CREATIVE:

How to educate the next generation and inspire new energy consumption habits

