

## **ONE SIZE DOESN'T FIT ALL: EVALUATING EPA'S ENERGY STAR® TOOL KIT**

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State and local governments control the purse strings to billions of dollars through their procurement and purchasing functions. Yet, this has been a historically difficult market to reach. To address these issues, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed the Energy Star Purchasing Tool Kit specifically designed to meet the needs of municipal decision-makers. It was developed to educate state and local procurement officers about the benefits of purchasing and installing energy efficient equipment.

The Consortium for Energy Efficiency (CEE) received a grant from the EPA to evaluate the effectiveness of this tool kit. CEE engaged several consultants to conduct interviews with state and local officials, and to have these procurement experts “test drive” this new tool kit. CEE also asked its consulting team to identify unique segments within the state and local purchasing marketplace.

The tool kit was introduced to various procurement officials at the state and local industry conferences and during interviews for in-depth case studies of purchasing practices at selected localities.

This approach of “test driving” the tool kit among real users led to changes that made the tool kit more effective in meeting the needs of these highly specialized audiences. It helped to identify the specific needs of individual user segments within the broader procurement arena. This evaluation illustrates the benefits of developing targeted informational materials, rather than merely assuming that “one size fits all.” Moreover, it also demonstrates that this can be accomplished by asking for feedback from the most important audience: the end users.