

Clark County Desert Conservation Program

Public Information and Education Program

Final Assessment Report

Presentation to

MSHCP Implementation and Monitoring Committee

By Strategic Solutions

September 29, 2004

Explanation of Assessment Process

Assessment is defined as the systematic collection, review, and use of information, undertaken for the purpose of improvement.

Assessment activities included:

- Interviewing selected individuals involved with PIE.
- Comparing PIE efforts to known-effective components from other environmental and HCP programs.
- Conducting a cost-efficiency analysis of PIE expenditures.
- Conducting qualitative research utilizing focus groups comprised of DCP PIE target audiences.
- Conducting a targeted survey at an event with a traditional DCP presence.

Cost Analysis

- In all of the expenditure categories, the analyses reveal that the DCP is expending dollars efficiently for public information and education efforts. Costs for PIE Program products and services are below, at, or only slightly above market rates for similar services.
- A particular cost-savings highlight: the analysis demonstrated that PIE's contracted media professional reaped significant savings (about \$17,000) for the DCP on 30-second spots through a negotiated media package.

Environmental Program Comparison

- The assessor researched and compared the DCP's public information and education efforts with five environmental programs selected in conjunction with the PIE Committee:
 - Coachella Valley Multiple Species HCP
 - San Diego County Natural Communities Conservation Plan/HCP
 - Central/Coastal Orange County Natural Communities Conservation Plan/HCP
 - Department of Environmental Protection – Montgomery County, Maryland
 - Department of the Environment – City and County of San Francisco

Environmental Program Comparison

- In comparison to the DCP's efforts, the HCP and environmental programs are conducting similar activities:
 - Establishment of a strong school district partnership
 - Production of literature – brochure or news piece
 - Operation of informative website
 - Involvement of stakeholders

Environmental Program Comparison

Another similarity is that all programs are faced with resource limitations, which leads to the realization that all needed outreach and educational efforts cannot be done by the program participants and volunteers alone.

- To address the concept of maximizing limited resources, the research results emphasized the need to:
 - Create and foster partnerships.
 - Develop training for teachers so they can conduct lessons, delivering program messages to students.
 - Take advantage of available opportunities to attach messages to other environmental, educational, and agency programs that already exist.
 - Develop strong media relations.
 - Partner with/utilize community key opinion leaders.

Interviews

27 individuals participated in the interview process. The interview research allowed the assessor to determine if individuals most closely involved with PIE activities perceive that the Program is meeting PIE objectives and reaching the Program's target audiences.

- Findings:
 - Most interviewees are bullish on Mojave Max Program.
 - Some perceive need for *positive* messages.
 - Many suggest building upon success of Mojave Max Program.
 - Regarding media, interviewees favor television and radio and see need for "media mix" and advice of professionals.

Interviews

- Findings:
 - *Desert News* was named as most effective literature piece produced by the DCP.
 - Best elements of PIE Program were identified as Mojave Max Program and the dedication, openness, and diversity of the PIE Committee as well.
 - Many interviewees say PIE objectives are being met, except objective pertaining to informing public about terms of Section 10(a) Permit – some question if this is an achievable and/or appropriate objective?
 - Many interviewees say children are effectively reached by PIE, and they expressed the challenges of reaching and changing behavior of general public.

Focus Groups

- Teachers
 - Teachers are enthusiastic about Mojave Max Program – summed program as “authentic learning” and one that builds excitement among both educators and students.
 - Teachers have real appetite for receiving species and conservation information to supplement their science, math, and/or social studies curriculum.
 - Teachers like Contest incentive package.
 - In terms of all combined elements (assembly, contest, Mojave Max character, website), Program successfully engages students in earth sciences via fun, interactive, and engaging program elements.

Focus Groups

■ OHV Enthusiasts

- A challenging group to reach and challenging in terms of this population's degree of receptiveness toward DCP messages.
- An OHV "community" does not exist per se – they are people of diverse backgrounds in terms of age, occupation, and location of residency – and the majority of enthusiasts recreating in Clark County are not affiliated with any club.
- Perceiving positive messages is very important (i.e., demonstrate where enthusiasts can recreate, as opposed to where they cannot.)

Focus Groups

- Rural Community
 - Residents are more receptive to information delivered to them by their peers and peer groups than perceived “outside” individuals, organizations, and agencies.
 - Focus group participants emphasized that they must feel that they have input into any government-imposed/public-impacted process.
 - Traditional mass media methods do not necessarily reach a sizable amount of the residents of the rural communities.

Focus Groups

- Desert Recreation Enthusiasts
 - Common perception is that irresponsible/disrespectful desert behavior is more likely to be exhibited by infrequent, “non-serious” individuals recreating in desert than frequent, “serious” enthusiasts.
 - Focus group participants believe that the Mojave Max Program should reach those youth who could potentially be using the desert (now or in the future).
 - Participants felt that desert users are more likely to be reached in a very focused/targeted manner than a more “blanket” approach that would target the general population – many of whom may never recreate in desert.

Survey Results

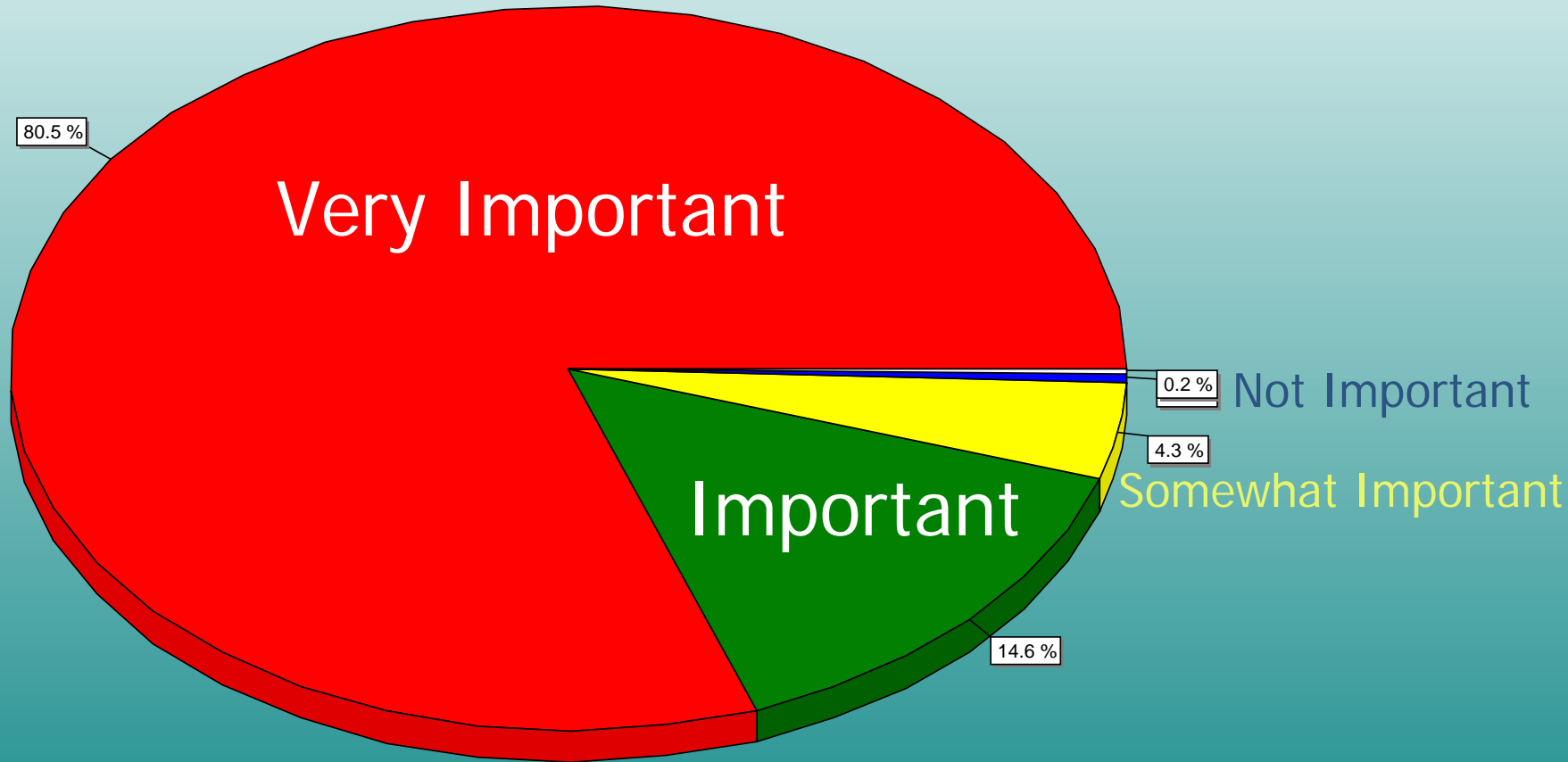
Clark County Fair - April 8-11, 2004

How important is it to you to respect and protect the desert in Clark County?

80% of respondents believe it is very important to respect and protect the desert in Clark County.

<u>Response</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Very Important	375	80.5%
Important	68	14.6%
Somewhat Important	20	4.3%
Not Important	2	0.4%
Don't Know	0	0.0%
Refuse/ No Answer	1	0.2%

How important is it to you to respect and protect the desert in Clark County?



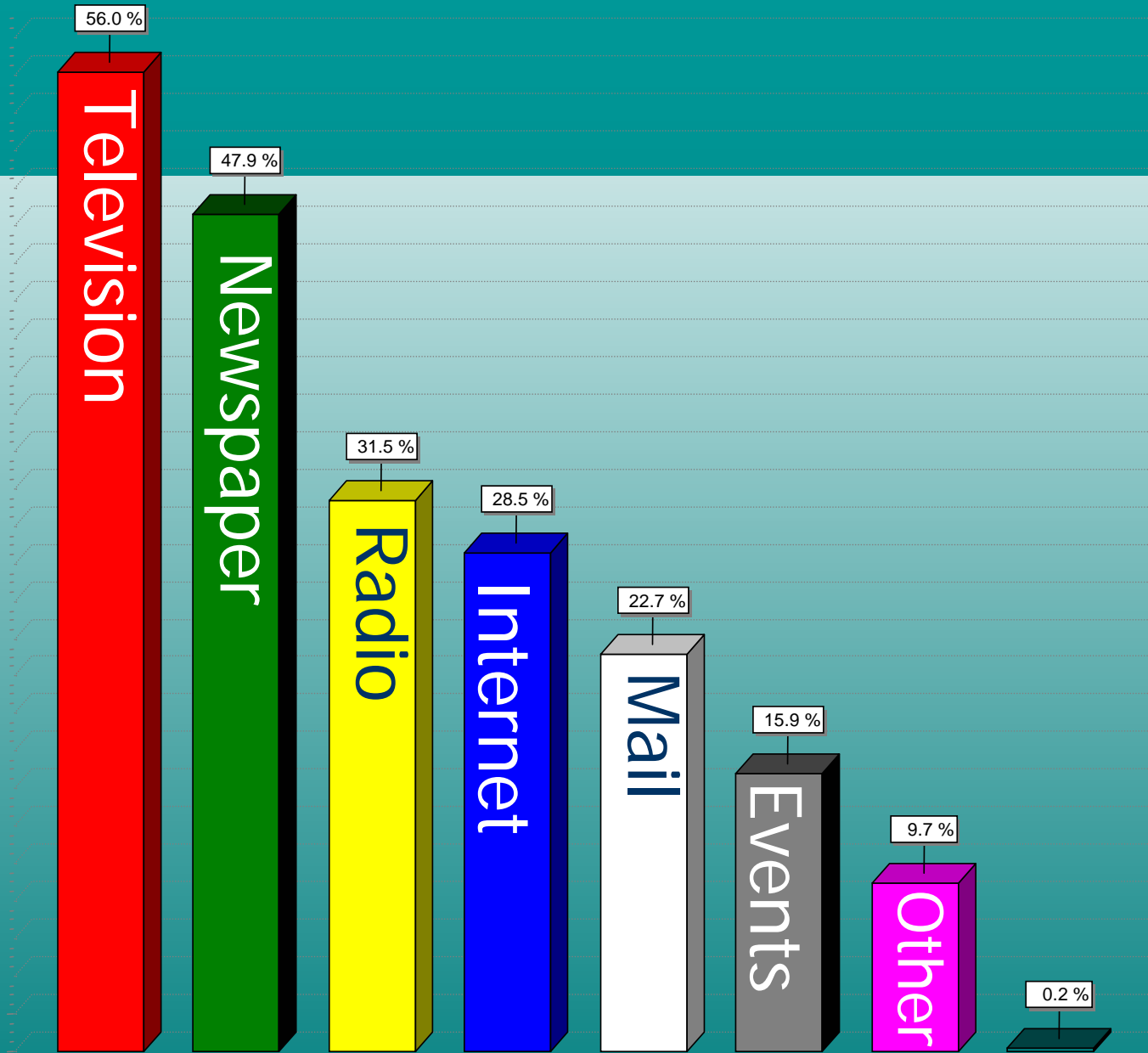
From which sources do you most often receive public information?

Television was the top choice at 56%.

Respondents also chose other mass media, such as newspapers (48%) and radio (31%).

<u>Response</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Percent</u>
TV	61	56.0%
Newspaper	223	47.9%
Radio	147	31.5%
Internet and/ or E-mail	133	28.5%
Mail	106	22.7%
Public Events and/or Meetings	74	15.9%
None of the Above	1	0.2%
Don't Know	0	0.0%
Refuse/ No Answer	0	0.0%
Other	45	9.7%

From which sources do you most often receive public information?



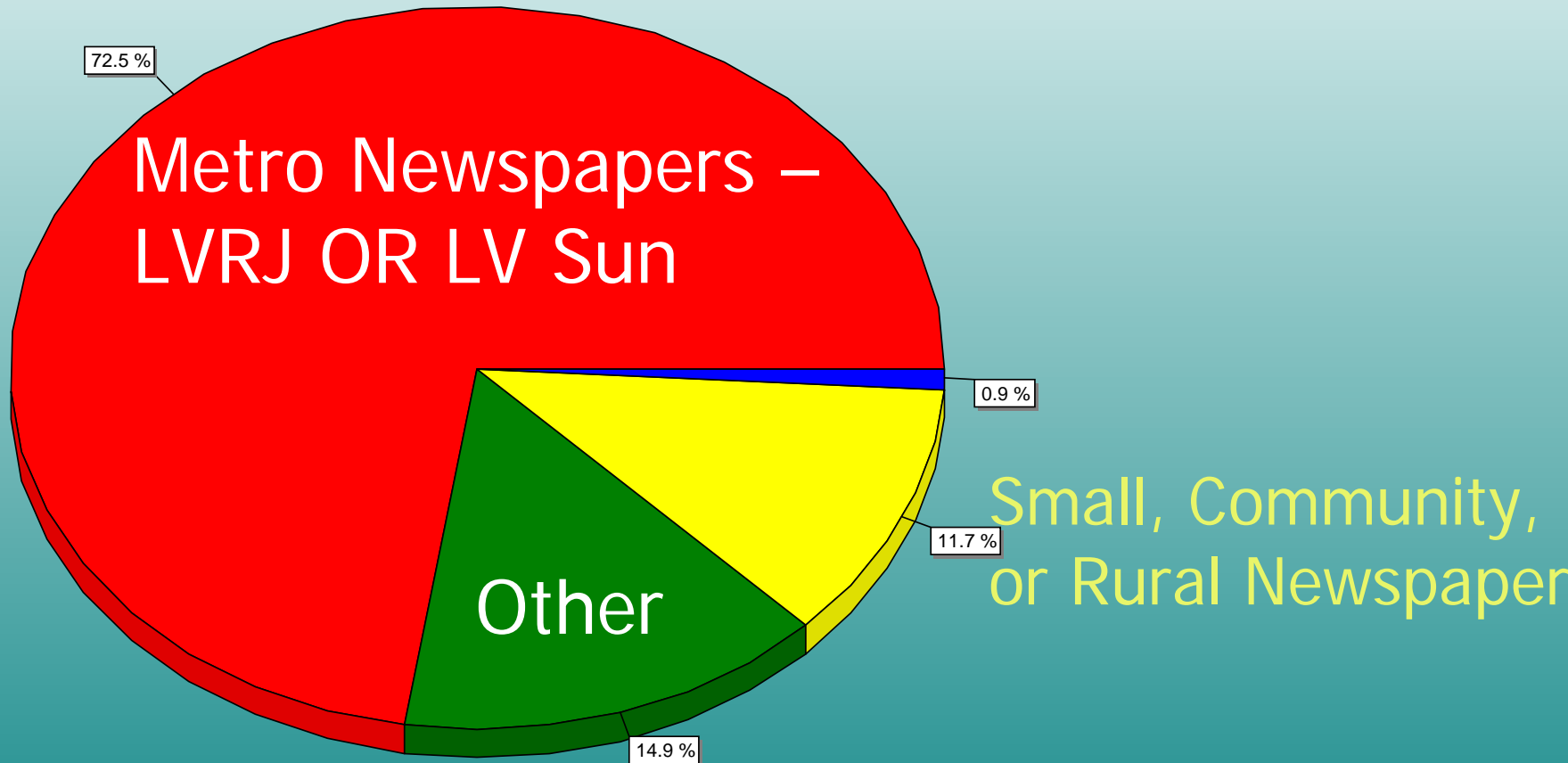
What kind of newspaper do you receive information from?

Of the 48% of respondents who get their public information from a newspaper, 72% are receiving information from one of the two metro newspapers.

Response	Count	Percent
LVRJ or LV Sun	161	72.5%
Small, Community, or Rural Newspaper	26	11.7%
None of the Above	0	0.0%
Don't Know	0	0.0%
Refuse/ No Answer	2	0.9%
Other	33	14.9%

Why was "Other" at 15%? Anecdotally, the assessor heard many people state that they read national newspapers, such as *The Wall Street Journal*.

What kind of newspaper do you receive information from?



I'm going to name different sources of information. On a scale of 1 to 5, please rank how much you trust each source. 5 means that you trust it very much and 1 means that you do not trust it at all.

The highest levels of trust were exhibited for academic sources, community based organizations, and peers/colleagues.

The lowest levels of trust were exhibited for the federal government, Clark County School District, and the Internet/email.

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Refuse/ NA</u>
Federal Government	15.1%	14.4%	36.8%	23.4%	9.7%	0.2%	0.4%
State Government	9.5%	17.0%	35.1%	27.3%	11.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Clark County	11.5%	15.4%	28.6%	29.2%	13.4%	1.7%	0.2%
Town Board	9.7%	14.8%	26.5%	23.7%	10.1%	13.8%	1.5%
Comm. Based Org.	3.2%	9.9%	22.8%	38.1%	18.7%	6.5%	0.9%
CCSD	14.4%	17.0%	25.8%	21.3%	13.8%	6.7%	1.1%
Academic Source	5.2%	6.9%	18.8%	39.7%	24.1%	5.4%	0.0%
Local Television News	9.4%	18.2%	35.4%	25.1%	9.9%	1.5%	0.4%
LVRJ or LV Sun	9.3%	14.0%	32.5%	27.8%	9.9%	5.4%	1.1%
Comm. Newspaper	5.0%	11.0%	24.8%	32.4%	11.4%	13.4%	1.9%
Internet and/or E-mail	13.7%	20.0%	33.6%	12.1%	7.6%	10.6%	2.4%
Peer or Colleague	6.0%	14.0%	30.4%	31.9%	16.2%	0.4%	1.1%

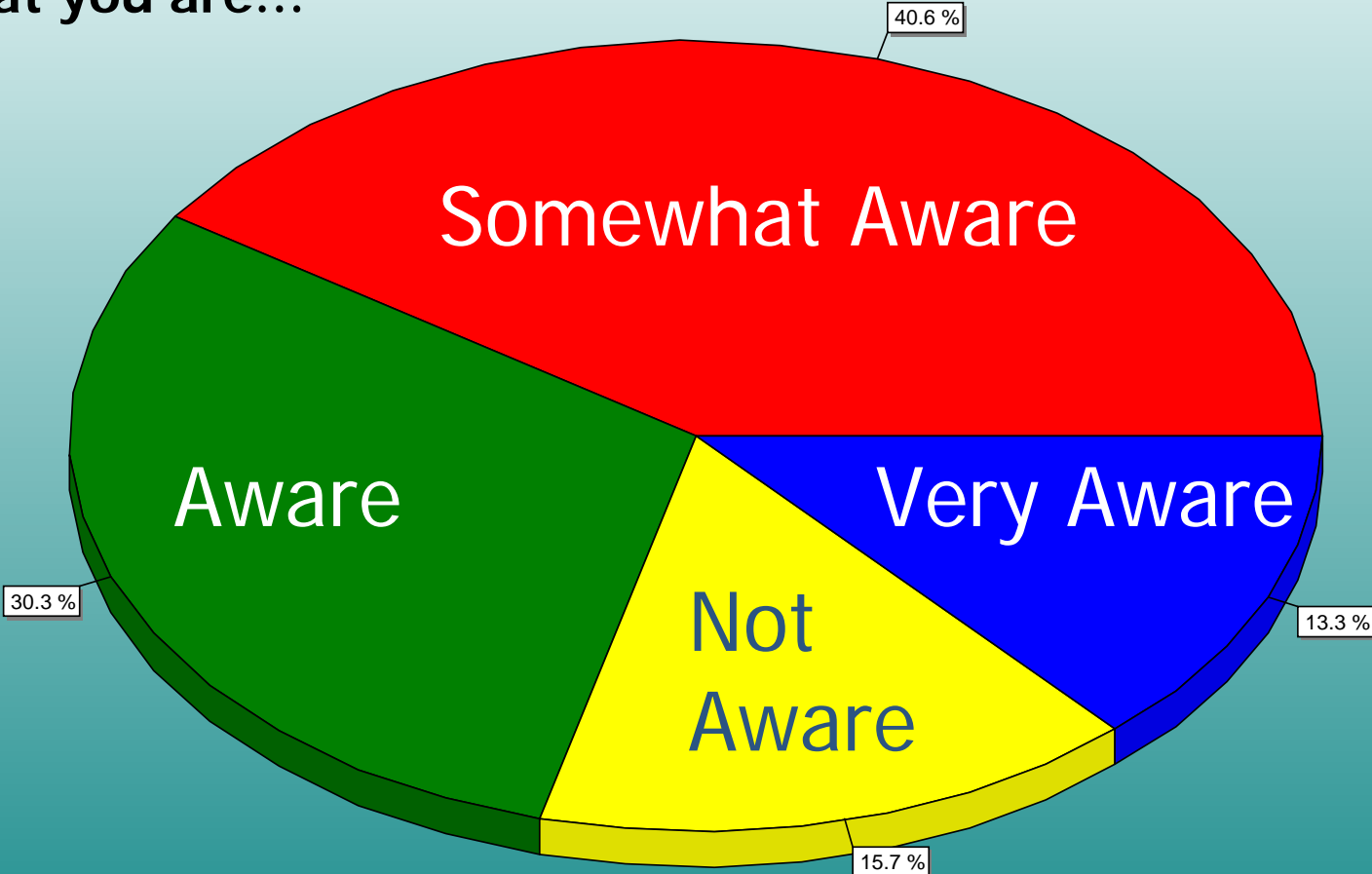
Please rate your awareness level of the Clark County Desert Conservation Program and/or the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan? Would you say that you are...

84% of respondents have a level of awareness about the DCP and/or MSHCP.

Only 16% had no awareness of the DCP and/or MSHCP.

<u>Response</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Very Aware	62	13.3%
Aware	141	30.3%
Somewhat Aware	189	40.6%
Not Aware	73	15.7%
Don't Know	0	0.0%
Refuse/ No Answer	0	0.0%

Please rate your awareness level of the Clark County Desert Conservation Program and/or the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan? Would you say that you are...



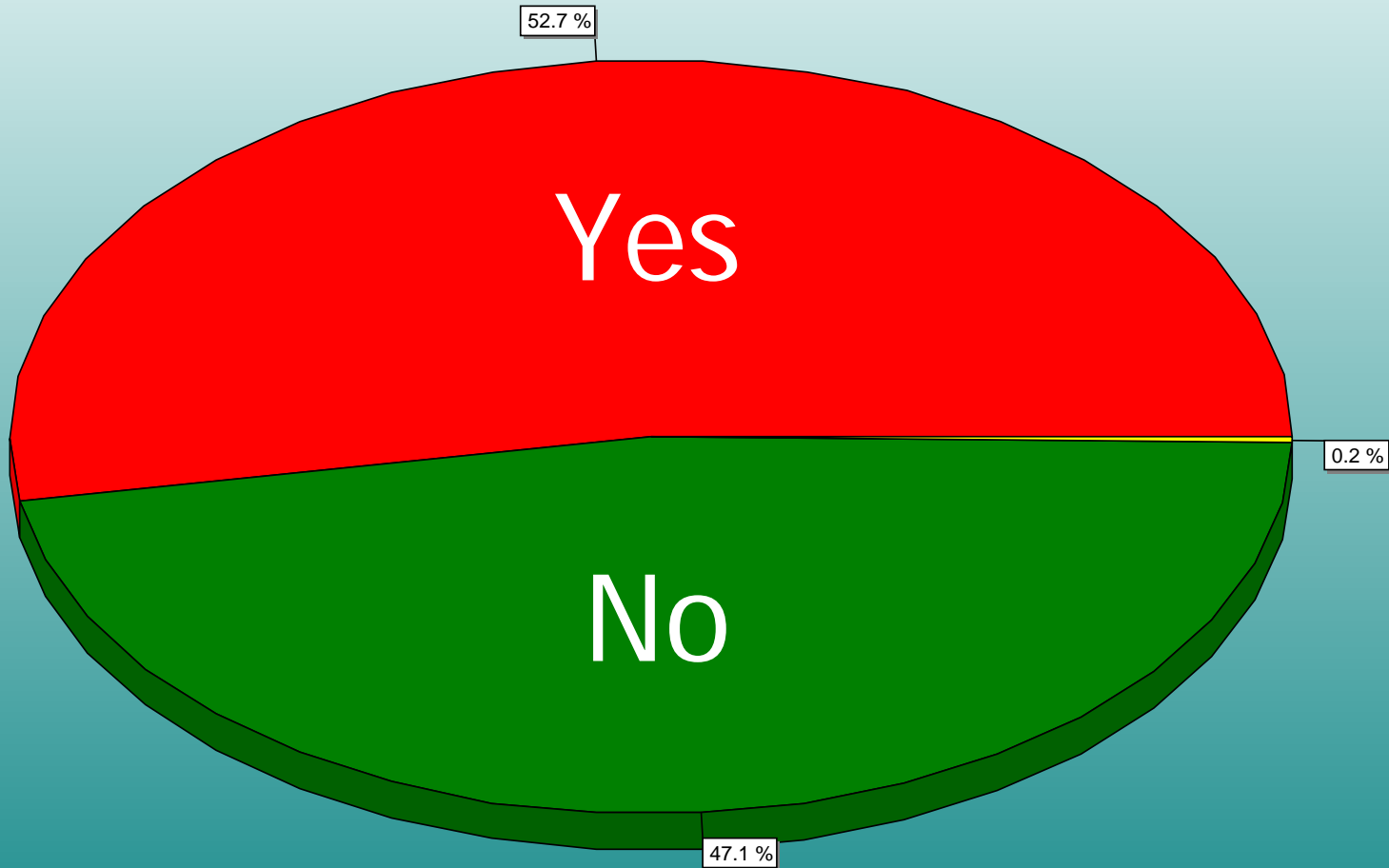
Have you ever heard of the Mojave Max Program?

The survey revealed that 53% of survey respondents have heard of the Mojave Max Program.

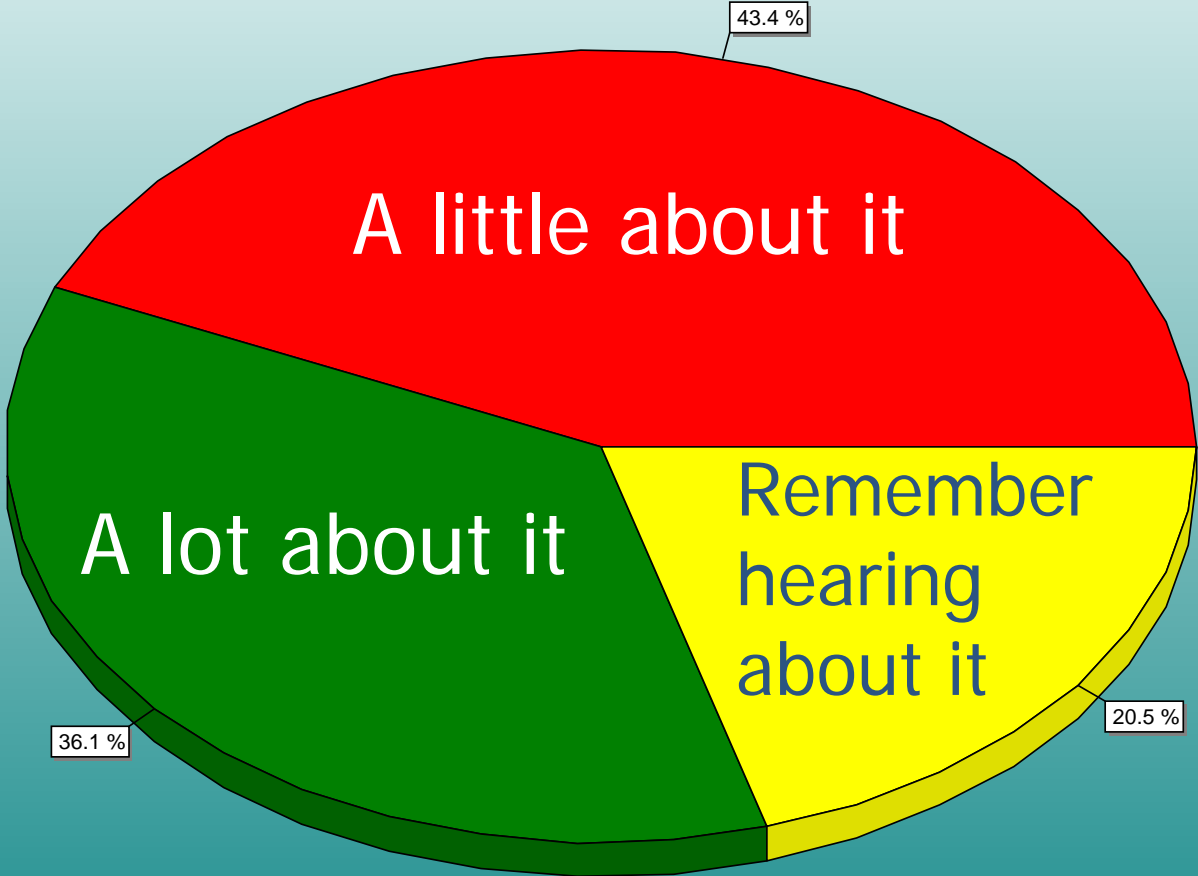
It is important to note that the majority of survey respondents were adults (only 7% were 18 years of age or younger), and given that the Mojave Max Program's target is school-age children, the results are skewed given the age demographics.

<u>Response</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	245	52.7%
No	219	47.1%
Don't Know	1	0.2%
Refuse/ NA	0	0.0%

Have you ever heard of the Mojave Max Program?



**IF THE RESPONDENT ANSWERS "YES,"
ASK THE QUESTION: Have you heard...**

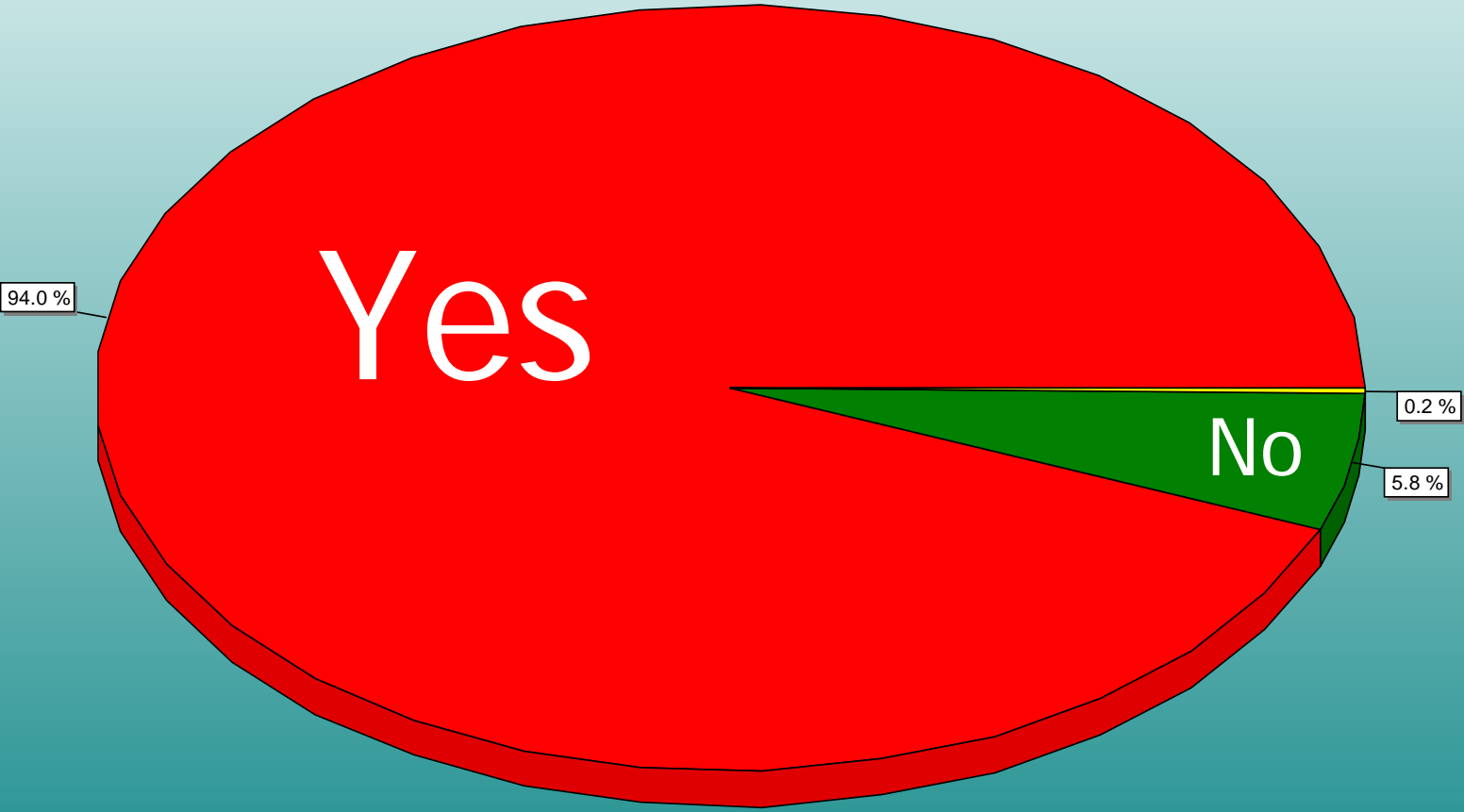


Have you heard or seen messages that encourage conservation, such as to respect, protect, and enjoy the desert?

94% of survey respondents have heard or seen conservation messages, such as *Respect, Protect, and Enjoy*.

<u>Response</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Yes	438	94.0%
No	27	5.8%
Don't Know	1	0.2%
Refuse/ No Answer	0	0.0%

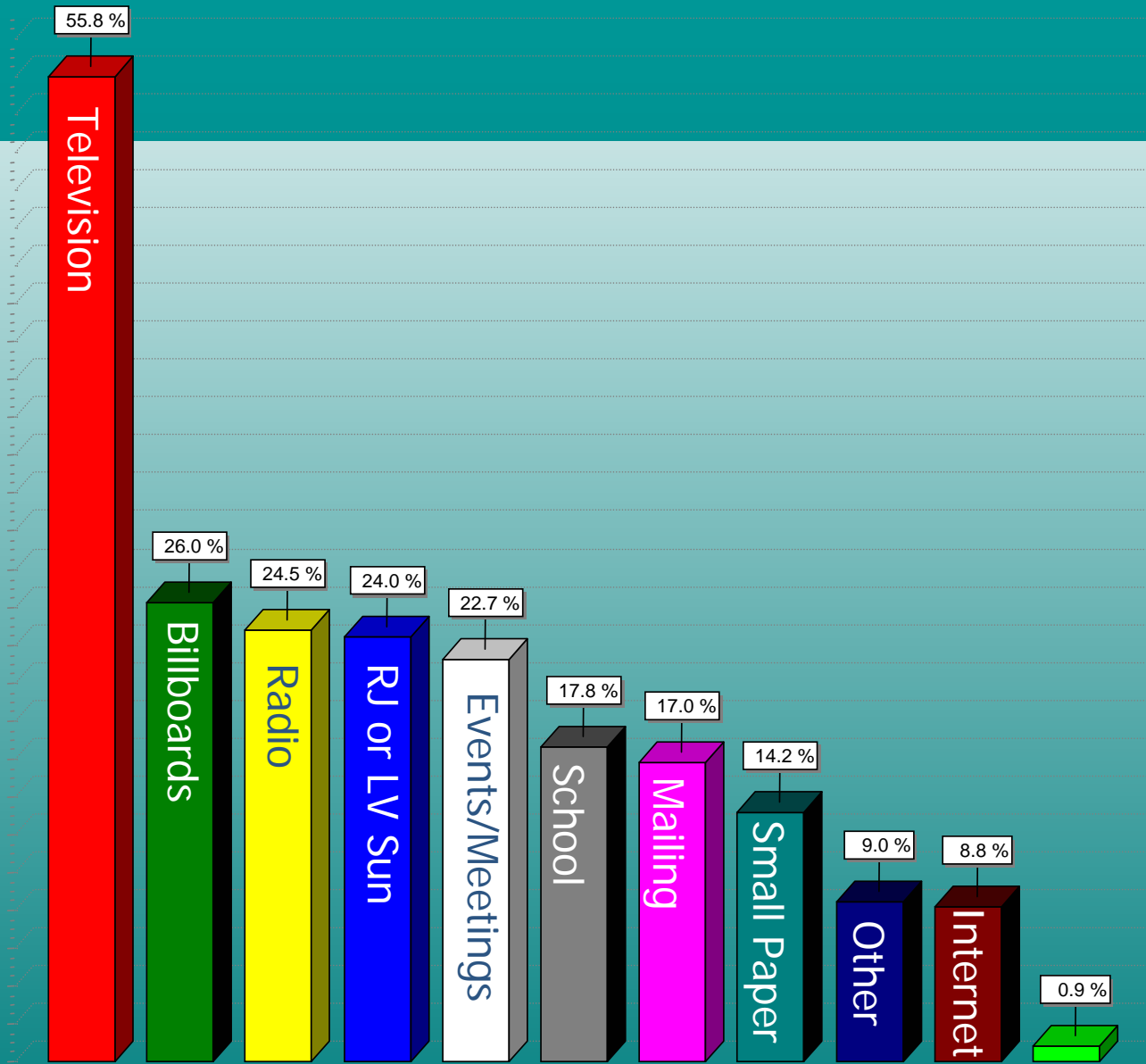
Have you heard or seen messages that encourage conservation, such as to “respect, protect, and enjoy” the desert?



IF THE RESPONDENT ANSWERS YES, ASK THE QUESTION: Where do you remember seeing or hearing those messages?

Mirroring the results of the public information question, respondents primarily heard conservation messages through mass media choices, with television (56%) significantly ahead of other choices. Billboards (26%), radio (24.5%), and metro newspapers (24%) follow.

<u>Response</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Billboard	121	26.0%
Public Events and/or Meetings	106	22.7%
Internet and/or E-mail	41	8.8%
Mailing	79	17.0%
LVRJ or LV Sun	112	24.0%
School	83	17.8%
Small, Community, or Rural Newspaper	66	14.2%
Radio	114	24.5%
Television	260	55.8%
Don't Know	4	0.9%
Refuse/ No Answer	0	0.0%
Other	42	9.0%



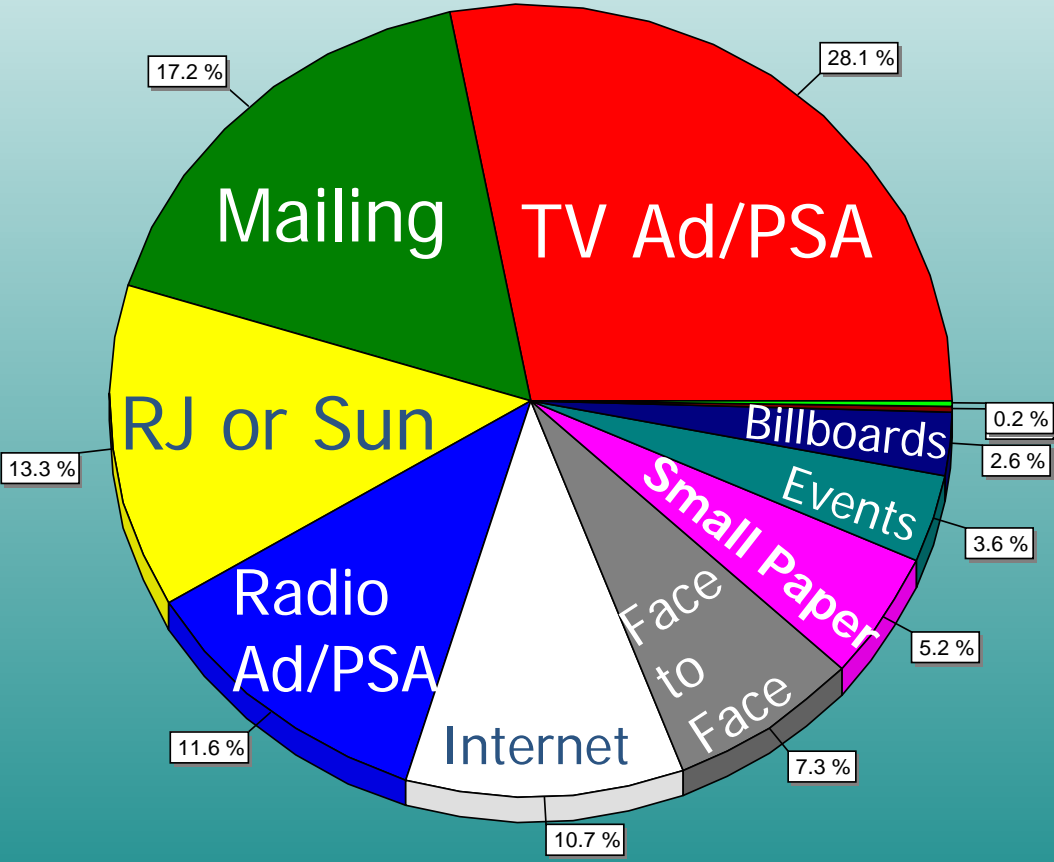
Where do you remember seeing or hearing those messages?

Please name the best method of communication for you to receive public information? Name the best choice out of the following...

Once again, television (28%) was named as the top choice, followed by a mailing (17%) and metro newspaper (13%).

<u>Response</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Billboard	12	2.6%
Public Events	17	3.6%
Face to Face Presentation	34	7.3%
Internet and/or E-mail	50	10.7%
Mailing (such as flyer or newsletter)	80	17.2%
LVRJ or LV Sun	62	13.3%
Radio Advertisements or PSA	54	11.6%
Small Community or Rural Newspaper	24	5.2%
TV Advertisements or PSA	131	28.1%
Don't Know	1	0.2%
Refuse/ No Answer	1	0.2%

Please name the best method of communication for you to receive public information? Name the best choice out of the following...

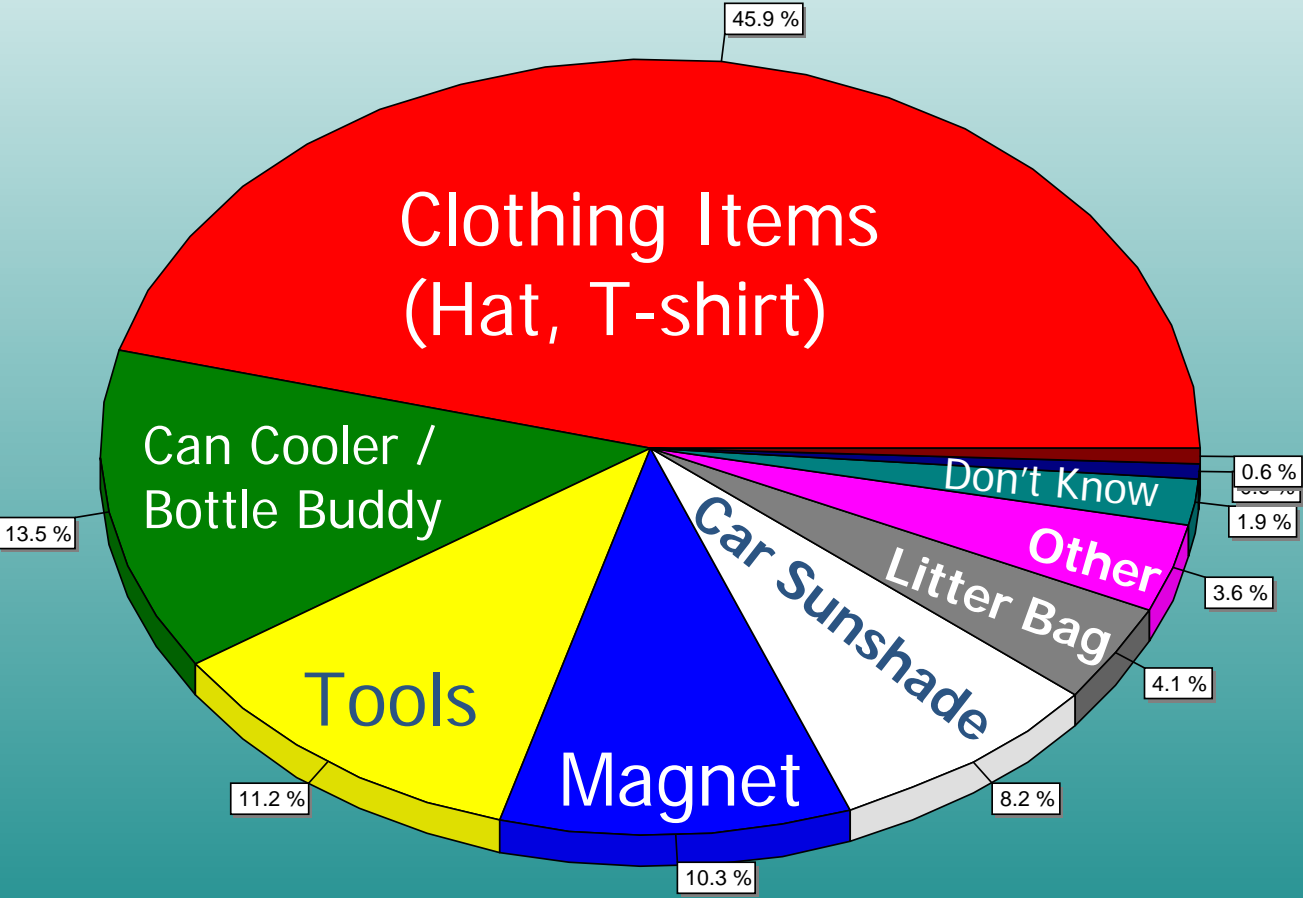


If you were to receive a free giveaway item at an event with a conservation message printed on the item, what kind of item would you most likely keep and use?

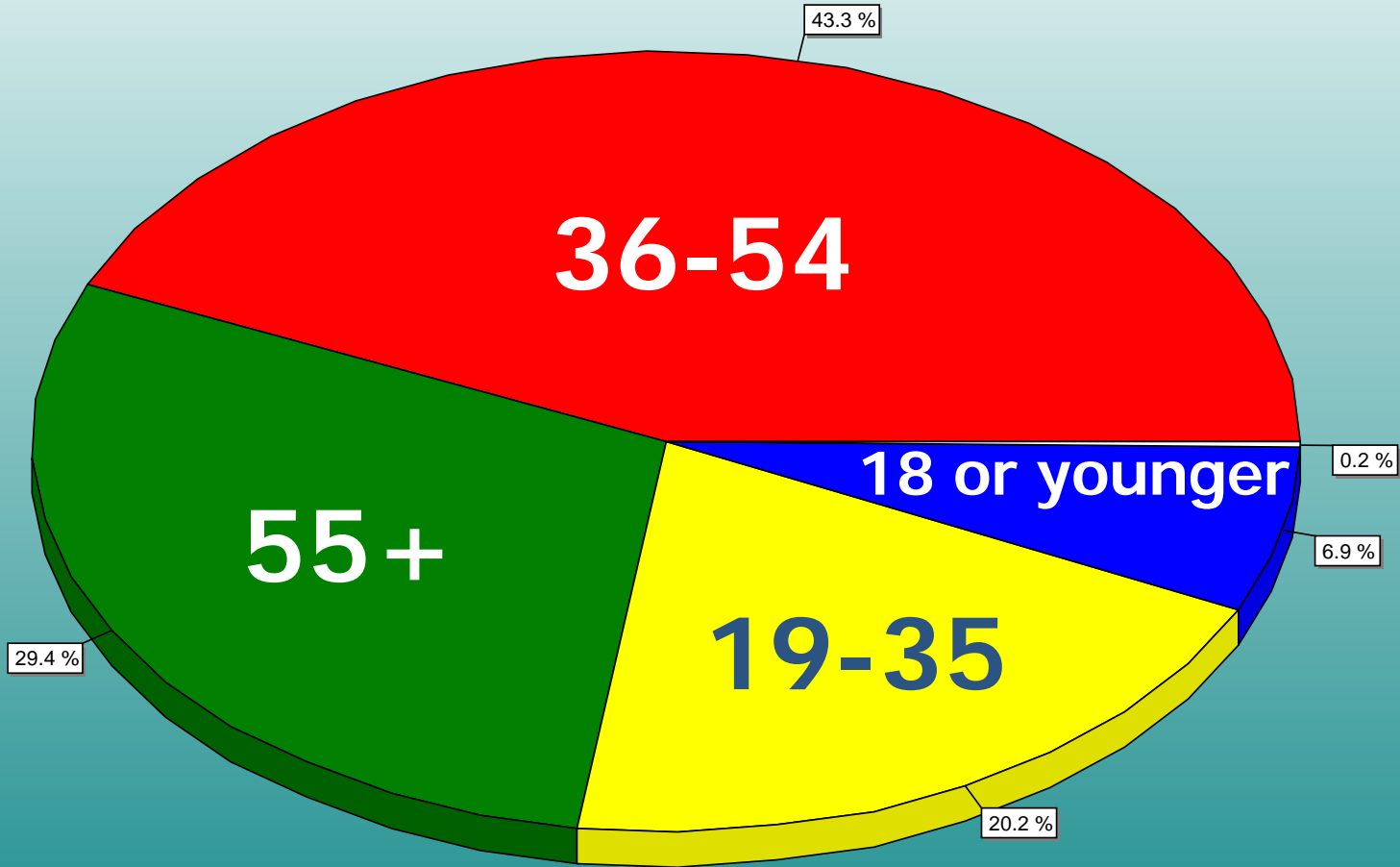
Although probably the most expensive item on the list to produce, clothing items (46%) were clearly the top choice of respondents, distantly followed by can cooler/bottle buddy items (13%), tools (11%), and magnets (10%).

<u>Response</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Clothing Item (such as t-shirt or hat)	214	45.9%
Can Cooler or Bottle Buddy	63	13.5%
Tool (such as a screwdriver or ruler)	52	11.2%
Litter Bag	19	4.1%
Magnet	48	10.3%
Car Sunshade	38	8.2%
Zipper Pull	3	0.6%
Don't Know	9	1.9%
Refuse/ No Answer	3	0.6%
Other	17	3.6%

If you were to receive a free giveaway item at an event with a conservation message printed on the item, what kind of item would you most likely keep and use?

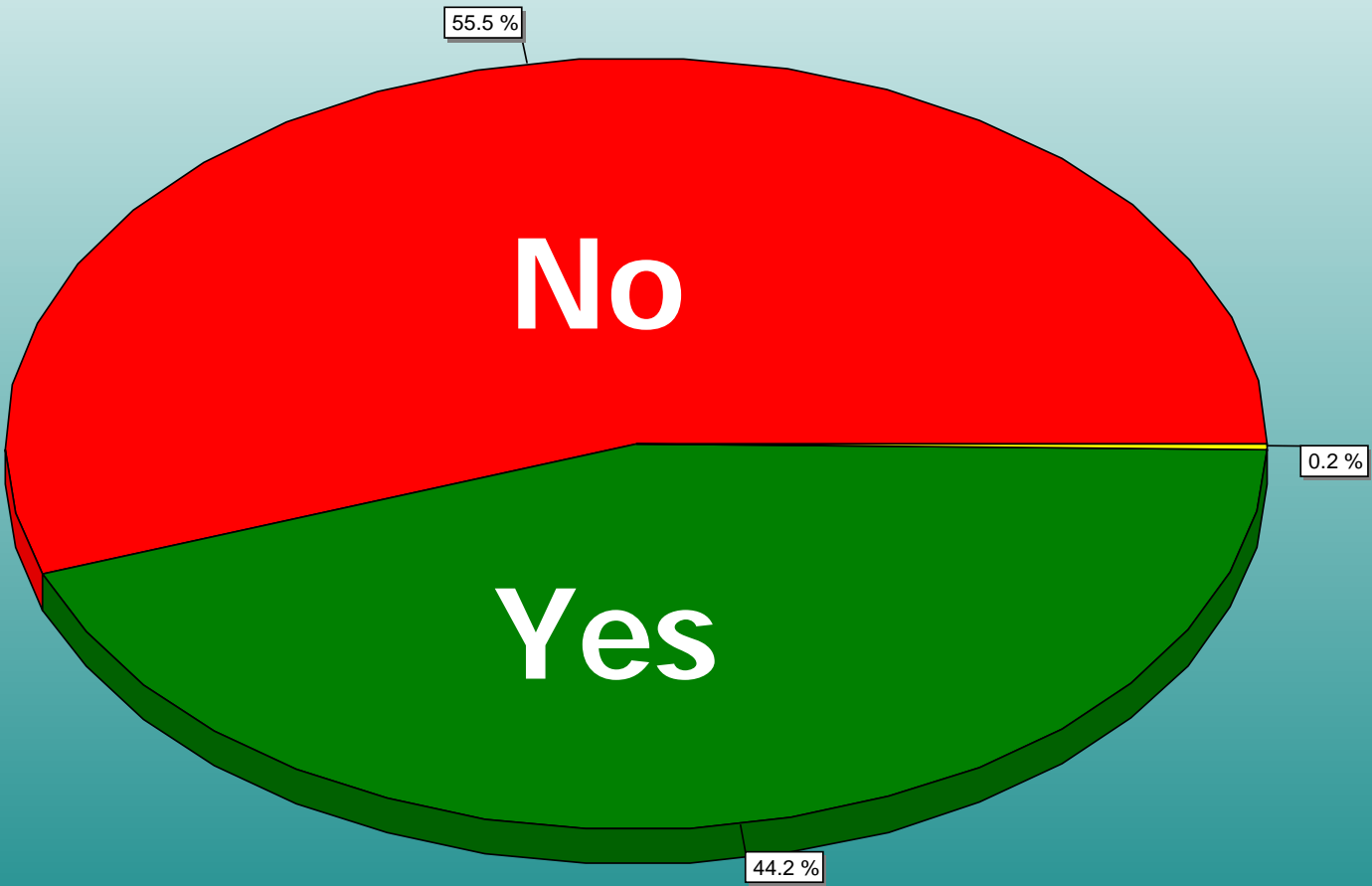


What is your age?



IF THE RESPONDENT IS OVER THE AGE OF 18, ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:

Do you have a child or children who currently live with you?

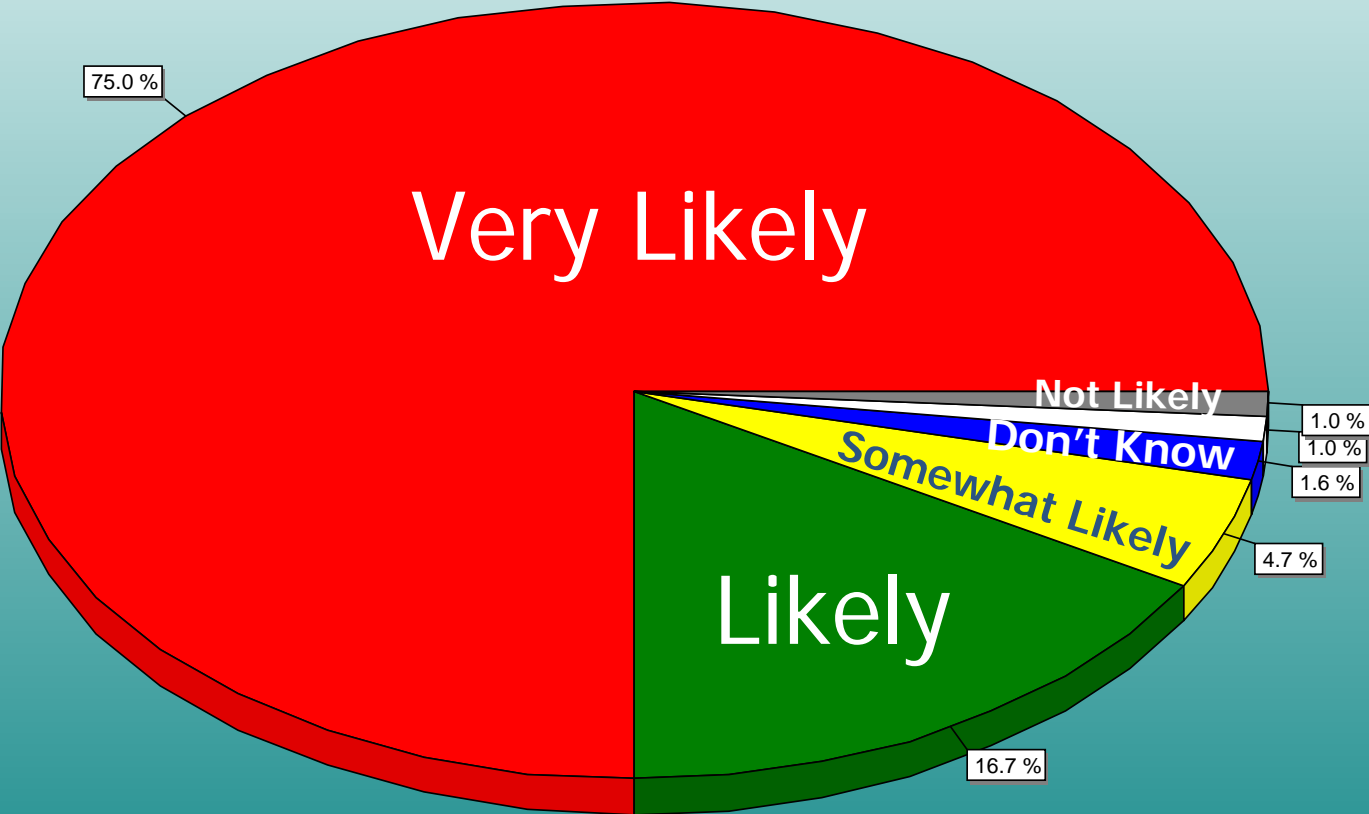


How likely are you to pay attention to information your child or children bring home to you?

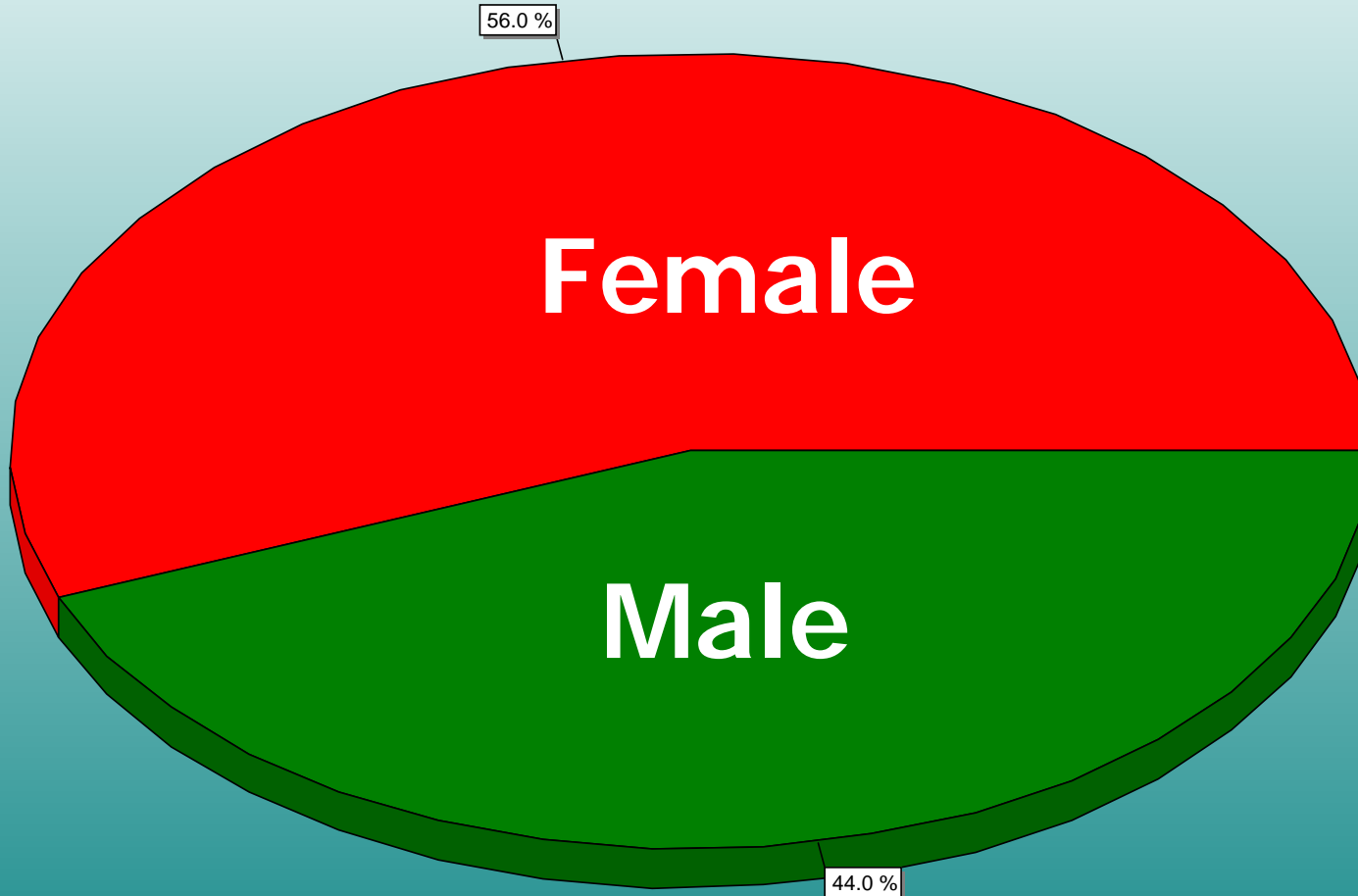
92% of survey respondents are very likely (75%) or likely (17%) to pay attention to information that their children bring home to them.

<u>Response</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Very Likely	144	75.0%
Likely	32	16.7%
Somewhat Likely	9	4.7%
Not Likely	2	1.0%
Don't Know	3	1.6%
Refuse/ No Answer	2	1.0%

How likely are you to pay attention to information your child or children bring home to you?



Gender



Recommendations

Build Upon Success of Mojave Max Program

- The assessment research clearly indicates that the Mojave Max Program is a successful educational outreach effort.
- Program recognizes the importance of reaching children at appropriate age levels, when behavior is learned.
- The Program is described by teachers as “authentic learning” and thoroughly engaging for students due to the program’s emphasis on mixing facts with fun.
- Anecdotal: Mojave Max has personalized the desert for students, making them more apt to respect their environment as a result of this “spokes-tortoise.”

Recommendations

Specific Recommendations –

Just like “Punxsutawney Phil,” Mojave Max has the potential to gain recognition in a much larger scope, representing the arrival of spring and linked to health of the desert.

- Increase Public Relations Efforts
- Build-up anticipation for the announcement of the contest winner by using low-cost promotion tools such as PR efforts, including periodic media advisories with message points.
- Consider a “Mojave Max Watch” (MMW)
 - Send MMW daily updates to meteorologists and to schools so that school administration officials can read the “Mojave Max Watch” update (“Mojave Max says...”) during a school’s morning PA news announcements each day for two weeks. Feature updates on website.

Recommendations

Specific Recommendations –

- Make the Winner Announcement a Larger Event
Although there are challenges with not knowing when Max will emerge...
 - Hold a press conference-style event and withhold identity of winning student and school until event.
 - Make the event more attractive for media coverage; invite all of the commissioners, CCSD superintendent, and perhaps a local celebrity or two – while keeping the costumed Mojave Max and the student winner as the focus of media attention.
 - Invite previous winners, too, to discuss how their values have changed and to explain to reporters how they gained greater respect and enjoyment of the desert as a result of having participated in contest.

Recommendations

Specific Recommendations –

- Explore the Idea of a Mojave Max Club
 - Continue student interest/involvement via a Mojave Max Club (serving as the name of a school's environmental/conservation club).
 - If an appetite exists, these clubs could be chartered and run by interested students.
- Reach Adults, Too
 - The Mojave Max Program represents a primary focus of the PIE Committee's efforts, with the majority of PIE dollars dedicated to reaching one of its three target audiences: children.
 - Parents/guardians may be a receptive audience if receiving information from the MMP. Survey indicates that 75% of survey respondents said they are very likely (and 17% likely) to pay attention to information brought home to them by their children.

Recommendations

Continue the Mass Media Approach

- The survey research, in particular, indicated the importance of using mass media, especially television.
- Additionally, early research in the assessment process discussed the benefits of creating effective PSA campaigns...
- ...as well as the cost benefits of strategically planning and executing a media campaign and the importance of utilizing professional services to realize the cost savings produced by negotiated media packages.
- HCP Research: current outreach emphasis is concentrated in areas such as print advertising in local newspapers and conveying messages on gov't access television programs, and utilizing PSA-type opportunities.

Recommendations

Continue the Mass Media Approach

- Additionally, the interview process indicated that those individuals closest to the PIE process perceive the benefits of a concerted media campaign.
- There is recognition of the importance of the “media mix.”
- Survey reaffirmed the importance of using mass media to convey messages.
- Survey revealed that 94% of survey respondents have heard or seen conservation messages such as “respect, protect, and enjoy” the desert. Of the 94%, 56% of respondents saw the messages on television.
- Mass media efforts should involve the Spanish speaking population as well since the Spanish speaking population in the Las Vegas Valley exceeds 20 percent.

Recommendations

Take Focused Approach with Special Interest Groups

Address certain target audiences differently – not necessarily in terms of the kind of messages, but more in terms of how they receive the messages.

Desert Recreation Enthusiasts

- Distribute or post messages at points where enthusiasts commonly recreate in Clark County (I.e., trailhead signage and booth presence or sponsorship messaging at appropriate desert activities and events);
- Reach youthful enthusiasts through Mojave Max Program.
- Additionally, more frequent desert recreation enthusiasts may be reached via communication channels offered by outdoor/desert recreation clubs and organizations.

Recommendations

Take Focused Approach with Special Interest Groups

Address certain target audiences differently – not necessarily in terms of the kind of messages, but more in terms of how they receive the messages.

Rural Residents

- Conduct outreach meeting(s) where representative of DCP would both talk to and listen to the rural community.
- Assessment research emphasizes that personal, interactive contact with the rural community would have the greatest potential in terms of effectively delivering conservation messages.
- Also, the research suggests that what PIE is already achieving, such as its partnership with a rural-based organization, is important.

Recommendations

Take Focused Approach with Special Interest Groups

Address certain target audiences differently – not necessarily in terms of the kind of messages, but more in terms of how they receive the messages.

OHV Users

- OHV users are not a community per se, nor necessarily a cohesive group.
- Reach them where they purchase their vehicles or the shops they return to for maintenance, parts, repair, and/or accessories.
- Moreover, who communicates to OHV users is important – OHV enthusiasts who serve on the PIE Committee already help in this regard.

Recommendations

Take Focused Approach with Special Interest Groups

Address certain target audiences differently – not necessarily in terms of the kind of messages, but more in terms of how they receive the messages.

Teachers

- Reaching teachers may take a combination of efforts (written communication that would arrive in teacher boxes, mass media advertising, and use of the “InterAct” intranet system of the Clark County School District).

Recommendations

Address Communication Barriers

- Some focus group participants indicated that they are more receptive to information delivered to them by their peers and peer groups than perceived “outside” individuals, organizations, and agencies.
- This finding suggests that one of the PIE Committee’s most valuable resources are those individuals who serve on the committee – whose voices on the committee are representative of their communities and whose active participation demonstrates the diverse interests involved in directing and planning PIE efforts.

Recommendations

Consider End-User with Products

- Assessor has observed how the product selections seem tied to cost consideration, the ability for the product to carry appropriate messages, and a product's (presumed) utility for its intended audience.
- Products will have greater potential to be effective in carrying messages to target audiences if the product is actually used (desired) by the end user.
- Clark County Fair survey results – almost 50% of the respondents favored clothing items. *The assessor recognizes people may favor more expensive items, but cost considerations must be weighted with a product's potential effectiveness in carrying messages.*

Recommendations

Keep Messages Consistent

- Research uniformly states: Once you decide on a central message, stick with it. “Respect, Protect, and Enjoy.”
- Advertising & PR professionals know that a message takes a long, painstaking time to build up, and using multiple messages can water down the potency of a consistent and repetitive message.

Recommendations

Increase Message Delivery Efficiency

The assessment research indicates that beyond the Mojave Max Education Project, more should be done to put the empowerment of environmental education into the hands of teachers to achieve more efficiency in the delivery of conservation information and the messages of the DCP to achieve program objectives.

- Develop Mojave Max Curriculum and Teaching Materials
 - Several research processes indicated the importance of developing Mojave Max science-based curriculum and appropriate teaching materials.
 - HCP research demonstrated that developing curriculum and working directly with teachers is viewed as a more efficient delivery method than, with limited resources, having a group of volunteers directly reaching the children.

Closing Comments

Why is the PIE Program such a success?

- The PIE Committee is comprised of a group of hard working and dedicated volunteers who represent numerous stakeholders – this open and inviting structure allows for diverse voices.
- The program has received national recognition for its Mojave Max Program, which successfully engages thousands of Clark County students each year by mixing fun with facts.
- The PIE Program has realized the importance of seeking help and advice from professional services, such as its strategically planned and coordinated PSA and mass media campaigns, which have also saved the program money through negotiated media packages.

Closing Comments

Why is the PIE Program such a success?

- The DCP has formed a number of fruitful partnerships.
- Lastly, through its current strategic planning efforts and recent assessment process, the DCP PIE Program demonstrates that it continues to enhance, adapt, and improve the components of an already successful program.

“Success is a journey—not a destination.”

- H. Tom Collard

THANK YOU

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Public Information and Education Program**

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