



go evwhere

A FLINT ENERGIES PROGRAM



**Communicating
with members
about electric vehicles**

Best Total Communications Plan

Go EVwhere: A Flint Energies Program



Summary

As a rural electric cooperative, Flint Energies' mission is to serve electricity to our members while improving the quality of life for those that we serve. Not only do we serve the members on our lines, but we also aid communities that receive power from other electric utilities. In our service to others, we must anticipate the needs of our members and meet those needs. Flint Energies has been anticipating the needs of our members for more than 85 years and we continue to do so. The future of transportation is electric. It will transform the electric industry and rural America. Electric vehicles (EVs) are anticipated to take over America's roadways, much like gas-powered vehicles once overtook horse and buggies.

While knowledge of EVs is still nascent among rural Georgians, it is our duty as an electric cooperative to educate our members and employees about them, control our load growth and encourage EV charging during the least costly time of day. With the announcement of not one but two EV manufacturing facilities (Rivian and Kia) being built in Georgia, the time is now. It is essential for Flint to get ahead of the impending EV tidal wave that is anticipated for the Peach State and subsequently the nation.

As part of our Go EVwhere program, Flint Energies developed several targeted programs to educate and encourage early acceptance of EVs among employees and different member classes, from incentivizing home charging to reducing range anxiety across the co-op's vast 17-county service territory and giving local builders an advantage in a booming housing market.

Flint's Cooperative Communications Team was tasked with researching, creating, executing and evaluating a total communications plan to achieve the Co-op's strategic objectives across several target audiences (employees, members and community stakeholders).

The results of the program have been deemed successful based on quantitative measures, such as member count and project completion.

Highlights:

All 100 Drive Free For A Year incentives (a \$33 per month electric bill credit for 12 consecutive months) have been used by Flint members who switched to the Co-op's EV rate.

All 10 commercial charging station incentives have been claimed, five of which were claimed by one member alone.

Due to the builder's interest in the program, the incentive for 30 EV-ready homes in a subdivision was increased to 36 (at \$500 per home).

A Level 3 charger was installed at the Co-op's headquarters in Reynolds, Ga. in the middle of an identified "charging desert."

An EV Day at the Museum of Aviation attracted more than 100 school-age students to participate in electricity-related activities while their parents conversed with Flint Energies Members who are also EV owners. Test drives and rides in the Co-op's Mach-E and the CEO's Ford F-150 Lightning were offered.

All 224 Flint employees received education at the Co-op's all-employee safety meetings and have been encouraged to use the Co-op's Mach-E when a pool vehicle is needed.

10,239 people reached via social media posts.

Go EVwhere logo trademarked.

Purpose

- To provide up-to-the-minute information about Co-op news, programs, safety notices and outage updates
- To educate members on electric vehicles
- To provide an avenue for members to interact with the Co-op



At left: During the EV Day event at the Member of Aviation, Flint employees conversed with Flint members about the benefits of electric vehicles. Touchstone Energy pull-up banners helped support the Co-op's messaging as well as provided decoration.

Role

Flint Energies Cooperative Communications Team was responsible for the total communications program from the research stage and creation of materials to executing the plan and evaluating the results. From development through implementation and beyond, the Go EVwhere program was managed by the Cooperative Communications team and supported by the Co-op's EV Strategy Team, also known as the Go EVwhere Team.

Additional activities include:

- Event coordination
- Logo design and development
- Video production
- Ad creation
- Social media content creation, posting and management
- Copywriting
- Storyboarding
- Research
- Focus group facilitation
- Survey creation and analysis
- Website content management
- Support material creation and design
- Magazine writing
- Media relations
- Promotional items design and procurement
- Presentation development
- Community relations



Above: Chairman of the Go EVwhere Team Brad Knowles closely inspects the battery bank for an electric school bus at the Blue Bird manufacturing facility in Fort Valley, Ga. during the technical workshop held in December 2021.

Flint's Cooperative Communications Team:

- Marian McLemore, VP of Cooperative Communications
- Jennie Lacey, Manager of Cooperative Communications
- Blair Brown, Cooperative Communications Specialist

Flint's Go EVwhere Team:

- Jamie Albritton, Manager of Applications Support
- Stefan Bajai, Electrical Engineer II
- Johnny Chancellor, Supervisor of Automotive
- Jeff Fike, Energy Analyst
- John Fyke, Manager of Accounting Services
- Jake Hopkins, Director of Power Supply
- Brad Knowles, Safety & Loss Control Specialist

Jamie Massey, Rate Analyst
Marian McLemore, VP of Cooperative Communications
Anita Moreno, Director of Member Advocacy
Jeremy Nelms, President / CEO
Rogie Roberson, VP of Member Solutions
Reed Wells, Supervisor of SCADA & Automation

Others' Roles

Resources from Touchstone Energy, Straight Talk, Green Power EMC and other sources were used as needed throughout the program.

Research:

People, co-ops and other organizations that we gleaned EV information from to develop the total communications plan:

Randolph EMC
Cobb EMC
Cape Hatteras EMC
Energy Star
NRECA
Touchstone Energy
Georgia EMC
Green Power EMC
GRESO
Oglethorpe Power Corporation
Beneficial Electricity League
Survey Monkey
Flint Members who are also EV owners
Bluebird
Yancy Bus
NUUVE
ChargePoint
Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia
River Valley Regional Commission
Clean Cities Georgia
Fort Benning, US Army Post, Georgia
Georgia Power
Tesla



Above: Blue Bird representatives give a tour of their electric school bus manufacturing facility to more than 100 co-op employees from nearly 41 EMCs from across Georgia. The workshop was hosted by Flint Energies.

Logo Design:

mPrint (logo design)
IBalz (Mach-E decals)

Logo Trademark:

Daniel, Lawson, Tuggle & Jerles, LLP
Smith Temple Blaha, LLC

Promotional Item Vendors:

Zebra Marketing
Faye B's Reminders
Andrews Business Services
Project Energy Savers
Proforma

Publications:

Georgia Magazine

Video/Animation Production:

72 South Productions
Pioneer Social

Website:

Touchstone Energy's Co-op Web Builder
Choose EV web module

Stock Photos:

Straight Talk
Touchstone Energy
Shutterstock

Events:

Green Power EMC
Bluebird
Yancy Bus
NUUVE
Georgia EMC
Museum of Aviation
National STEM Academy



Above: Flint's EV Strategy Team wanted to create a unique brand for the Co-op's overall EV program. Several names were tossed around before the final one was selected. Created by Marian McLemore, the name Go EVwhere is a play on the words and thoughts of "go green with an EV" and "go everywhere in an EV". The logo was designed in collaboration with mPrint Design of Athens, Ga.

Below: Promotional items were selected to be functional for the EV owner. Several vendors were used to procure these branded promotional items.



Homebuilders Association of Middle Georgia
Tri-County EMC

Media:

Houston Home Journal
13 WMAZ, Macon, Georgia

Homebuilder Partner:

Dreamworks Homes

Commercial Partners:

Five Star Automotive Group, Warner Robins, Ga.
City of Warner Robins, Georgia



Above: Flint's Go EVwhere Team presents an incentive check for the first 10 EV-ready homes to John Kitchens representing DreamWorks Homes in Warner Robins, Ga.

Project's Objective

In the early days of our Co-op, we educated members on the benefits of electric appliances such as refrigerators and ranges. This is our generation's time to educate members on the benefits of the newest electric appliance, electric vehicles. The program's main objective is to become our members' trusted advisor on electric vehicles through education and being a resource for EV information. To do this, we make electric vehicle ownership more attractive and increase EV adoption rates among members by removing the mystery. We're also expanding the network of rural EV charging stations while supporting our rural communities through community development.

Target Audiences

Primary:

Flint Energies consumer-members (residential and commercial), including Board of Directors
Community leaders
Flint Energies employees

Secondary:

Local media
Cooperative network
General public

At right: Flint's Go EVwhere team member Rogie Roberson talks to Flint Members about the "frunk" of the Ford F-150 Lightning.



Estimated Circulation or Number of People Reached

Total: Minimum of 88,421 people reached

Georgia Magazine: 76,422 subscribers

Website: 1,089 unique page views

Social Media: 10,980 followers; 10,239 people reached via social media posts.

Events:

Electric school bus technical workshop: 102
100+ students and 120+ adults attended EV
Day at the Museum of Aviation
Homebuilders Association: 25 homebuilders
Community organizations, other Co-ops,
including statewide meetings: 200+
Co-op employees: 224



Project's Budget

\$15,000

Restrictions, Limitations or Challenges

Budget:

Initially, Flint's Board of Directors approved a budget of \$20,000. However, due to budget cuts from the Co-op's overall budget, the final approved amount was \$10,000. The remaining \$5,000 spent came from the Co-op's general advertising budget. Staying within the total project's amount was especially challenging due to inflation rapidly depleting an already limited budget.

Rescheduled event:

Due to the potential impact of Hurricane Ian on the Co-op's service area, we had to reschedule our EV Day event at the Museum of Aviation from October 1 to October 22.

Limited staff availability:

Flint's Cooperative Communications Team has been down one employee since the departure of our Community Connections Specialist in June 2022.



Research

A significant investment of time was put towards research. Flint Energies introduced its electric vehicle rate in 2019. At the time, the (former) CEO did not want to promote the rate to Flint's consumer-members as he felt electric transportation would likely be a passing fad that was unlikely to affect rural Georgia. In October 2020, Flint's new CEO, Jeremy Nelms, came on-board and fully embraced the electric vehicle movement. Shortly thereafter, he created the Co-op's first EV Strategy Team consisting of a cross-section of employees from different departments across the Co-op. Although research began in late 2020, it wasn't until 2021 that our research efforts really gained steam in the development of a total communications program.


The Cooperative Communications Team was an integral part of the EV Strategy Team and helped lead the research portion of the program. Research began simple enough by reaching out across the cooperative network to ask peers and colleagues about their EV programs. The team consulted with state and national partners like Georgia EMC, Green Power EMC, GRESCO, NRECA and Touchstone Energy to gain knowledge about the potential impact of electric vehicles on Flint's system and cooperative business model. Other research was conducted by reading daily about electric vehicles in the news and sharing with the EV Strategy Team.

Research efforts included:

- Survey of Flint Energies consumer-members who were electric vehicle owners
- Focus group and discussions with Flint EV owners
- Review of Georgia EMC, Green Power EMC, Energy Star, NRECA and Touchstone Energy electric vehicle communications and education materials
- Discussions with other co-ops about their electric vehicle programs
- Internet research
- Department of Transportation research
- Electric vehicle test drives
- Research of Flint's electric system and members' energy usage

Research proved that climate change regulations were causing automakers (GM, Ford, Volkswagen, Rivian, Stellantis, etc.) to make significant investments (more than \$225 billion) in electrified transportation by 2025. Even with this hard-court press by automakers, research found that most consumer-members were unaware of electric vehicles outside of golf carts. Other barriers to EV adoption were the perceived high costs, limited range and lack of charging stations.

The amount of information gleaned from our members was the most valuable in the development of our communications plan.



Action

Key steps in action plan:

Develop a logo encompassing the Co-op's overall EV program

Determine key messages for each target audience

Create talking points

Develop content for each communication channel

Georgia Magazine

Website

Social media

Presentations

Internal communications

Handouts

Promotional items

Video/animation

Events

Direct mail

Evaluate the number of residential, commercial and residential builders claiming the incentives offered

Evaluate the reach and engagement of each communication vehicle used

Revise action plan as needed due to changing circumstances such as legislative, budgetary, etc.



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Considering an electric vehicle (EV)? More and more people are making the switch to electric vehicles as the technology improves and costs decrease. Driving an EV is good for the environment and easy on the wallet. Flint Energies is excited to support EV adoption and has a variety of programs available to our Members.

Switch to our EV rate and save \$

Did you know that the majority of Flint Members on our EV rate save money on their energy bills? Yes, it's true. More than 91% of the Flint Members who have been on our EV rate for at least a year have seen savings when compared to those Members on our regular residential rate. One Member has realized more than \$600 in savings by taking advantage of off-peak charging.*

Switch now and drive free for a year

What are you waiting for? Switch to our EV rate today and drive free for a year!*** For a limited time, Flint Members will receive a \$33 per month bill credit for 12 consecutive months by signing up for our EV rate. That's nearly \$400 in free electricity for the year! All you have to do is show proof of EV ownership to qualify.

Questions?




Visit flintenergies.com/considering-electric-vehicle or contact our Member Solutions Team at 800.342.3616.

*Based on 2021 data.

**Flint Energies EV pilot program offers listed here are first come, first serve and may be discontinued at anytime.



Electric vehicle charging levels

AC Level One	AC Level Two	DC Fast Charge
		
VOLTAGE: 120V 1-Phase AC	VOLTAGE: 208V or 240V 1-Phase AC	VOLTAGE: 208V or 480V 3-Phase AC
AMPS: 12-16 Amps	AMPS: 12-80 Amps (typ. 32 Amps)	AMPS: +500 Amps
CHARGING LOADS: 1.4 to 1.9 kW	CHARGING LOADS: 2.5 to 19.2 kW (typ. 6.6kW)	CHARGING LOADS: 50-350 kW
VEHICLE CHARGE TIME: 3-5 Miles per Hour	VEHICLE CHARGE TIME: 10-20 Miles per Hour (20% for every 2% increase)	VEHICLE CHARGE TIME: 60-80 Miles in 30 Minutes

Sources: Advanced Energy and EPA



Communication

Georgia Magazine:

To reach Flint Consumer-members, we published articles in our member newsletter, Energy Lines, which is inserted into the center of Georgia Magazine monthly. This is the Co-op's legal organ and main way we communicate with our membership.

Website:

A specified section of the Co-op's website is designated as the go-to EV resource for Flint members. Information relating to EVs and the Co-op's electrified transportation programs, includes a Know Before You Buy section and a cost comparison calculator.

Social Media:

Posts were created and placed on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The posts highlighted the residential incentive of Drive Free for a Year, event announcements or were educational in nature.

Presentations:

PowerPoint presentations were created to share program information at a variety of community and industry events.

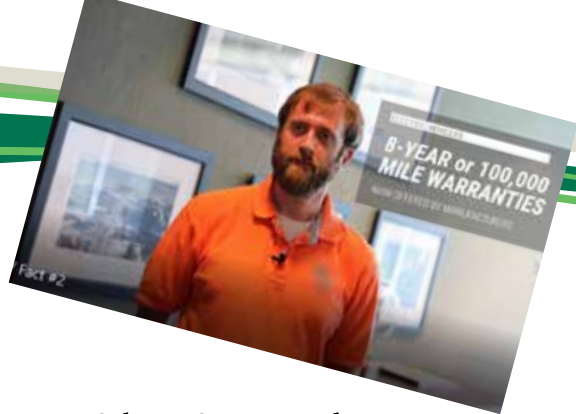
Internal communications:

To become our members' trusted advisor on electric vehicles, it was imperative that Flint Energies employees were educated on the subject, especially those who encounter members more frequently like line workers and MSRs. Training was held during the all-employee safety meetings and a recording was made available on SharePoint for employees to view/review at their leisure. Flint CEO Jeremy Nelms frequently mentioned the Go EVwhere program in his biweekly videos to employees. The program is often highlighted in written Table Talk and Board reports, available to employees on a biweekly basis.

Handouts:

Several handouts were created to promote the Go EVwhere program and its three member-facing incentives. A general one is available through our Member Solutions Representatives and member-facing lobbies. One targeted for homebuilders was distributed at a Homebuilders Association meeting. A vehicle fast fact sheet was developed for employees who drive the Co-op's Mach-E to community events.





Events:

We partnered with Green Power EMC, Blue Bird Corporation, Yancey Bus Sales & Service and NUUVE to host an electric school bus technical workshop at our Member Center office. The event included a ride on an electric school bus to Blue Bird's assembly plant in Fort Valley, Georgia.

Flint partnered with the Museum of Aviation and the National STEM Academy to provide a free EV Day event which provided hands-on activities for students and test drives/rides for their parents. This allowed students and adults alike to get up close and personal to EVs educating them and dispelling myths.

Direct mail:

We mailed letters to Flint Members already on the EV rate to notify them that they were grandfathered in on the Drive Free for a Year promotion.

Video/animation:

Videos and animations were developed to share with employees and members via internal communications, social media channels and our Charge-Point charger touchscreen.

Promotional items:

Branded golf shirts were created for team members to wear to events to bring awareness to the program.

Branded promotional items that were functional for electric vehicle drivers/owners were distributed to bring awareness to the program. The items included: trunk organizers, USB car chargers, vehicle sunshades, ceramic car coasters, travel mugs, koozies, reusable grocery totes, sling backpacks and drawstring bags.

Children's coloring books were also made available.



Evaluation

Measuring success came through the strategic goals set forth by the Go EVwhere team, monitoring social media and engagement, monitoring and recording press coverage, etc.

- 100+ new EV rate enrollments since January 1, 2022.

- 36 EV-ready homes built

- Five commercial chargers installed; five to be installed

- One DC fast charger installed at Co-op's Headquarters, eliminating a charging desert (more than 50 miles to the nearest DC fast charger)

- Earned media in local publications: Houston Home Journal and 13 WMAZ

- Social media:

 - 10,249 people reached

 - 224 engagements

 - 7 shares

- EV Day at the Museum of Aviation:

 - Six Flint Consumer-members/EV owners participated in the event

 - More than 100 school-age children participated in STEM activities

 - More than 120 adults conversed with EV owners and took test drives/rides

- Community Presentations

 - Nine

 - 220+ People reached

- Co-op Presentations, including Electric School Bus Technical Workshop

 - Three

 - 40 EMCs plus statewide organizations and community leaders reached; 100+ people reached



Success can also be measured in the eyes of our peers. Alan Shedd, Director of Emerging Technologies at Oglethorpe Power, said (in January 2022) he recently read a report that outlined the best member engagement practices for EV adoption. Alan said what we are doing at Flint is exactly (point by point) what was recommended in the report. He also said that we were doing a better job at our EV efforts than other larger EMCs with more of a budget, etc. Alan was also very appreciative and complementary that we were willing to share our knowledge and experiences with our sister co-ops.

We've been asked to present at several statewide meetings about our Go EVwhere program and share our experiences so that other co-ops can "admire and acquire" what we've done. Marian McLemore has been asked to

sit on the statewide EV marketing committee as a result. Another member of the Go EVwhere team sits on the statewide EV technical committee. In addition, other organizations like the Carl Vinson Institute of Government have asked us to present at regional commission meetings to give community leaders a better understanding of EVs, especially how they will affect rural communities.

Success can be measured by the EV member-enthusiasts we have on our lines that are willing to take several hours of their weekend with no compensation to evangelize about their EV experiences to other Flint members. The conversations our Go EVwhere team and our EV member-enthusiasts are having with an impact on our average members and increasing their interest in EVs.

The Go EVwhere program is changing the minds of our members about electric transportation. More and more of them now know that they can go everywhere they want to go in an EV.

