Eco-Cycle SWANA Award Application: Stop Junk Mail for GOOD

Submitted April 20, 2012

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SWANA Awards Application in the Education Category

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Project: Eco-Cycle Stop Junk Mail for GOOD service: A project in partnership with Catalog Choice

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Eco-Cycle, one of the nation’s largest and oldest non-profit recyclers and a Zero Waste pioneer, has partnered with junk mail opt-out leader Catalog Choice to bring Boulder County residents an effective service to reduce unwanted mail and phone books at home and at work. From August 2011 through August 2013, residents can sign up at no charge through the “Stop Junk Mail for GOOD” service to opt out of unwanted phone books, catalogs, and other advertising mail. The site can be viewed at www.ecocycle.catalogchoice.org.

Leveraging its technology, Catalog Choice configures dedicated junk mail opt-out services for sponsoring communities. The results are dramatic; communities with a dedicated opt-out program reduce five times more junk mail compared to nonparticipating communities. The program gives the sponsor detailed reporting on local participation, solid waste diversion, and equivalent environmental benefits to evaluate success.

Eco-Cycle set a goal to sign up 5,000 accounts in two years. As a result of innovative educational and outreach methods, the “Stop Junk Mail for GOOD” campaign has been an enormous success. More than 1,500 households have signed up, and several major employers in the county have launched their own in-house mail preference registry for
employees. Eco-Cycle now serves as a model for empowering citizens to take control of their mailbox.

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT:

The Stop Junk Mail for GOOD service is an education/outreach program that helps residents prevent waste, not just recycle it. The program, which was launched in August of 2011 and continues until August 2013, is on track to be a successful and replicable model for other communities wishing to reduce waste, not just recover it.

2. RESEARCH/PLANNING:

Getting rid of unwanted mail has become a daily ritual in our culture. Piles of unwanted flyers, coupons and phone books show up on our doorsteps, only to be sent directly to the recycling bin, or worse, the landfill. In 35 years of Eco-Cycle educational outreach, reducing junk mail has consistently been the #1 challenge our residents and businesses beg us to help them solve. Junk mail takes time to sort, time to prepare properly for the recycling bin, and just feels like a waste.

The discards are, of course, recyclable. But there is a much bigger environmental problem with junk mail that recycling alone can’t solve: More than 109 billion pieces of direct mail were produced and distributed in the U.S. in 2009. It took more than 100 million trees to create all this bulk mail— that’s the equivalent of deforesting all of Rocky Mountain National Park every four months. Even though most junk mail can be recycled, one-third of all mail still ends up in landfills or incinerators. Nearly two-thirds of phone books are trashed every year. And all this comes at a cost to our climate as well: The production and disposal of junk mail consumes more energy than 3 million cars.

More locally, Boulder County has a goal of reaching Zero Waste by 2025. As part of the county’s Zero Waste plan, a waste characterization study was undertaken to quantify what is in our discards. The study revealed Boulder County landfills contain more than 36,500 tons of paper every year. Junk mail, phone books and magazines and catalogs make up a large share of that wasted paper. Not only are these products easily
recoverable through our existing recycling infrastructure, but Eco-Cycle saw an opportunity to reduce our waste stream by avoiding these products in the first place. Eco-Cycle strongly felt it was not just enough to try and encourage people to do a better job of recycling junk mail and phone books. Stopping junk mail helps prevent the destruction of natural resources, saves energy, and helps prevent climate change by preventing waste in the first place. This was a waste reduction priority from the onset.

**Building on Previous Junk Mail Programs:**

Previously, to solve the junk mail challenge, Eco-Cycle has included various approaches to help the Boulder County population get off junk mail. Varied approaches have included promoting a top 5 list of “get off junk mail” tips, addresses for direct marketing associations, pre-addressed post-cards that can be mailed to mailing list brokers, and collaborating with a group that sent in name and address information to the Direct Marketing Association on behalf of a resident or business.

Eco-Cycle has maintained an extensive website dedicated to stopping junk mail for more than 10 years. In fact, we have been the #1 hit on Google search for how to stop junk mail for several years. We’ve received national media attention for our 10-step program of how people could unsubscribe from the various marketing and credit card lists. We printed and distributed more than 10,000 junk mail brochures and have given numerous talks on the subject in our local area.

Specific to phone books, Eco-Cycle ran a pilot project in fall 2010 to track how well phone book companies were honoring opt-out requests from residents. We emailed our network of 800+ volunteers and asked them to let us know if they still received phone books after opting out of receiving a phone book through the companies’ websites. We heard back from approximately 200 residents and found that only 2 of the 200 people who responded had their opt-out request honored.

While our previous junk mail programs were successful at reducing junk mail waste, they lacked a way to thoroughly empower the consumer and track results. When someone requested to be removed from a mailing list, there was and is no legal responsibility for the marketer or company to remove that person’s name. Consumers have very few if any legal rights when it comes to junk mail. What we saw in the partnership with Catalog Choice was a way to harness the collective efforts of our community to not only reduce waste, but to stand up for consumers’ rights. Now when a company starts refusing to honor the opt-out requests of hundreds or thousands of people, there’s a tracking and data
system in place to hold that company responsible, all the way up to the Federal Trade Commission.

Stop Junk Mail for GOOD program targeted to Boulder County Residents and Businesses:

The program is promoted to all residents and businesses within Boulder County, letting them know they are eligible to participate in the program at no cost. While the need for a program in the home is obvious to anyone who has ever visited their mailbox and sighed heavily at finding only unwanted materials rather than valued mail, the value to businesses may be lesser known. Eco-Cycle discovered that businesses are a great target for two reasons: 1. Businesses, particularly those with more than 100 employees (and certainly those whose employees number in the thousands), spend an enormous amount of staff time, and therefore money, distributing unwanted mail to various recipients, and then pay for the cost to haul the material—as recyclables OR as garbage. Boulder County businesses were very grateful and eager to have a program to stop the mailing in the first place. 2. Businesses enjoyed sharing the opt-out service to their employees as a perk to help staff reduce their junk mail at home. Catalog Choice emails existing Boulder County account holders to encourage these members to spread the word through the program’s invite-a-friend feature.

Program Goals:

Before beginning the program, 750 households were already using the national CatalogChoice.org service. Eco-Cycle’s first goal was to get twice that number, 1,500, to sign up in its opt-out registry within the first year. We reached that goal 7 months into the campaign.

We have an overall goal of reaching a total of **5,000 account sign-ups** in the next 16 months. We expect to reach that goal using the following three primary strategies:

- **Tabling during the summer months of 2012 and 2013 using iPads:**
  Eco-Cycle does the bulk of its face-to-face outreach during the spring/summer season. We table at local Farmers’ Markets, smaller community events, and at large community events (2,000-100,000 attendees) where Eco-Cycle helps make
the event Zero Waste through composting and recycling services and education. Large junk mail displays with a character “drowning in junk mail” gets the attention of passers-by, the table is strewn with easily grabbed program cards with the opt-out details, and two staffers or volunteers are on hand, equipped with iPads to help people sign up on the spot. Participants then receive an email in their inbox to get them started. The junk mail program was initiated at the end of our tabling season last year, and was the most effective means of getting people to establish an account, helping us sign up 750 by the end of October. During the course of one tabling season, our outreach staff speaks to an average of 4,000 people through these events. We expect to turn 25%, or 1,000 people into account signers, or 2,000 over the combined 2012/2013 seasons.

• Outreach to Businesses:
As described above, we have determined that reaching out to large businesses and institutions that employ thousands of people is the best way to achieve large numbers of sign-ups. By working with the City of Boulder and Boulder County as employers, institutions like the University of Colorado and Boulder Community Hospital, and large companies such as Ball Aerospace, IBM and Amgen, we anticipate that a conservative estimate of sign-ups would be 2,000.

• Promotion through Eco-Cycle publication:
Eco-Cycle just published an evolved version of its 35-year-old, bi-annual Eco-Cycle Times. What used to be a newsletter is now a 36-page Eco-Cycle Guide to everything you need to know to live a sustainable lifestyle. The junk mail program is featured on a full page of the guide. An initial 45,000 guides will be distributed throughout the county, 22,500 of which are delivered door-to-door by our 800 volunteer Block Leaders who take the guide to their neighbors. We expect that the outreach through this guide should result in a minimum of 1,000 new account sign-ups.

• Online Promotion:
Eco-Cycle will promote the program through online efforts including website promotion. (We have more than 850,000 visitors to our site each year, and “junk mail” continues to be one of the most popular pages visited.) We will also keep a regular drumbeat going about the program through tweets, Facebook postings and direct emails to our 7,000 subscribers. In addition, we are planning a 2-minute
instructional video for our website and YouTube channel that demonstrates how to sign up for an account, and then how to use it to STAY off junk mail lists into the future. We do not have targeted sign-up goals for these strategies, but rather see it as a way to continue to raise awareness about the issue and the program. Given that the junk mail materials we’ve provided on our website alone have resulted in a lot of activity over the years, we will no doubt see increased sign-ups as a result of this online promotion.

- **Junk Mail Parties:**
  Eco-Cycle will be creating a “party kit” to create the opportunity for the 800 members of the volunteer Block Leader Network to host their own “Junk Mail Party” to help their neighbors, friends and family get off of junk mail. We do not necessarily consider this outreach effort to yield high sign-up rates. However, we do consider it a great activity to energize our network and help them spread the word about the service.

The only potential obstacle to reaching these goals would be that we will have saturated the market, and that those who are inclined to sign up for the program have already done so. However, we do not anticipate that we will encounter this obstacle given that we are targeting groups of people that are not our typical audience, such as large businesses that are not Eco-Cycle customers.

3) IMPLEMENTATION/EXECUTION

**Timeline:**

*April 2011:* Eco-Cycle and Catalog Choice formalized partnership

*April – August 2011:* Eco-Cycle created website copy for the Eco-Cycle Catalog Choice site; brainstormed outreach activities

*August 2011:* Eco-Cycle launched website page with Catalog Choice at [https://ecocycle.catalogchoice.org/signup](https://ecocycle.catalogchoice.org/signup)

*August/September 2011:* Eco-Cycle purchase iPads to be used to sign up visitors at tabling events

*August/September 2011:* Eco-Cycle creates marketing/outreach collateral materials, including:
  - Content and graphic for new Eco-Cycle junk mail page reflecting new
program at [www.ecocycle.org/junkmail](http://www.ecocycle.org/junkmail)

- “I’m drowning in junk mail” 6’ display to be used at tabling events
- “I stopped junk mail for GOOD” stickers to be given out at tabling events to those who signed up
- 4 PSA ads to be used for social media posts about the importance of getting off junk mail
- Series of social media posts

**Mid-September, 2011:** Program is launched to the press, resulting in coverage two times in both major local papers: Daily Camera, distribution 29,000; Longmont Times-Call, distribution 22,000; See Appendices A-D.

**Mid-September, 2011:** Eco-Cycle begins an ongoing series of regular Facebook posts, tweets and announcements to our email list of more than 7,000 subscribers to announce and promote the junk mail program.

**Mid-September, 2011:** Eco-Cycle begins tabling at events, particularly Boulder County Farmers’ Market, resulting in the most effective approach thus far to signing up accounts.

**September 24, 2011:** Eco-Cycle launches junk mail program at musical event with performers Sound Rabbit who donate their performance as well as some of the money raised at the door. $300 donated to the program.

**October, 2011:** Eco-Cycle creates online giving page through Giveo to offer those who sign up a chance to support the program financially. The program has so far raised $470, far less than the expected giving levels. This function was perhaps not promoted well enough.

**November, 2011 – March, 2012:** Eco-Cycle begins to work with local companies to establish an in-house opt-out program tailor-made to fit their needs. This pilot paid service proves to be the most effective given the large volume of junk mail processed by large businesses desperate to reduce the wasted time and resources spent on processing junk mail. Plus, the free home opt-out program provides an attractive value-added service for company employees.

**March, 2012:** Eco-Cycle and Catalog Choice work together to create a new model for small-to-medium sized businesses to reduce their in-house junk mail, creating new functions in the service, such as a drop-down menu for employees to affiliate themselves with a particular organization enabling the measurement of opt-out
results and environmental savings by company.

March, 2012: Eco-Cycle creates additional outreach collateral for the in-house business programs, branded with the business names. Materials include:
- Email templates for businesses to use in-house to promote the program, introduce an inter-department competition to see which campus or building can reduce the most junk mail, and report results.
- Contracts for businesses to create their own tailor-made opt-out service with Catalog Choice
- Flyers posted in mail-drop areas and signs on bins set out to collect junk mail pieces that will then be sent to Catalog Choice for mail list removal

April 16, 2012: Customized Amgen drop-down menu for Amgen employees to affiliate with a specific campus or building on website. Drop-down menu created for pilot approach establishes model to working with larger businesses that allow for segmenting tracking of results and possible future internal competitions or competitions of Boulder County companies with each other.

April 19, 2012: Publication of Eco-Cycle’s first Eco-Cycle Guide, a 36-page magazine format guide, featuring one full page on the junk mail program. 45,000 copies will be distributed throughout the county—22,500 on magazine racks around the county, 22,500 delivered door-to-door by volunteer network of more than 800 Block Leaders.

Still to come:

April, 2012 – August, 2013: Businesses, institutions, cities will be targeted as employers for in-house and employee opt-out programs. Targeted organizations include the City of Boulder, Boulder County, University of Colorado, Boulder Community Hospital and 65 other businesses.

April, 2012 – October, 2012: Tabling efforts at community events, Farmers Markets and businesses and organizations in Longmont and Boulder.

April, 2012 – October, 2012: Neighborhood house parties promoted through the Eco-Cycle volunteer network

June, 2012: Production of 2-minute video demonstrating the opt-out service and providing additional tips for staying off junk mail lists

April, 2013 – August, 2013: Tabling efforts at community events, Farmers Markets in Longmont and Boulder.
BUDGET:

The budget for the program is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Budgeted Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Flat fee&quot; rate paid by Eco-Cycle to Catalog Choice to allow individuals in Boulder County to sign up for the free and premium MailStop Shield service at no charge</td>
<td>$15,000/year x 2 yrs = $30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layout of collateral materials (most layout was done in-house, so expenses reflected here were primarily for illustrations, etc.)</td>
<td>$750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing of collateral materials</td>
<td>$750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing for one page of <em>Eco-Cycle Guide</em></td>
<td>$180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL Expenses</td>
<td>$31,680*</td>
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</table>

* Budgeted amount does reflect the actual costs, the program did stay on expense budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fundraising Activity</th>
<th>Budgeted Funds Raised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giveo Online Campaign</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portion of annual donor campaign to support Junk Mail program</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support through local communities</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fundraising Activity</th>
<th>Actual Funds Raised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giveo Online Campaign</td>
<td>$470 to date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portion of annual donor campaign to support Junk Mail program</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support from local communities</td>
<td>$0 (communities have not yet been approached and will not until outreach is done with them as employers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL Funds Raised Thus Far</td>
<td>$2,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL BALANCE</td>
<td>$29,210</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eco-Cycle expected to incur a loss from the program. Generally outreach/educational programs are largely funded through the sale of material (recyclables), our primary source of revenue. Expectations for raising funds through the online Giveo network were well above actual funds raised. Eco-Cycle will be pursuing other online giving
opportunities to support the program.

Community partners in the business sector key to reaching goals:
Wanting to have a greater environmental impact and increase our sign-up numbers for the stop junk mail service, Eco-Cycle focused on partnering with members of the business community and targeted audience members through their workplaces and organizations.

We obtained a list of Boulder County’s largest employers and identified 70 organizations, businesses and schools in our community to participate in the program. Initially, we contacted organizations and offered the junk mail opt-out service for employees to stop junk mail at their home. However, we soon realized that it would be even more effective if we had businesses stop their junk mail at the office and compounded these numbers with home opt-outs.

We have developed two distinct programs, depending on the size of the company or organization:

Office Program for small-to-medium-sized businesses:
For organizations with 100 or fewer employees, we offered a program where the office opt-out process was handled by a company employee, such as an office or department administrator. This internal Junk Mail Champion (JMC) creates the Catalog Choice (CC) accounts, individually handles the opt-out process for each item, and serves as the main contact person for the program with CC and the organization. Eco-Cycle provides the JMC with templates for junk mail communications, including customized flyers, signs for the junk mail bins, sample emails to staff, and articles for the company newsletters. We also meet with the JMC to consult on the ideal placement of junk mail collection bins and flyers in the mail area, and how to time and implement the roll-out to staff.

Boulder Housing Partners:
- Phase 1: Junk Mail in the Office – For Boulder Housing Partners, an organization with 50 employees, we met with Executive Director Tim Beal. In our initial meeting we determined that stopping junk mail was in alignment with the Housing Partner’s Zero Waste goals and he assigned an administrator as the JMC. We worked closely with the JMC and suggested that staff participate in an office-wide competition to encourage immediate engagement in the opt-out process. Staff members were divided into two teams, Teams A & B, based on which side of the building they worked. The JMC placed junk mail bins in the two main areas where mail is picked up. Each member of the team with the largest number of opt-outs wins a prize: a free coupon to a coffee shop one block from their office.
• **Phase 2: Home Program for small-to-medium-sized businesses** – Once we successfully establish the office program for at least 30 days, we report to staff the environmental benefits of the office opt-out program. Our next step is to expand the service to employees so they can stop their junk mail at home.

• To make it easy for employees to affiliate with their employers, Catalog Choice created for Eco-Cycle a first-of-its-kind Boulder County Green Team drop-down menu of 70 organizations. The online drop-down menu, accessible through the [Eco-Cycle Stop Junk Mail for GOOD](#) website page, comes up when people sign up for the free service. As a result, all of an employee’s home opt-outs will count toward their employer’s environmental benefits.

• We believe home opt-out numbers will add significantly to the total numbers. The compounding effect will quickly add up to significant environmental savings that companies can promote to their stakeholders.

**Opt-Out program for large businesses**
Part of our learning curve was recognizing that we needed a different approach for stopping third class bulk mail at large Boulder County employers with 100 or more employees. Fortunately, Catalog Choice had just been working on a pilot program, the Enterprise Mail Reduction service, with Emory University for high volume opt-outs through a mail center. (Please see attached document from Catalog Choice describing the Enterprise program.)

**Amgen:**
• We reached out to Amgen, an Eco-Cycle customer who already had a commitment to reducing office junk mail and overall waste reduction by 75%. Amgen’s Environmental Health & Safety Manager, Rob Harsh, was already
tackling junk mail as part of a larger company-wide sustainability program and agreed to participate as the first Boulder County company in our pilot project.

- For Amgen, which has three campuses in Colorado and more than 2,000 employees, we needed to create a program that could handle volumes of up to 25,000 junk mail pieces per year. We met several times with Rob to determine the most effective way to introduce the service to staff and how to implement the program through the mail department’s existing mail drop off and pick-up process.

- We worked closely with Amgen to create a system that would be easy for mail staff and simple for employees to participate in. The solution was a mail-in approach whereby Amgen would send the direct mail to Catalog Choice for opt-out processing.

- Amgen set up junk mail bins in 40 mail drop areas, with signage and flyers at each location. Rob created 10 accounts to segment and track junk collection by building and campus. Catalog Choice provided mailing labels and bar codes for the 10 junk mail accounts. The mail staff used the same containers for junk mail collection and shipping to Catalog Choice, saving time and money.

- Eco-Cycle played a key role in the creation of an agreement between Amgen and Catalog Choice that included the option for Amgen staff to opt of junk mail online or through their SmartPhone. Rob felt the iPhone mobile app would be particularly appealing to Amgen staff.

- Unique elements in the Amgen program included the creation of a custom Amgen website that contained a drop down menu (please see attached screen shot) that allows an employee to affiliate with the campus and building in which they worked. The segmentation makes the opt-out process more manageable for Catalog Choice and allows for future competitions by group affiliation.

- The website went live on April 16, just in time for the debut of the service at Amgen during Earth Day week. A challenge we met with Amgen was timing the launch to simultaneously debut the office and home opt-out programs. We are accomplishing this by having Eco-Cycle staff table during Earth Day week at Amgen’s Boulder and Longmont campuses. During the tabling, Eco-Cycle staff will answer questions and have iPads on hand to immediately sign employees up online for the home service. In addition, we helped Amgen communicate both the home and office service to staff with signage, flyers and an article about the
program in a staff newsletter.

- The environmental reporting features of the website is particularly exciting to Amgen. Rob intends to present pilot results to the corporation’s Sustainability Council with the hope that the Amgen Colorado program may be replicated throughout Amgen’s U.S. offices.

- The Amgen pilot has laid the ground work for other Boulder County employees to participate in the Enterprise model. We are currently creating additional large-scale pilot programs with several major corporations that have campuses in Boulder. We expect to reach our 5,000 goal by third quarter 2012.

Creativity:

Eco-Cycle negotiated with Catalog Choice on an expanded service for Boulder County residents that includes the MailStop Shield service at no additional cost to customers. This premium add-on is typically $20 per person and removes the subscriber from data brokers nationwide. These are the companies that sell mailing lists to direct marketers. Eco-Cycle felt this was a crucial tool for our local residents to really reduce all of their junk mail and not just the companies with whom they had a direct relationship. This was a new direction for Catalog Choice as its community package typically just gives subscribers access to remove their names from catalogs and phone books, and offers the MailStop Shield as an additional $20 premium service.

The dedicated community opt-out program that Eco-Cycle sponsors through Catalog Choice has specific benefits for municipalities beyond the national catalogchoice.org site. Specifically, the program is measurable, giving Eco-Cycle data on the number of household accounts per ZIP Code, the number of opt-outs, and the equivalent environmental benefits (trees, water, CO₂ and solid waste reduced).

Catalog Choice offers the most comprehensive service available for consumers to get off marketing lists for catalogs and other types of direct mail as well as phone books, and is unique in that Catalog Choice:

- Stands up for consumer rights and fights to make sure you have a choice in what mail you receive;
- Holds companies to their word in honoring your opt-out request and files complaints directly with the FTC about those who don't.
- Protects your privacy by providing a Catalog Choice email address when you are submitting opt-out requests so you don’t swap out junk mail for SPAM.
• Tracks the mailers you’ve declined and the date, the company’s response, and records the information inside your account.
• Works with mailer to ensure they maintain and effective opt-out process since there is no law requiring name removal.

Eco-Cycle added elements to the Catalog Choice program that did not exist previously, including the Opt-out program for businesses described above. Eco-Cycle also created new promotional materials for the program, including print PSAs to be used with social media, promotional business-sized cards, tips for staying OFF junk mail lists once you get off, and ultimately a how-to video. Plus, the outreach to businesses is the first time this unique market segment is being offered as a comprehensive solution to stop office junk mail to former and current employees. The ability to compound the environmental savings by including employees on top of the office metrics is another first in the U.S.

4.) RESULTS/EVALUATION:

Expected and Unexpected Reactions: Residents were very enthusiastic, even more so than expected, to have a program, provided to them at no cost, to help them get off of unwanted junk mail. We kicked off the project through tabling events around the community, and we found our table flooded with passers-by. Our tabling efforts had never been so successful, and we had never spoken to more people!

We knew residents would be excited, but we had not predicted the enthusiasm from the business sector, which was eager to reduce costs and staff time spent on unnecessary junk mail, as well as offer the service as a perk to employees. We realized that the large businesses in particular offered a significant opportunity for us to sign up hundreds, if not thousands of accounts with relatively minimal effort, compared to tabling, our second most successful outreach approach.
What was unexpected was some of the negative, though relatively minor, reactions. Some of our strongest supporters did not want to sign up for the program out of concern for postal workers and the potential that significantly cutting down on junk mail may result in a decrease of work, and therefore work for their letter carrier. As a result, we produced a one-page response intending to provoke some bigger-picture thinking around sustainable jobs. We identified junk mail as a “people issue” and pointed out that while there may be jobs in this country associated with delivering these pieces of mail, they are arguably not sustainable jobs, in that the resources used to produce this mail are disappearing, so the jobs will be too, whether we succeed with stopping junk mail or not. And, on the other side of the equation are the more than 1 million native people who live in the Boreal forests in Canada, the source for most of the trees used to produce junk mail in our country. Is it fair to keep cutting down their forests and support an unsustainable business model so that U.S. postal workers will have work delivering a product most recipients don’t want? Our response piece encouraged the reader to think bigger about how we should be looking for sustainable jobs in the green industrial revolution, for postal workers, coal miners, petroleum workers, etc.

**Measuring Success:**
One of the key benefits of partnering with Catalog Choice and their junk mail service is the data tracking. Catalog Choice provides real-time results of how many people have signed up for the service, how many opt-out requests have been placed, and these environmental benefits of the collective actions of our communities (see graphic, right).

We can also track the results by zip code to tailor outreach efforts to different communities within the county. Catalog Choice provides daily web traffic information, which allows us to see the effectiveness of our outreach activities and choose the most cost-effective and results-oriented approaches. For example, our partnerships with large local businesses have resulted in huge upswings in user signups and activities when the company sends out a promotional email to its staff of thousands of employees. This is far more effective than some of our standard tabling efforts that may result in us talking to a few dozen folks in an entire afternoon. Having access to this type of reporting and being able to effectively compare the outreach efforts with a measurable result is rare in our industry and a huge advantage of our partnership with Catalog Choice.

Here is a summary of our results to date:

- 1600 new users
- 15,700 opt-out requests
- 229,016 lbs. of carbon dioxide avoided
- 558 trees saved
- 551,527 gallons of water saved
• 81,190 pounds of solid waste avoided

Opportunities for Improvement:
Eco-Cycle is increasing our focus and expertise to do outreach to the business community and targeting audience members through their workplaces and organizations. We have a list of 70 organizations, businesses and schools in our community that have joined the program and we see this as the best way to expand its reach (see below).

Replicable Models Created:

For Communities:
Eco-Cycle’s goal with any new program is to create a model for other communities. The Catalog Choice package is a great off-the-shelf waste reduction tool for a community of any size and is designed to be replicable. We are happy to share our outreach efforts and successes with all communities, and have already participated in conference calls with other groups interested in the program and our outreach efforts.

The Catalog Choice program is used by dozens of cities, counties, and organizations across the country looking for a measurable, voluntary initiative to reduce unwanted mail and phone books in their communities. Building an online mail preference service from scratch is cost prohibitive for any municipality. Instead, communities can leverage Catalog Choice technology and co-brand their mail preference service at a fraction of the cost. Catalog Choice shares best practices and assists with program promotion. For a complete list of the more than 20 participating communities please visit:  
https://www.catalogchoice.org/communities/participants

For Businesses:
Two replicable programs were created to serve the business community. Working to create a model with Catalog Choice, Eco-Cycle developed two approaches, one applicable for small-to-medium sized businesses, and a second approach for large companies with more than 100 employees. We learned that smaller companies can have a single administrator manage the opt-out process internally and can take advantage of the free service offered by Catalog Choice.

For large employers, their volume of junk mail can range between 10,000 to 25,000 junk mail pieces per year. At this scale, we found large companies preferred to mail their bulk mail to Catalog Choice and pay a nominal fee ($3,500 for 21,000 opt outs per year) for Catalog Choice to handle their opt-outs. In our work with Amgen, a company for whom we have just recently created an in-house junk mail service, we will be evaluating the savings of the Stop Junk Mail for GOOD! program to the company based on
“Operational Excellence” (OE). In OE systems, you look at how much time and labor is saved by implementing a new procedure. Since junk mail is handled so many times in its processing—it’s first received in the mail room, delivered to a mail center, handled by a department administrator, looked at by the receiver, then handled again by the mail room—we believe the savings will be significant. We will share these numbers and case studies freely to other businesses in Boulder County and the U.S.

Another replicable aspect of this program is the efficiency of offering a service through the employer that stops junk mail at both the office and at people’s homes. Companies are motivated to participate in the program because there are significant sustainability benefits to both the company and the employer. In partnership with Eco-Cycle, the employer is offering an added value to employees – taking the annoyance of junk mail out of their lives at home for free. The home opt-out service is voluntary and we typically time the invitation for the home program after the employee has first been exposed to the service at their office and seen the environmental metrics of saved trees, water, solid waste and greenhouse gas emissions. Our work has shown that the executive board room is seeking environmental measurements of saved resources to demonstrate their organization’s environmental stewardship. The Catalog Choice on-demand reporting feature provides real data 24/7 that companies are eagerly seeking. Our work in Boulder with the business community holds great potential for replication across the U.S.
A. MEDIA COVERAGE OF JUNK MAIL PROGRAM,  
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Appendix A

Boulder's Eco-Cycle offers service to stop junk mail Saturday

Camera staff
Posted: 09/23/2011 02:23:10 PM MDT

Eco-Cycle is offering to help residents and businesses stop junk mail by providing an interactive display, a place to unload junk mail and a new service to stop it on Saturday at the Boulder Farmers' Market.

Market visitors also can guess how many pieces of junk mail the average American household receives in one year. Participants will be entered into a raffle for Eco-Cycle freebies.

The "Stop Junk Mail for GOOD service" is usually $20, but Eco-Cycle partnered with Catalog Choice to make the service free for Boulder County residents and businesses. The service stops unwanted mail, catalogs and phone books.

Eco-Cycle's goal is to sign up 5,000 Boulder County residents and businesses.

Eco-Cycle will be at the Boulder Farmers' Market from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday next to downtown's Central Park. For more information, visit www.ecocycle.org/junkmail.

Eco-Cycle launches program to stop junk mail

Longmont Times-Call
Posted: 10/14/2011 07:45:23 AM MDT
Updated: 10/14/2011 07:51:10 AM MDT

LONGMONT — Residents interested in avoiding the unwanted commercial advertising, catalogs and telephone books they’re getting in the mail can sign up for Eco-Cycle’s “Stop Junk Mail” service at two Longmont events this weekend.

From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Eco-Cycle staff members will be at the Longmont Farmer’s Market at the Boulder County Fairgrounds, 9595 Nelson Road. From 2 to 5 p.m. Sunday, Eco-Cycle will join residents of the Prospect neighborhood at a community meeting at 1050 Neon Forest Circle.

Eco-Cycle is working with Catalog Choice to notify telephone book and catalog companies and notify them of Boulder County residents and businesses who have signed up for the list of people and businesses who no longer want to be mailed those phone books and catalogs.

“Rather than just recycling this material, our goal is to stop junk mail upstream and prevent the environmental destruction before it starts,” said Susan Meissner, Eco-Cycle’s Longmont campaigns coordinator.

Information about the “Stop Junk Mail” program is available online at www.ecocycle.org/junkmail.
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Appendix E

This Tree:
- Is home for indigenous Canadians and many animal species
- Protects us from climate change
- Has been standing since before the constitution was signed
- Is about to be cut to the ground and made into a credit card promotion for your mailbox!

Does that make sense? We don’t think so either.
Nip the problem at its source with Eco-Cycle’s new “Stop my Junk Mail!” Service, the most effective, efficient opt-out service available. (FREE to Boulder County residents).
www.ecocycle.org/junkmail

Eco-Cycle SWANA Award Application: Stop Junk Mail for GOOD 6
Feel like junk mail never ends?

It can with our new FREE service!

click to sign up

in partnership with

eco-cycle®
Working to Build Zero Waste Communities

Help us help Boulder County get off junk mail.

Make a donation to Eco-Cycle and help us sponsor this program.

DONATE
Appendix G

I Stopped Junk Mail for GOOD!
www.ecocycle.org/junkmail

Hey Boulder County!

Stop Junk Mail for GOOD
with Eco-Cycle’s new service

Good for you, good for the planet, and FREE for Boulder County residents and businesses. It's the best mail preference service out there.

Sign up with us on 9/24!

www.ecocycle.org/junkmail
Appendix H

Stop Junk Mail for GOOD BIN

► Please toss ALL your junk mail in the Stop Junk Mail bin below, including:
  - Direct mail catalogs
  - Credit card offers
  - Sweepstakes and travel offers
  - Direct mail postcards
  - Flyers and coupon books

Thank you!
An Individual Member's Environmental Benefits Statement
showing aggregate Environmental Benefits

Environmental Benefits
TOGETHER WE'VE SAVED:
749,892
FULLY GROWN TREES
YOU SAVED 7
312,317,944
POUNDS OF
GREENHOUSE GAS
YOU SAVED 2,869
110,712,540
POUNDS OF SOLID
WASTE
YOU SAVED 947
752,168,558
GALLONS OF WATER
YOU SAVED 6,428

Environmental impacts calculated using the EPN Paper Calculator

Help Us Measure Waste Reduction by Joining a Green Team!

Green Team
- Eco-Cycle is measuring paper waste reduction by group.
- Select your group here.
- Join your Green Team and invite your colleagues to make a difference.

Select Green Team

- Please Choose...
- Array BioPharma
- Avery Dennison
- Ball Aerospace
- Boulder Chamber of Commerce
- Boulder Community Hospital
- Boulder County
- Boulder Housing Partners
- Celestial Seasonings
- Center for Resource Conservation
- City of Boulder
- Community Cycles
- Corporate Express
- Coviden
- Crispin Porter & Bogusky
- Crocs
- Daily Camera
- DigitalGlobe

Elevations Credit Union
E Source
2012 Public Education Excellence Award
CHECKLIST AND RELEASE

2012 Applications must be submitted to SWANA no later than Friday, April 13, 2012

*** PLEASE NOTE THAT ENTRY REQUIREMENTS HAVE CHANGED ***

Application Checklist: (Please make sure the following items are included in your submittal packet)

- Completed release statement (this page), to be scanned and included in digital submission
- Check (made payable to SWANA) or credit card payment for nomination fee (in U.S. dollars) via

  Award Nominations

- At least 2 pictures of your operation (may be included in nomination text)
- One copy of your award submittal uploaded using your purchased 2012 SWANA Excellence Awards Application

Uploading Instructions

- If you would like to mail your submission, please contact Jesse Maxwell, Program Coordinator, at

  jmmaxwell@swana.org or (240) 494-2237.

Release Statement: I certify that the information provided in this application is accurate and correct to the best of my knowledge. SWANA reserves the right to publish the enclosed information. Nominations become the property of SWANA. My signature gives SWANA the right to reprint or make available for purchase any portion of this submittal.

Signature: [Signature] Date: 4-19-2012