



ABSTRACT

Marketing research behind the launch of the Earth Hour App for 2015 was done through this independent study. The project examines people's heuristics and behaviours towards pledging to chosen environmental activities in preparation of the hour. The study's foundation is supported by the social distance dimension of the Construal Level theory.

Overview of the project:

- Earth Hour and Earth Hour App
- Construal Level Theory
- Incentives
- Intentions towards environmental activities



INTRODUCTION

Earth Hour

Started in Sydney, Australia, in 2007, Earth Hour require lights to be switched off for an hour, and has grown as an annual global occurrence. "Beyond the Hour" continues the concept throughout the year by doing other environmentally friendly activities (Earth Hour, 2014).

Earth Hour App

A new Earth Hour App will launch in 2015 in Edmonton, AB, and will be a tool to:

- help **track** the progress of people's environmental activities
- **pledge** to join Earth Hour
- receive unique **challenges** to help the environment
- **redeem** points collected towards incentives

Construal Level Theory

CLT examines the psychological distance from a task. The social distance dimension examines "self" (low construal) vs. "other" intentions (high construal) (Nan, 2007).

Independent variables: receiving a text message about Earth Hour from a close family member (low construal), or a classmate (high construal), followed by a monetary (low construal) or non-monetary (high construal) incentive to participate.

Dependent variable: Intention to participate in Earth Hour

Hypothesis

We predict that high construals will be more likely to encourage participation due to the prosocial nature of participating in Earth Hour; therefore:

Main Effects

Hypothesis **A:** Participants presented with the "classmate" sender are more likely to participate

Hypothesis **B:** Participants presented with non-monetary incentives are more likely to participate

Interaction Effect

Hypothesis **AB:** Participants presented with the "classmate" sender followed by a non-monetary offering are more likely to result in participation

REFERENCES

Earth hour. (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.earthhour.org/about-us>

Nan, X. (2007). Social distance, framing, and judgment: A construal level perspective. *Human Communication Research*, 33(4), 489-514. doi:10.1111/j.1468-958.2007.00309.x

METHODS

Google Forms Survey

Eight Google Form surveys were constructed in a 2x2x2 design (Social distance: between subjects; Incentive: within subjects) A total of 121 surveys were collected in a convenience sample at the MacEwan School of Business.



RESULTS

Main Effects: Participation

Receiving information from a "close family member" and being offered a "non-monetary incentive" independently lead to the highest percentages of participation: **45.9%** and **44.6%**, respectively.

	Participation	%		Participation	%
Classmate	Yes, 90	37.2%	Monetary	Yes, 93	38.4%
Classmate	No, 32	13.2%	Monetary	No, 27	11.2%
Family	Yes, 111	45.9%	Non-monetary	Yes, 108	44.6%
Family	No, 9	3.7%	Non-monetary	No, 14	5.8%
Total	242	100.0%	Total	242	100.0%

Interaction Effect: Participation

Highest participation: a "close family member" text message with a monetary incentive sequence at **23.1%**.

	Participation	%	Tests of Between-Subjects Effects
Classmate, Monetary	Yes, 37	15.3%	Dependent Variable: Participate
Classmate, Non-monetary	Yes, 53	21.9%	Source
Classmate, Monetary	No, 23	9.5%	Classmate/Family (SD1)
Classmate, Non-monetary	No, 9	4%	Incentive (INC)
Family, Monetary	Yes, 56	23.1%	Monetary/Non-monetary
Family, Non-monetary	Yes, 55	22.7%	SD1 * INC interaction
Family, Monetary	No, 4	1.7%	SD1 * SD2
Family, Non-monetary	No, 5	2.1%	INC * SD2
Total	242	100.0%	Alpha = 0.05

Interesting Facts

- 87.6%** already **CONSERVE ENERGY**
- 88.8%** already **RECYCLE**
- 42.3%** already **CARPOOL**
- 64.7%** already use **ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY TRANSPORTATION**
- 53.7%** already **CONSERVE WATER**
- 45.6%** **PLAN TO** purchase environmentally friendly products
- 44.0%** **DON'T & DON'T PLAN TO** compost

CONCLUSIONS

Research Extension

An extension to the independent study will be done to contribute to the launch of the Earth Hour App. Current students of the Introduction to Nonprofit Management business course have taken a project to which will help polish the marketing plan.

Recommendations

Targeting universities when marketing to launch the Earth Hour App this year will be optimal as well as inexpensive. The results show that classmates attached with a non-monetary incentive would lead to higher participation.

Limitations

Surveys were only distributed to business students at MacEwan University. Collecting data from a broader audience is recommended to generalize these results.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Dr. Leo Wong (Mentor)
- Dr. Indratno
- Dr. Sharon Bratt

- School of Business students (Participants)
- Computer Science students
- Laura Milroy (City of Edmonton – City Environmental Strategies)