



Docket 24826: 2025 Integrated Marketing & Communications Plan

Propane Education & Research Council

APPLICANT INFORMATION

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Amount Requested: \$ 11,224,600

Start Date: 01/01/2025

Organization: Propane Education & Research Council

Phone: 202-452-8975

Total Project Cost: \$ 11,224,600

End Date: 12/31/2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Funding Request Priority Area

Consumer Education and Awareness

Project Summary

- *Briefly describe the proposed product or idea, its importance, its benefits, and the market and/or audience it serves. Briefly outline the scope of work.*

The integrated communications and marketing docket supports 2025 programming for all markets, based on the communication strategy and messaging objectives for paid, earned, and PERC's owned media channels. The docket also includes programming for environmental thought leadership, corporate communications, as well as digital content development and strategy.

While the cross market budget has increased slightly due to shifting a communications platform subscription from the Data and Technology budget, this docket's net decrease of 13% vs. 2024 is due to shifting autogas funding from communications to research and development, and reducing spending for environmental thought leadership and residential construction.

The 2025 plan developed with the guidance of the Communications and Marketing Strategy Working Group will continue to increase awareness and positive perception of propane among consumer and business audiences through PROPANE Energy for Everyone® branded messaging and to increase the likelihood to use or specify propane in all markets.

The campaign will achieve its goals by increasing awareness and understanding of propane's benefits through a national educational campaign, increasing propane's share of voice and positive sentiment nationally through PR efforts, and by driving audiences to our website to engage with educational content.

We will continue to address the eco-inclined and eco-earnest personas because this cohort will have increasingly more influence on energy decisions that impact the future of our market sectors like transportation, material handling, agriculture, commercial construction and power generation.

As renewable propane becomes more widely available, we will increase our efforts to educate audiences about the benefits of both conventional and renewable propane, securing propane's role as a clean alternative energy on the path to zero emissions.

Strategic Importance

- *Describe how this initiative supports PERC's strategic plan including the strategic pillars.*
- *Describe how this initiative is important to the propane industry.*
- *Describe how this initiative helps achieve PERC's aspiration to increase uses and users.*
- *Explain why this docket is critical to achieving your goal.*

This docket directly supports the pillars of the strategic plan, specifically growing users and uses of propane and increasing propane's voice in the national energy conversation.

Each market's plan supports the business development strategy for growing users and uses by increasing the likelihood to use and to specify propane and increases propane's voice in the energy conversation by asserting propane's role in the wide path to a zero carbon future as a clean, reliable, affordable energy solution. This docket is critical to achieving our awareness, perception, and likelihood to specify goals as well our goal to increase propane's voice in the national energy conversation.

DETAILED BUSINESS CASE

Scope–

- *List the activities paid for by this docket only (research, consultants, sponsorships, etc.)*

This docket pays for all paid media placements (digital, print, TV, radio, social, and outdoor), earned media placements and tracking (national and trade media outreach, special events, and tracking, production of creative, advertising, and written and video content, consumer research, website development and deployment, environmental thought leadership earned media, events, podcast production, social influencers. This plan will align with and support the business development plan for each market, focusing on the target audience(s), select application(s), and key benefits in all messaging.

Vendor Capabilities

- *Does this docket engage external vendors such as research partners, OEMs, Consultants, Subject Matter Experts, PR/Media or Creative Agency Assistance?*

Yes

- *Describe any external vendor's capabilities (if engaged) to produce work that is paid for by this docket. This section should not describe PERC staff nor the project lead's role. Who is responsible for creating deliverables – content/research/data/etc.? What's the review process and who is involved? List any external agencies or outside organizations that will be utilized and identify the purpose for which they will be needed*

Our major project partners include GRP Media who will purchase media, Elevation Advertising who will develop creative materials, Swanson Russell for trade P.R., and Hahn Public for environmental thought leadership. They have demonstrated their ability to deliver results over the past 3+ years of working with PERC.

Industry Engagement –

- *Does this project require propane industry stakeholders' involvement to be successful?*

Yes

- *How will you engage industry stakeholders?*

We engage the Communications and Marketing Strategy (COMS) working group of the Advisory Committee to provide input when developing our programming, vetting partnerships, and identifying growth opportunities. There are five project teams that advise specific sections of our planning process: environmental thought leadership, influencers, National Propane Day, renewable propane activation, and safety messaging.

Cost/Benefit Analysis –

- *What is the potential impact? (i.e., NPV, new gallons, units sold, persons trained, propane industry resource savings, safety, consumer education, etc.)*
- *What are the potential risks to achieving the impact? (i.e. fuel price; regulatory, environmental, or legislative considerations; propane marketer support)*
- *Are other parties or organizations involved?*
- *For products:*
 - *Provide five-year estimated sales projections for the product (if applicable) and a list of factors that may influence the estimates.*
 - *How many gallons of propane does the product use per unit per year?*
 - *Provide best, worst, and intermediate projection scenarios and describe what variables contribute to each scenario*

Among the key messages that we will employ to drive adoption of propane across our markets are propane’s reliability, its ability to increase businesses’ efficiency and lower total cost of ownership, achieve environmental requirements, and to satisfy their customers’ needs.

We will increase the perception of propane as a clean energy among existing and prospective customers in propane country which will help propane retailers gain more customers and sell more gallons and we will do the same among audiences beyond propane country to secure propane's role as an alternative energy into the future.

Risk Assessment

- *Identify 3-5 potential risks to the successful completion of the project or inability to meet outcome targets, how likely those are to happen, impact on the project, and how to resolve those risks.*
- *Indicate low, medium, or high for “Likelihood” and “Impact.”*

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Resolution and/or Contingency Plan
Increased focus on electrification	High	High	Continue to educate business and consumer audiences about the environmental benefits of propane and the importance of energy mix and choice.
Fossil fuel ban	Medium	High	Supply content to support associations' advocacy for clean energy choice.
Innovation from competitor energies (less expensive, lighter batteries, less expensive EVs, and faster charging stations)	High	Low	Continue to support innovation with OEM partners through grant opportunities and collaboration on commercialization plans.
Increased high profile propane accidents	High	High	Identify and correct misperceptions regarding cause if warranted, reiterate safe use and handling of propane, and provide incentives for firefighter training.
Negative press coverage about propane associated with problems with wintertime delivery.	High	High	Prepare state executives and marketers with talking points, engage Rapid Response Team to assist in crisis communications when appropriate.

Aggressive responses to our messaging from journalists, energy competitors, law makers, and regulators.	High	Medium	Engage influencers to act as propane ambassadors by asserting the need for energy choice from a mix of clean options, engage Rapid Response Team to prepare response to competitors, prepare myth busting content preemptively to be tailored for intended audiences, provide industry with talking points to share with staff and customers.
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Budget

- Outline cost per task, including estimated cost share (cash and in-kind).
- If applicable, indicate hourly rates, including overhead.
- Highlight contractor vs. pass-through costs.

See budget below.

Timeline

- Provide a detailed timeline of all activities, tasks, and milestones. Include commencement and completion dates. List most responsible person for each task.

This is an annual plan spanning January - December with programming dates that vary based on market and application. Communications managers are responsible for executing their individual market and project plans. Detailed activities and milestones will be presented at the February Council meeting.

Market

Market – Geographical Reach

- What is the geographical reach (national/regional?)

National

Market – Target Audience

- Who is the target audience?
- Why is the target audience important?

All of our audiences need to be aware and understand our key messaging pillars. These audiences include:

Homeowners and prospective homeowners in propane country who are interested in building, remodeling, or adding or replacing appliances.

Eco-inclined and eco-earnest consumers across the nation whose purchasing and business decisions impact the future of the propane industry.

Construction professionals

Commercial building owners, operators, and specifiers.

Agricultural producers and future farmers

Material handling professionals and terminal operators.

Fleet managers and school transportation directors.

Rental and construction equipment business owners.

Energy and environmental thought leaders, environmental and specifying engineers, scientists, academics, and journalists.

Market – Market Research

- *Have you conducted market research in support of this project?*

Yes

Describe – Annual omnibus / awareness tracker

Market-based intent to specify study

Consumer segmentation study

Leverage and Synergies

Other audiences–

- *How could the content be used by other markets or industry organizations?*
- *How could the contents be used with other audiences beyond the target audience?*

This program will build on success and learnings from previous campaigns, including leveraging influencer relationships and developing new relationships, executing special media events, and focusing paid media efforts with those partners who have delivered best results.

The content can be used by state executives, individual marketers, OEMs, and allied partners including Clean Cities and Communities executives.

Additional audiences could include organizations like the National Recreation & Parks Association.

Development

Delivery

Delivery – Delivery Channels –

- *Describe the distribution channels*
- *What existing delivery channels will be used?*
- *Who is responsible for deploying/delivering product?*

PERC staff and agency partners will be responsible for creating the content needed for this program. Our newly shot and existing video content will be leveraged in 2025.

Delivery – Allied Partner Participation

- *Are there allied or strategic partners who will be engaged in this delivery?*

PERC's media buying partner, GRP, will place the advertising that supports the markets, and PR partners Swanson Russell and Hahn Public will secure earned media placements to support each of our markets.

Customer service and Support Needs —

- *What are the customer service and support requirements?*
- *What service and support resources are required?*

N/A

Are service and support developed through this project? –

No

Is there a PERC website/learning center component that will need to be updated/created? –

Yes

Describe:

Propane.com will be updated with new video and written content throughout the year and website refinements will be on-going.

MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION

Project Deliverables and Market Outcomes

- *Detail how success will be measured for this project overall and by tactic, what the metric is, and when it will be achieved.*

Goal/Milestone	Project Deliverable or Market Outcomes	Metric	By Date	Tied to Payment Y/N	Payment Due upon completion
Leverage the 2024 video assets throughout the 2025 campaign.	Launch ads in Q1-Q4	Delivery of ads	2025-01-31	Yes	
Partner with influencers to reach additional propane business audiences in 2025	Begin engagement in February, 2025	Deployment and posting of content	2025-02-28	Yes	
Increase earned media placements in 2025.	Shift from paid events to pitched events.	Articles, speaking engagements, interviews, and podcasts placed	2025-12-31	Yes	
Increased engagement with content on propane.com	Provide visitors to propane.com with relevant and compelling print and video content.	Increased time on site and reduced bounce rate.	2025-12-31	Yes	
Increase propane gallon growth in 2025	Educate audiences about the benefits of propane and increase positive opinion of propane as a safe, clean, reliable, and affordable energy solution.	Increase composite metric by 2.1%	2025-12-31	Yes	

Intellectual Property

Who owns the data and or intellectual property generated from this project? Describe:

PERC owns the content developed for the campaign in perpetuity, or in the case of influencers, for a period of months according to the individual contract.

Is this a new contractor? No

Budget Impact

- *Provide the budget market & activity this project will be impacting.*

Market & Activity	Amount Requested	Year Total	YTD Remaining	Remaining if Funded
2025 > Agriculture > Communications - Business	\$750,000.00	\$750,000.00	\$750,000.00	\$0.00
2025 > Autogas (On-Road) > Communications - Business	\$500,000.00	\$500,000.00	\$500,000.00	\$0.00
2025 > Cross Market > Communications - Consumer	\$1,149,200.00	\$1,149,200.00	\$1,149,200.00	\$0.00
2025 > Cross Market > Digital Strategy & Analytics	\$452,400.00	\$452,400.00	\$452,400.00	\$0.00
2025 > Commercial > Communications - Business	\$690,000.00	\$690,000.00	\$690,000.00	\$0.00
2025 > Residential > Communications - Consumer	\$5,200,000.00	\$5,200,000.00	\$5,200,000.00	\$0.00
2025 > Material Handling/Industrial > Communications - Business	\$508,000.00	\$508,000.00	\$508,000.00	\$0.00
2025 > Off Road / Power Generation > Communications - Business	\$675,000.00	\$675,000.00	\$675,000.00	\$0.00
2025 > Cross Market > Thought Leadership	\$700,000.00	\$700,000.00	\$700,000.00	\$0.00

2025 > Residential > Communications - Business	\$600,000.00	\$600,000.00	\$600,000.00	\$0.00
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Does this project have a past funding history? Yes

Describe: I feel the funding history is relevant as the past years plans have supported increased awareness and positive opinion of propane and likelihood to specify.

Funding History for Similar Dockets

- Provide a funding history for similar projects, including the project budget, final or current spend, and project results.

Year	Docket #	Project Budget	Project Spend
2021	22786	\$9,863,000.00	\$9,863,000.00
Results:			

Year	Docket #	Project Budget	Project Spend
2022	23255	\$9,363,000.00	\$9,363,000.00
Results:			

Year	Docket #	Project Budget	Project Spend
2023	23654	\$12,863,000.00	\$12,863,000.00
Results:			

Year	Docket #	Project Budget	Project Spend
2024	24186	\$12,863,000.00	\$8,428,887.00
Results:			

2025 Budget PROPOSED			
Market	Tactic	Budget	Total
Homeowner			
	Paid	\$4,550,000.00	
	Production	\$300,000.00	
	Influencers	\$350,000.00	
			\$5,200,000.00
Residential Pro			
	Paid	\$200,000.00	
	Production	\$150,000.00	
	Earned	\$100,000.00	
	Influencers	\$150,000.00	
			\$600,000.00
Commercial			
	Paid	\$280,000.00	
	Production	\$60,000.00	
	Earned	\$100,000.00	
	Program	\$50,000.00	
	Influencers	\$200,000.00	
			\$690,000.00
Agriculture			
	Paid	\$350,000.00	
	Production	\$50,000.00	
	Earned	\$200,000.00	
	Influencers	\$150,000.00	
			\$750,000.00
Autogas			
	Paid	\$200,000.00	
	Production	\$50,000.00	
	Earned	\$200,000.00	
	Program	\$50,000.00	
			\$500,000.00
Material Handling			
	Paid	\$250,000.00	
	Production	\$63,000.00	
	Earned	\$150,000.00	
	Program	\$45,000.00	
			\$508,000.00
Off Road and Power Gen			
	Paid	\$300,000.00	
	Production	\$75,000.00	
	Earned	\$200,000.00	
	Program	\$100,000.00	
			\$675,000.00
Environmental Thought Leadership			
	Paid	\$400,000.00	
	Earned	\$200,000.00	
	Production	\$50,000.00	
	Events	\$50,000.00	
			\$700,000.00
Digital Strategy & Development			
	Content Strategy + Updates	\$152,000.00	
	Development of Content/ Features/Tools	\$300,400.00	
			\$452,400.00
Corporate Communications / Cross Market			
	LP Gas & BPN ads	\$92,000.00	
	Annual Report	\$8,000.00	
	Organic Social Boosting	\$15,000.00	
	Media Training / Crisis Communications	\$5,000.00	
	Consumer Research	\$280,000.00	
	Agency Fees & Retainer	\$625,000.00	
	Cross Market event creative	\$40,000.00	
	National Propane Day	\$35,000.00	
	HubSpot Subscription and Service	\$49,200.00	
			\$1,149,200.00
		Docket Total:	\$11,224,600.00