



The View from a Niche

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August 12, 2015



Brief Bio

A 30-plus-year serpentine career trajectory in social science research, including 7 years in Thailand (not Tibet). Since 2007, has been applying his research expertise to answering the questions “What are we doing right?,” “What are we doing wrong?,” and “What should we do next?” for energy efficiency program administrators across North America. Sits 15 feet away from Jane Peters, founder of Research Into Action, where he has been employed since returning from Thailand.

Our Niche

RN1

We help you understand the reasons for program success and failure

- Understand decision making
- Reach and motivate the target market
- Implement workable rules and processes
- Identify and assess success metrics

➔ *The information needed for making good program decisions*

Slide 3

RN1

Need to talk to people. How to make good decisions. Data vs. information. We provide the narrative and context. Spaghetti graph.
Examples. Buildings don't participate in programs, people do.

RIA Notebook, 7/29/2015

Our Adaptive Behaviors

- Talk to people
 - *Program participants & nonparticipants, TAs, program staff*
- Bring institutional knowledge
 - *What has or has not worked for others → Best practices*
- Use available data analytics
 - *Identifies issues to explore in surveys and interviews*
 - *Evaluators and informants can spend more time on “why”*
- Analyze and interpret
 - *Turn data into information*
 - *Provide the context and narrative*

Examples

- ZNE homes: Interviews with building inspectors revealed lack of contractor expertise
 - *Hidden barrier : limited ability of building inspectors to inspect*
- C&I custom lighting: Recommended increased project documentation
 - *Realization rate increased from 85% to 96%*
- Mystery shopping and ride-alongs: Appliance customers interact with sales associates but lighting customers do not
 - *Implications for lighting POP materials*

Example: A Story of Two Evaluations

Residential HVAC upgrade. Program theory:

Homeowner sees program advertising, calls qualified contractor, participates in program.

Earlier Evaluation

How did you find contractor?

Recent Evaluation

Existing relationship? IF NO
How did you find contractor?

	<u>Earlier</u>	<u>Recent</u>
Existing relationship	23%	38%
Program/utility	20%	6%
Contractor ad/outreach	38%	34%
Referral	12%	17%

Underscores the importance of existing contractor relationships

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