

ecoPRO Certified Sustainable Landscape Professional Program

Marketing Plan



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COLEHOUR + COHEN

Public Relations & Social Marketing

Program Vision

Sustainable land care is the norm

Sustainable land care practices are widespread throughout Washington state

Sustainably certified landscape professionals are in demand by both residential and commercial clients and public entities

Obtaining sustainable certification is routine, a common expectation for landscape professionals

The sustainable certification program launched in 2014 is thriving and innovative, finding new ways to reach practitioners – The program is widely credited with transforming the industry

Communication Goals and Objectives (years 1-3)

Goal

- Achieve market recognition of the brand

Objectives

1. Consumers are hiring and asking for Certified Sustainable Landscape Professionals (CSLP)
2. Landscape Professionals (LP) are actively seeking certification
3. LPs are marketing certification to their customers

Target Audiences (years 1-3)

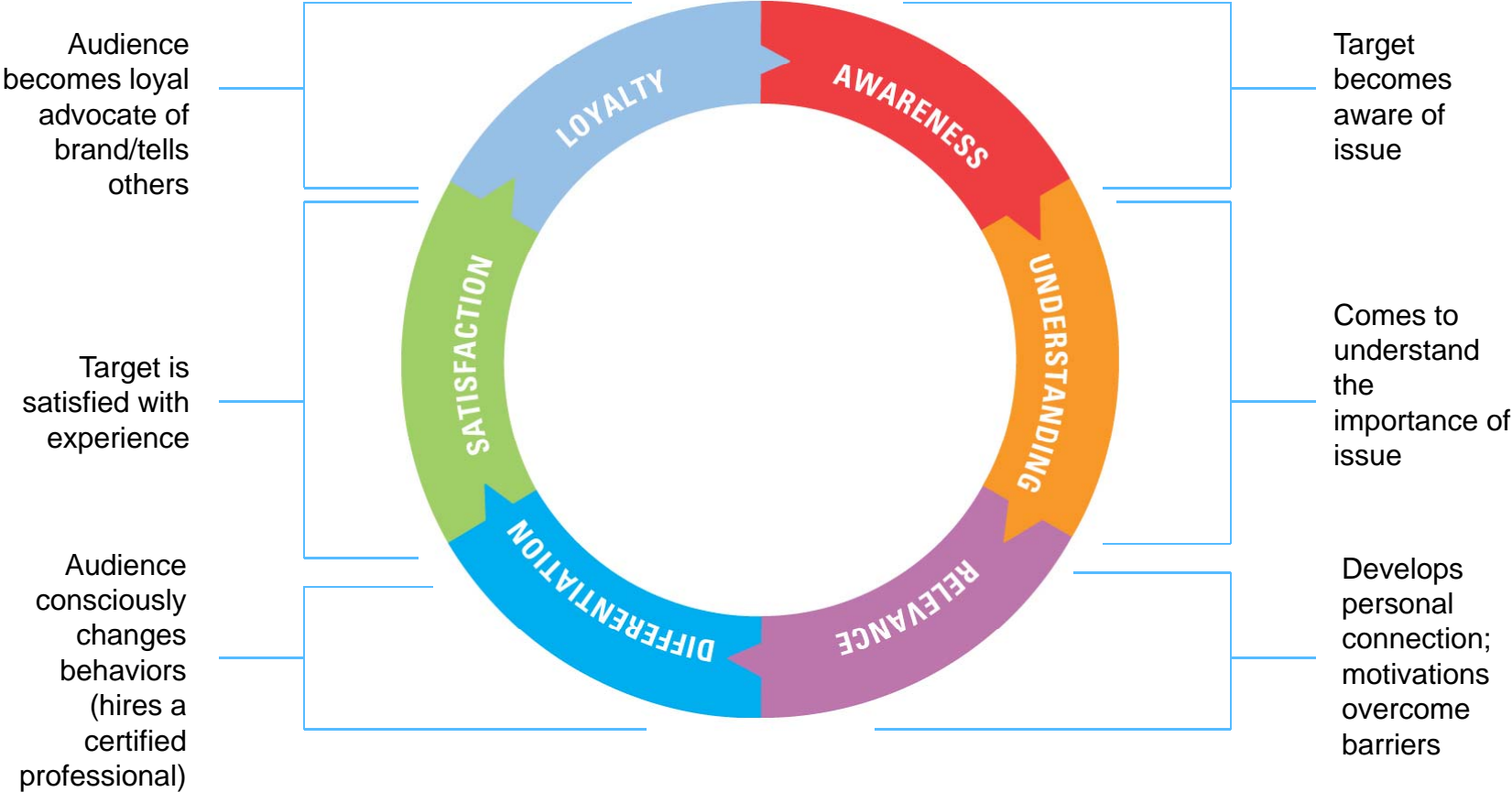
Primary

- Landscaping Professional Companies and Employees
- Public Facilities Managers
- General Public (10-15% consumer audience who use landscaping services and are “green-minded”)
 - Aged 45-64
 - College-educated
 - Married
 - Annual Income over \$75K
 - No kids at home
 - Own a single-family home
 - Engaged in outdoor activities and cultural events

Influencers

- Building Trade Associations (BOMA, CAI, NAIOP)
- Utilities and Municipalities (via Green Outreach)

Behavior Change Science



Behaviors, Motivations & Barriers

Audience	Desired Behavior	Barriers	Motivations
Landscape Professional Companies and Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get certified • Hire certified employees • Market certification to their customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of certification • Time • Lack of awareness • Lack of marketing support • Don't know or understand value • Employee resistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive advantage in the marketplace • Health and safety for employees • Marketing materials/tools available to CSLPs • Environmental commitment – PR • 3rd party certification

Behaviors, Motivations & Barriers

Audience	Desired Behavior	Barriers	Motivations
Public Facilities Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certify staff• Include certification specification in procurement process• Promote certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost of certification• Don't know or understand value• Competing priorities• Existing contracts and staff in place• Lack of management support• Program credibility is unproven	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health and safety for the community• Environmental commitment – PR• Meets internal sustainability goals• Specifications and standards easy to understand

Behaviors, Motivations & Barriers

Audience	Desired Behavior	Barriers	Motivations
<p>General Public (10 – 15% consumer audience who use landscaping services and are “green-minded”)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire a CSLP • Tell friends and neighbors (word of mouth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived cost • Lack of awareness of certification • Don’t know or understand value • Aesthetic concerns • Existing relationships with other LPs • Competing priorities • Don’t know where/how to find CSLPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save money (irrigation, etc.) • Health and safety • Environmental protection • Lower maintenance • Green and natural aesthetics

Behaviors, Motivations & Barriers

Audience	Desired Behavior	Barriers	Motivations
<p>INFLUENCERS</p> <p>Utilities, Municipalities, Building Trade Associations (BOMA, CAI, NAIOP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote, recommend and encourage certification to customers/members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not a priority Lack of management/ leadership support Program credibility is unproven Lack of awareness of certification Competition for space in marketing materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental commitment – PR Meets internal sustainability goals Provide resources to customers/ members Help with workload (providing resources and messaging)

Marketing Strategies and Tactics

Strategy #1: **MARKETING MATERIALS TOOLKIT**

Provide partners and CSLPs with electronic and print collateral materials to assist them in their own marketing efforts to promote the program.

Audience

- LP Companies and Employees
- Influencers

Objective(s) Supported

- LPs are marketing certification to their customers

Marketing Strategies and Tactics

Strategy #1: **MARKETING MATERIALS TOOLKIT**

Tactics

- Program website where materials can point back to and that includes a “Find a Certified Professional in your area” feature
- Customizable materials that are downloadable from the website where certified professionals can add their company logo and information:
 - Fact sheets and brochures
 - Door hangers
 - Business card template
 - Case studies / Project profiles, including testimonials from practitioners
 - Content for social media, newsletters, email blasts, etc.
 - Create talking points selling the long term benefits of a sustainable site vs. conventional (health, cost, environment, health of landscape, low noise, low energy)

Marketing Strategies and Tactics

Strategy #2: **MEDIA OUTREACH**

Targeted and strategic outreach can be a very economical and effective method for raising awareness of the program. Allows us to hone in on who we are talking to and what our key messages are.

Audience

- LP Companies and Employees
- Public Facilities Managers
- General Public
- Influencers

Objective(s) Supported

- Consumers are hiring and asking for CSLPs
- LPs are actively seeking certification

Marketing Strategies and Tactics

Strategy #2: **MEDIA OUTREACH**

Tactics

- Trade media outreach, including vertical trades (i.e. schools, gov't)
- Local media outreach, including business publications
- Blogs
- Authored articles

Marketing Strategies and Tactics

Strategy #3: **STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND EVENTS**

Establishing and building relationships with target audience organizations and associations is a very effective way to introduce the program to them and their members. Having a presence at and attending key events throughout the state will also help to reach target audiences.

Audience

- General Public
- Influencers

Objective(s) Supported

- Consumers are hiring and asking for CSLPs
- LPs are actively seeking certification

Marketing Strategies and Tactics

Strategy #3: **STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND EVENTS**

Tactics

- Partner with the following organizations:
 - Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA)
 - Community Associations Institute (CAI)
 - Commercial Real Estate Development Association (NAIOP)
 - Garden Writers of America (GWA)
- Attend the following types of events:
 - Home and Garden Shows
 - Farmers Markets

Marketing Strategies and Tactics

Strategy #4: **SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE ADVERTISING**

Social media and online advertising can be very useful tools to reach specific audiences.

Audience

- General Public

Objective(s) Supported

- Consumers are hiring and asking for CSLPs

Marketing Strategies and Tactics

Strategy #4: **SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE ADVERTISING**

Tactics

- Facebook / Twitter / Pinterest
- Facebook Ads
- Google AdWords
- Angie's List
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Marketing Strategies and Objectives Summary

Strategy	Audience(s)	Objective(s) Supported
#1: Marketing Materials Toolkit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP Companies & Employees • Influencers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LPs are marketing certification to their customers
#2: Media Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LP Companies & Employees • Public Facilities Managers • General Public • Influencers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers are hiring and asking for CSLPs • LPs are actively seeking certification
#3: Strategic Partnerships & Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Public • Influencers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers are hiring and asking for CSLPs • LPs are actively seeking certification
#4: Social Media & Online Advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers are hiring and asking for CSLPs

Behavior Change Map

Audience	Desired Behavior	Primary Barriers	Primary Motivation	Marketing Tactics
Landscape Professional Companies & Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get certified • Hire certified employees • Market certification to their customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of certification • Time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive advantage in the marketplace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing toolkit helps them get customers and shows an advantage over their competitors in the market • Media outreach creates consumer demand
Public Facilities Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certify staff • Include certification spec in procurement • Promote certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't know or understand value • Existing contracts and staff in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets internal sustainability goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media outreach makes them aware of the program and its value
General Public (10-15%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire a CSLP • Tell friends and neighbors (word of mouth) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness of certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media outreach, strategic partnerships and events, and social media makes them aware of the program and its value
Influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and recommend certification to customers / members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a priority • Lack of awareness of certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide resources to customers/members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing toolkit provides resources they can offer to customers/members • Media outreach, partnerships and events makes them aware of the program and its value

Program Name and Logo

ecoPRO Certified Sustainable Landscape Professional Program



Brand Attributes



ENVIRO Green, Ecological,
Sustainable, Environmentally friendly

QUALITY Reputable, credible,
professional

HEALTH Clean, Safe, Healthy

Brand Personality

Professional

Smart

Quality

Responsible

Trust-worthy

Green

Credible

Safe

Brand Promise

**Responsible, professional
and sustainable landscape
services**

Elevator Speech

The ecoPRO Certified Sustainable Landscape Professional program recognizes landscape professionals who use safe and sustainable practices to create and maintain landscapes that are pleasing to the eye as well as the environment. When you hire an ecoPRO your landscape is healthier for people and pets, saves money, and looks great.

PR Boilerplate

About the ecoPRO Certified Sustainable Landscape Professional Program

The ecoPRO Certified Sustainable Landscape Professional program offers advanced certification for landscape professionals in Washington State. ecoPRO certification represents that an individual has demonstrated knowledge of sustainable practices in the design, installation, and maintenance of landscapes.

The ecoPRO certification program is administered by the Washington State Nursery and Landscape Association (WSNLA) and the Washington Association of Landscape Professionals (WALP). The program works to ensure a unified standard within the horticultural industry that also enhances marketing, networking, and educational opportunities.

Key Messages

The ecoPRO Certified Sustainable Landscape Professional program offers advanced certification for individual landscape professionals throughout Washington State.

ecoPRO certified professionals have passed an exam that tests their knowledge of sustainable landscaping principles and best practices. They design, construct, and manage landscapes using the most current, ecologically sound principles and practices.

Sustainable landscaping is design, construction, operations and maintenance practices that conserve and regenerate water, air, soil, plant and wildlife resources. Sustainable practices must maintain a focus on the environment as the priority while remaining socially equitable and economically feasible.

Sustainable landscaping is design, construction, and maintenance that work with nature to create healthy, resilient, and attractive landscapes.

Where possible, ecoPRO certified professionals collaborate across the disciplines of design, construction, and maintenance.

ecoPRO certified professionals have in-depth knowledge of 200+ sustainable landscape best practices in eight focus areas: protecting and conserving soil; conserving, managing, and protecting water; protecting air quality and preventing noise pollution; protecting, creating and managing habitat; managing and conserving energy; selecting, planting, and maintaining plants sustainably; managing pests and diseases sustainably; using sustainable materials; and protecting human health.

The program is administered by the Washington State Nursery and Landscape Association (WSNLA) and the Washington Association of Landscape Professionals (WALP) to ensure a unified standard within the horticultural industry that also enhances marketing, networking, and educational opportunities.

For more information about the ecoPRO Sustainable Landscape Professional Certification program, visit www.wsnla.org/ecoprocertified.

Target Audience Messaging

Landscape companies and employees

More customers are requesting sustainable landscape design, construction, and maintenance. ecoPRO certified professionals ensure knowledgeable, profitable, and environmentally sound landscape design, installation and maintenance services. ecoPRO certification will:

- Expand your professional credibility among customers through increased knowledge and recognition.
- Increase marketing advantages for you/your company by showing your commitment to sustainable landscape management.
- Have a positive impact on the environment and on your local community.

By marketing ecoPRO certification, a company can enhance its image and increase its competitive edge in today's marketplace. All certified individuals receive: an ecoPRO certificate and wallet card providing third-party verification of their certification; marketing tools and resources; and promotion on the ecoPRO website and in WSNLA and WALP industry publications.

Target Audience Messaging

Public facilities managers

By obtaining ecoPRO certification for your staff, and/or requiring ecoPRO certification of your landscape services contractors, you are demonstrating your organization's commitment to sustainable business practices helping you meet internal sustainability goals.

Sustainable landscape management may cost a bit more than conventional landscape management up front, but can reduce your costs in the long-term through lower water, energy, and labor costs.

Sustainable landscape management is safer for the environment and healthier for your employees and the people and pets that access your facilities every day.

Target Audience Messaging

Influencers: Utilities and municipalities; Building trade associations

By promoting, recommending and encouraging ecoPRO certification to your customers, membership and other constituents, you are:

- Providing helpful resources that could help them increase their competitive edge in today's marketplace;
- Helping them meet internal sustainability goals; and
- Demonstrating your organization's commitment to sustainable business practices.

Partnership Recommendations

Building Industry Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NAIOP (Commercial Real Estate Development Assn) ▪ BOMA (Building Owners and Managers Assn) ▪ CAI (Trade Assn that represents Homeowner Assn leaders) ▪ AIA (American Institute of Architects)
Facilities Managers Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IFMA (International Facility Management Assn)
Landscape Architecture and Design Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WASLA (WA Chapter – American Society of Landscape Architects) ▪ APLD (Association of Professional Designers)
Other Washington Sustainability Certification Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Salmon Safe ▪ Green Schools ▪ EnviroStars ▪ Sustainable Sites ▪ WSDA Pesticide Recertification
Entities that Offer Horticulture Education to Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Horticulture schools around Washington state ▪ Plant Amnesty ▪ UW ProHort ▪ WSU
Government Entities who could Help Fund and Promote the Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Department of Ecology ▪ Puget Sound Partnership ▪ Phase 1/Phase 2 (stormwater) jurisdictions around the state who have to meet NPDES natural yard care education requirements
Public Entities that have Sustainability Offices	

*Budget Estimations

Strategy	Hours Estimate	Hard Costs/Expenses Estimate
Strategy #1 – Marketing Materials Toolkit	100 hours (develop Fact Sheet, Biz Card template, Case Study/Project Profile, sample content for Social Media; ongoing website maintenance; includes writing and design time; includes quarterly updates)	\$2,500+ for printing of materials, dependent on quantity
Strategy #2 – Media Outreach	200 hours (develop press release(s), media list(s); includes time to pitch and news monitoring)	\$1,000+ for Wire costs, dependent on number of releases posted to Wire
Strategy #3 – Strategic Partnerships and Events	200 hours (establish and develop key relationships; continue with ongoing outreach to partner organizations; plan for and staff key events throughout the year)	\$5,000+ for event attendance/exhibitor fees, dependent on number of events and level of participation (i.e. attendance vs. exhibiting)
Strategy #4 – Social Media and Online Advertising	200 hours (includes daily social media administration; online advertising planning and set up; development of ads and ad copy)	\$500+ for online ad costs, dependent on ad venue and volume of ad buy

Total time commitment = 700 hours (approximately 1/3 FTE)

Total potential expenses = \$9,000+

**Budget assumptions: one program year only; media outreach conducted statewide*

Evaluation Plan

Strategy #1 – Marketing Materials Toolkit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Number of unique visitors and main avenues through which visitors reach the website✓ Amount of materials produced and disseminated✓ Number of certified professionals utilizing marketing tools and templates
Strategy #2 – Media Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Number of media placements✓ Quality of messaging in articles
Strategy #3 – Strategic Partnerships and Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Number of industry and public events where the program is represented (i.e. tables at conferences and trade shows)✓ Level of participation at events (i.e. number of people engaged with, connections made)✓ Number of partners actively promoting the program to their members/partners/constituents
Strategy #4 – Social Media and Online Advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Level of engagement on social media platforms (i.e. Facebook likes and comments, Twitter followers and retweets)✓ Number of impressions from online advertising✓ Increase in website traffic from online advertising and SEO efforts

Timeline

	2014				2015				2016			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Marketing Activities for Program Years 1-3												
Program flyer / fact sheet developed	█											
Marketing materials toolkit for practitioners developed *Certificate of completion, Wallet card, Brand guidelines, Camera-ready logos, Talking points to help sell program to consumers, Suggestions for use of logo & talking points, Sample press release	█											
Talking points to help landscape professionals sell program and sustainable landscape practices to consumers	█											
Newsletter template developed	█											
Letterhead developed	█											
Program Website developed and live	█	█										
"Find a Certified Professional" feature included on Website		█										
Marketing materials toolkit for partners posted on Website		█										
Marketing toolkit and widget distributed to existing certified professionals with instructions on where/when/how to use		█										
Priority potential partner organizations identified		█										
Conduct outreach to priority potential partner organizations			█	█								
Other potential partner organizations identified					█				█			
Conduct outreach to other potential partner organizations					█	█	█	█		█	█	█
Key conferences and events identified - home and garden shows, farmers markets, landscape conferences	█				█				█			
Conduct outreach at key events	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Program launch press release developed (B2B)	█											
Targeted media list developed (B2B) - trade and vertical trade publications, local WA media, business publications, blogs	█											
Press release distributed and story pitched to media (B2B)	█											
Quarterly newsletter distributed to certified professionals		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Social media properties established - Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest					█							
Ongoing social media administration					█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Online ad campaign developed - Facebook Ads, Google AdWords, SEO					█				█			
Online ad campaign implemented					█	█			█	█		
Program press release developed (B2C)					█				█			
Targeted media list developed (B2C) - home and garden publications, local WA media, garden blogs					█				█			
Press release distributed and story pitched to media (B2C)						█				█		