

This presentation premiered at WaterSmart Innovations

watersmartinnovations.com



**Use Only What You Need:
Denver Water's campaign
to create a culture of
conservation**

A vertical graphic on the right side of the slide. The top half is a blue background with a dynamic splash of water. The bottom half is an orange rectangular box containing white text and a logo. The text reads "USE ONLY WHAT YOU NEED." in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the text is the Denver Water logo, which consists of a stylized 'D' icon followed by the words "DENVER WATER" and the website "denverwater.org" in a smaller font.


**USE ONLY
WHAT YOU
NEED.**

 **DENVER WATER**
denverwater.org

About Denver Water

- **Oldest water utility in Colorado; largest between California and the Mississippi River**
- **Serves 1.3 million people in the Denver Metro area**
- **Almost all supply comes from mountain snowmelt**
- **Uses 1/3 of the state's treated water supply**

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Why Conserve?




- **Semi-arid climate; average annual precipitation of only 14 inches**
- **Evidence of climate change**
- **Growth; future supply**
- **Right thing to do**
- **Droughts in 1930s, 1950s, 1970s - - 2002 drought worst on record**

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The Goal

- **Cut consumption by 22% from pre-drought years**
- **Establish a conservation ethic and permanent behavior change among Denver Water customers**

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Future Supply Strategies

- 1. Conservation**
- 2. Recycling**
- 3. Developing new supplies**

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Communication Objectives

- **Primary objective:**

**Make water conservation
a Colorado lifestyle
and preserve Denver's
heritage and quality of life**



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Conservation Strategies: Use Only What You Need

- Public outreach model known as **community-based social marketing**
 - Changing behavior by blending nontraditional and conventional communication methods




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Conservation Strategies, cont'd.

- Advertising campaign
- Rebates and incentive contracts
- New operating rules, enforcement and fines
- Conservation rates
- Outreach to high-use customers


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Pre-Campaign Research

- **Conducted research to identify barriers and determine how customers would react to different messages**
- **“Conserve” = hardship, self-deprivation**
- **“Don’t waste” = agreeable, could support**

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Ad campaign: Year 1

Semi-Traditional

- **Billboards**
- **Print ads**
- **Bus ads**
- **Bill stuffers**



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Ad campaign: Year 1 Non-Traditional



- Taxi
- Yard signs
- Bench



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Ad campaign: Year 2 Semi-Traditional



- Billboards
- Microsite
 - Provide conservation tips and enlist ambassadors with freebies
- Pledge
- TV spot

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Ad campaign: Year 2 Non-Traditional

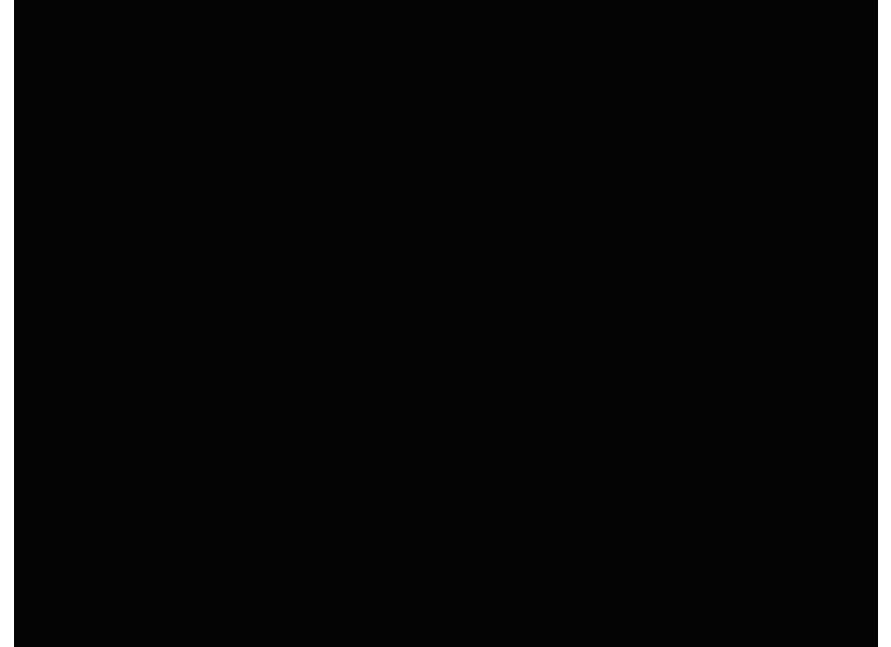
- **Running toilet**
- **Return of yard signs and taxi**



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Ad campaign: Year 2 TV spots




Ad campaign: Year 3

Semi-Traditional

- Billboards (added pole wrap)
- TV spot – drunk flowers in Spanish
- Online banner ads and e-mail blasts
- Continuation of microsite and freebies



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Ad campaign: Year 3

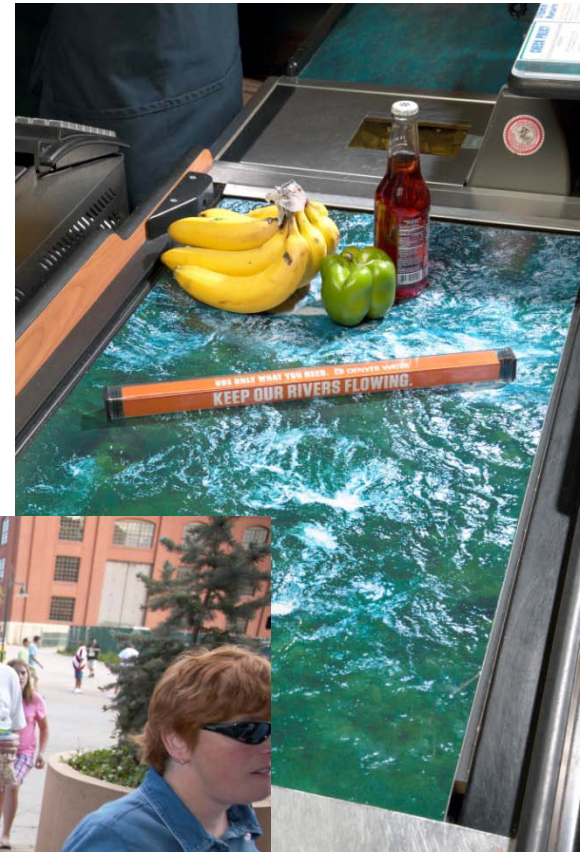
Non-Traditional

- Plant tags
- Running toilet and taxi
- Yard signs
- Barrels
- Conveyer belts in grocery stores
- Sandwich boards



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Ad campaign: Year 4 Semi-Traditional

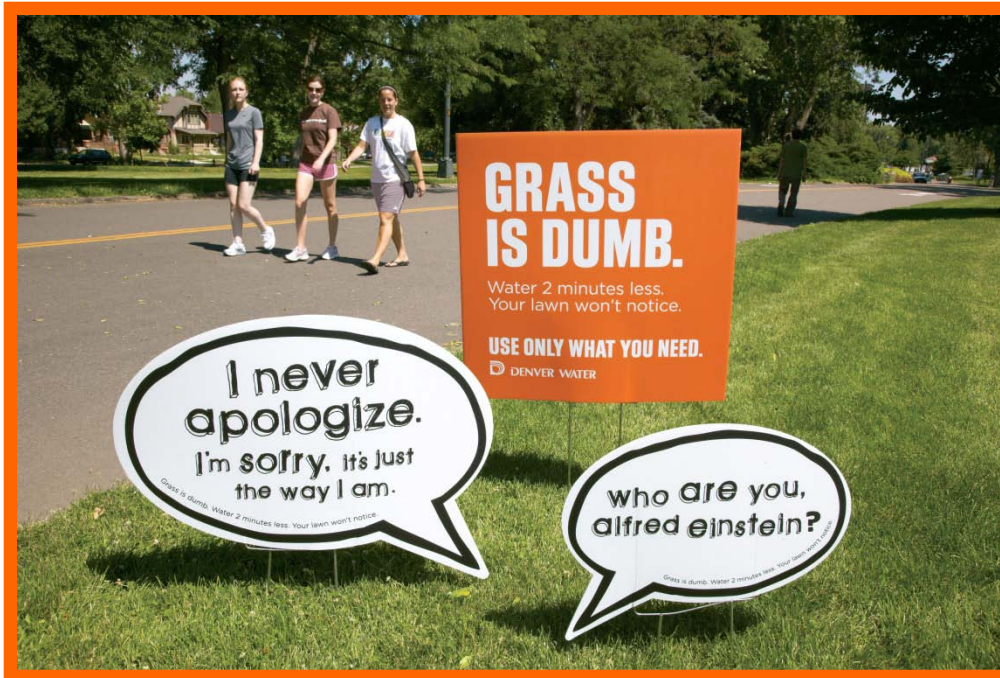
- Billboards
- Bus ads
- New TV spots
- Microsite: links to controller manuals
- Target water wasters: metro-Denver map with most efficient/inefficient neighborhoods
- Online banner ads



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Ad campaign: Year 4 Non-Traditional

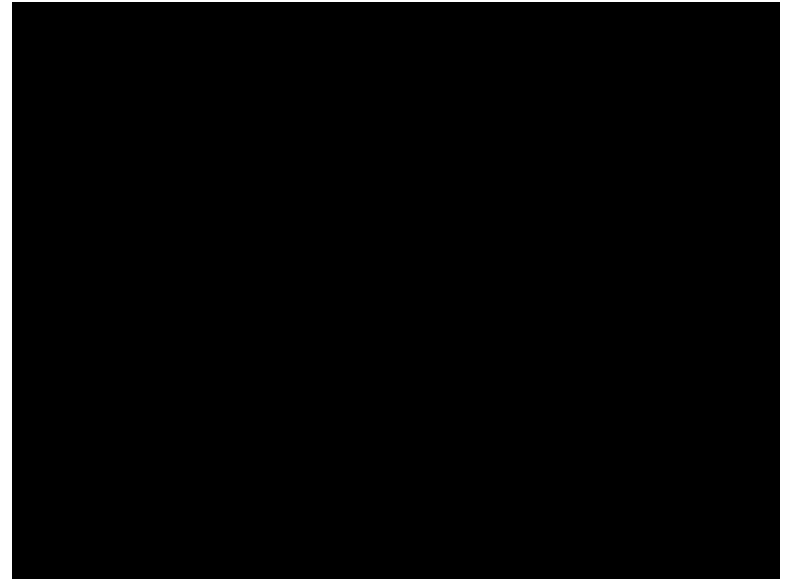


- Talk bubble signs
- Yard signs (targeted libraries, schools, housing authority)
- Return of mobile barrels, running toilet and taxi

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Ad campaign: Year 4 TV spots



Results – Water Use Reduction

- **Between 1993 and 2001, Denver Water customers used an average of 211 gpcd.**
- **During drought years 2002-2004, average water use fell to 169 gpcd, a 20-percent drop.**
- **With return of more typical weather in 2007, per capita use climbed only to 171 gpcd – 19 percent below pre-drought.**
- **2008 = 18 percent below pre-drought**
- **2009 = 33 percent below pre-drought**

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Results – Ad Campaign Public Commitment

Total Freebies given away to customers:

- **11,000 yard signs**
- **6,000 T-shirts**
- **5,000 pin/buttons**
- **4,500 canvas totes**
- **3,500 stickers**
- **5,000 other: magnets, Frisbees, plant tags, tattoos, rubber ducks**

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Results – useonlywhatyouneed.org

2007: 11,300 visitors

2008: 15,000 visitors

2009: 9,800 visitors

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Social Media

YouTube:

- **Drunk Flowers 9,300 views**
- **Running Toilet 5,000 views**
- **Grass is Dumb 1,600 views**


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Measuring Effectiveness

- **Denver Water hired research firm in fall 2007 to gather feedback from customers:**
 - **82% were aware of campaign and understood message of cutting waste**
 - **70% customers said they have changed their water use behavior during the past few years. Number one reason cited: “conservation is the socially responsible thing to do”**
 - **Plan to survey again at end of 2009**


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National and International Recognition

- Editors of magazine in United Kingdom saw materials online and published them
- Campaign was one of 32 featured at a media show in Venice, Italy
- *The Wall St. Journal* – Best of the Web
- ABC.com – Crazy & Creative Advertising

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Questions?

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