This presentation premiered at WaterSmart Innovations

watersmartinnovations.com
Motivating Water Customers through Social Media

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Where?

- Williamson County (conservative)
- Just north of Austin
- IH-35 corridor
- Avg rainfall = 34”
- Water planning group G
- Brazos River Authority
City Stats

- **Rapid** population growth:
  - 1990 = 30,923 residents
  - 2000 = 61,136 residents
  - 2010 = 99,887 residents
  - Service area population ~ 140,000

- ~32,000 direct **water connections**
  - Of those 29,500 are **residential**
    - Summer Avg = 12,900 gallons
    - Winter Avg = 6,100 gallons

- Wholesale to 8 MUDs

- **Water Sources**:
  - Lake Georgetown – Lake Stillhouse Hollow
  - Edwards Aquifer (<8 mgd)
Raw Water Lines from Lake Stillhouse Hollow and Lake Georgetown
Why communication has it’s challenges:

- Very close proximity to Austin
- One local newspaper that publishes as a supplement to Austin paper
- One monthly printed free paper
- No “real” TV station
- No local radio stations
- Round Rock is on a **different water source** (read: different restrictions) from many of our neighbors
Water Outreach Outlets

**Usual Suspects:**
- Website
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Water bill message
- Bill insert
A Blog is Born

- more flexibility than web
### Blogging

- Goal is 2/month
- Variety of topics
- Very little feedback
- High readership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blog Title</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Views</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July is Smart Irrigation Month, pt 2</td>
<td>Jul-14</td>
<td>9,767</td>
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<td>July is Smart Irrigation Month, pt 1</td>
<td>Jul-14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sooo…What is Water Waste?</td>
<td>May-14</td>
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<td>At the Car Wash</td>
<td>May-14</td>
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<td>Water Workshop at Home Depot</td>
<td>Apr-14</td>
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<td>Summer is Headed our Way</td>
<td>Apr-14</td>
<td>8,985</td>
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<td>RB Sale reminder</td>
<td>Mar-14</td>
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<td>Irrigation Workshop</td>
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<td>Springtime Sprinkler Check</td>
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<td>Rainbarrel Sale</td>
<td>Jan-14</td>
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<td>Leave the Leaves</td>
<td>Jan-14</td>
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<td>Shower Smarter</td>
<td>Dec-13</td>
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<td>Best Seat in the House</td>
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<td>RW Collection--Top 5 Reasons to do it</td>
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<td>8,145</td>
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<td>Vote for…</td>
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<td>When (Not) to Water, part 2</td>
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<td>Water Restrictions in Effect</td>
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<td>When (Not) to Water</td>
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<td>Welcome to the Water Spot</td>
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So…

- Is it working?
- Are people reading and following advice or making any changes at their homes?
Yes!

- **Toilet rebate program participation levels**—
  - Blog posted November 27, 2013
  - Had 65 participants in program during December 2013
    - 30 participants December 2012
    - 12 participants December 2011
  - Another blog posted June 3, 2014 “program returns”
    - 107 participants July/August 2014 compared to 23 previous year

- **Rainbarrel sale participation**—
  - 2 blogs posts—Feb & March 2014
    - 183 barrels sold in 2014
    - 88 barrels in 2013

*Only* difference between years is addition of blog.
Why is the blog working?

Two main reasons:

1. Regularly posted water content
2. Conservation / Water staff is posting directly
   (not waiting on others)
Thank you!

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