



Docket 25822: 2027 Marketing and Communications Plan

Propane Education & Research Council

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Primary Contact: Erin Hatcher, Senior Vice President, Communications and Marketing
Email: erin.hatcher@propane.com
Amount Requested: \$ 4,735,952

Organization: Propane Education & Research Council
Phone: 202-452-8975
Total Project Cost: \$ 4,735,952

Start Date: 01/01/2027

End Date: 12/31/2027

Additional Vendors: Our major project partners include GRP Media, who will purchase media for the market halo campaign, Fuel Digital, who will deploy the site-wide refresh of propane.com, Elevation Advertising, who will develop content for propane.com, Acupoll, who will conduct market research, and Hahn Public who will produce the Path to Zero podcast, support PERC's Rapid Response team, and pitch earned media placements for the energy thought leadership program. These partners have demonstrated their ability to deliver results over the past 5+ years of working with PERC.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Funding Request Priority Area

Consumer Education and Awareness, Communications

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 2027 Marketing and Communications Plan will build on the momentum of the Your Power Play campaign by continuing to educate decision makers in all markets about propane's advantages: reliable, affordable, abundant, safe, and clean and increase their likelihood to specify propane for their fleets, farms, operations, and projects.

The components of the plan include a national market halo campaign that targets decision makers in all markets when they are seeking news and entertainment, a PR plan that supports all markets as well as the Energy Thought Leadership program, a site-wide refresh of propane.com with relevant and interactive content and compelling data to educate and inform energy and equipment-related decisions, market research to refine our messaging, and website data to optimize the user journey and drive action.

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 supports the strategic pillar of increasing the likelihood of decision makers to specify propane and propane equipment. The work funded by this docket is important to the propane industry because it educates specifiers in all the markets where propane operates about the advantages of choosing propane to support the goal of increasing users and uses of propane.

DETAILED BUSINESS CASE

Scope–

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

This docket pays for all PR - earned media placements and tracking for national and trade media outreach as well as special events, production of creative and paid media placements (digital, print, TV, radio, social, and outdoor) for the homeowner or market halo campaign, consumer research, website development and deployment, environmental thought leadership earned media, events, and podcast production.

This plan will align with and support the business development plan for each market, focusing on the target audience(s) select applications(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 for the market halo campaign, Fuel Digital, who will deploy the site-wide refresh of propane.com, Elevation Advertising, who will develop content for propane.com, Acupoll, who will conduct market research, and Hahn Public who will produce the Path to Zero podcast, support PERC's Rapid Response team, and pitch earned media placements for the energy thought leadership program. These partners have demonstrated their ability to deliver results over the past 5+ 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 messaging opportunities. There are three project teams that advise specific sections of our planning process: Public Relations, Website, and Social Media.

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 price advantage and reliability vs. competitive fuels, 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 an acceptable energy among our target audiences and increase the likelihood to specify propane which will help business development managers place more propane equipment and help propane retailers gain more customers and sell more gallons.

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
Aggressive responses to our messaging from journalists, energy competitors, and regulators.	Low	Medium	Engage propane allies to act as ambassadors asserting the need for energy choice from a mix of reliable, affordable, and clean options, respond to prompts, prepare preemptive myth busting content to be tailored for intended audiences, and provide industry with talking points to share with staff and customers.
Innovation from competitor energies (less expensive, lighter batteries, less expensive EVs, and faster charging stations)	Medium	Medium	Continue to support innovation with OEM partners through grant opportunities and collaboration on commercialization plans.
Negative press coverage about propane associated with problems with wintertime delivery.	Medium	Medium	Prepare state executives and marketers with talking points and engage Rapid Response Team to assist in crisis communications when appropriate.
Increased high profile propane accidents	Medium	Medium	Identify and correct misperceptions regarding cause if warranted, reinforce the safe use and handling of propane, and provide incentives for first responder training.

Fossil fuel ban	Low	High	Supply content to support associations' advocacy for clean energy choice.
Increased focus on electrification.	Medium	High	Continue to educate audiences about the reliability, affordability, and low emissions of propane, and the importance of energy choice and mix.

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 attachments at the bottom of the form.

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 through December with programming dates that vary based on market application, and opportunity. 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?*

The target audience extends across specifiers in all markets as well as energy thought leaders. All of our audiences need to be aware of and understand our key messaging.

These audiences include:

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

Construction professionals

Commercial building owners, operators, and specifiers.

Agricultural producers and future farmers

Golf course grounds directors

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 – We have conducted a market-based intent to specify study that provided the baseline for the plan's goals and awareness trackers to determine the effectiveness of our campaign.

Market – Other Information

- *What other information do you think is necessary to provide for this project?*

All relevant information has been included in this document.

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.

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

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. Delivery channels consist of paid media for the market halo campaign, earned media placements for Energy Thought Leadership and all markets' PR, propane.com, PERC emails, and PERC's and staff's LinkedIn and other social channels.

Delivery – Allied Partner Participation

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

Allied partners, such as OEMs, state executives, and marketers may participate in PERC's social media campaigns by re-posting content about propane and propane-powered equipment and repurposing articles and pitches in their communities.

Customer service and Support Needs —

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

None.

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
On board new PR agency	Demonstrate command of market audiences, relevant data, and language.	Regular earned media placements	2027-03-31	Yes	
Full year PR theme for tradeshow, pitching, and events	Integrated theme that complements Your Power Play Campaign and increases propane's earned media placements.	Increased quality and quantity of earned media placements	2027-05-31	Yes	
Expand Path to Zero Podcast format	Innovation Lab interviews annually	One episode per quarter	2027-05-31	Yes	
Increase engagement on propane.com	Complete site-wide refresh	Increase time on site through specific actions taken and decrease bounce rate.	2027-05-31	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.

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
2027 > Material Handling/ Industrial > Communications - Business	\$125,000.00	\$450,000.00	\$450,000.00	\$325,000.00
2027 > Residential > Communications - Business	\$100,000.00	\$450,000.00	\$450,000.00	\$350,000.00

2027 > Commercial > Communications - Business	\$100,000.00	\$560,000.00	\$560,000.00	\$460,000.00
2027 > Residential: Homeowner > Communications - Consumer	\$2,400,000.00	\$2,400,000.00	\$2,400,000.00	\$0.00
2027 > Autogas > Communications - Business	\$250,000.00	\$900,000.00	\$900,000.00	\$650,000.00
2027 > Agriculture > Communications - Business	\$120,000.00	\$700,000.00	\$700,000.00	\$580,000.00
2027 > Off Road > Communications - Business	\$125,000.00	\$450,000.00	\$450,000.00	\$325,000.00
2027 > Cross Market > Thought Leadership	\$200,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$0.00
2027 > Cross Market > Digital Strategy & Analytics	\$450,000.00	\$450,000.00	\$450,000.00	\$0.00
2027 > Cross Market > Communications - Consumer	\$195,276.00	\$445,276.00	\$445,276.00	\$250,000.00
2027 > Cross Market > Communications - Business	\$775,324.00	\$775,324.00	\$775,324.00	\$0.00

Does this project have a past funding history? Yes

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
2026	25366	\$10,030,600.00	
Results:			

Year	Docket #	Project Budget	Project Spend
2025	24826	\$11,224,600.00	
Results:			

Year	Docket #	Project Budget	Project Spend
2024	24186	\$12,863,000.00	

Results:

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

Results:

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

Results:

2027 Communications Budget			
Market	Tactic	Budget	Total
Homeowner/Market Halo			
	Paid (National Campaign)	\$2,200,000.00	
	Production	\$200,000.00	
			\$2,400,000.00
Residential Pro			
	Earned	\$100,000.00	
			\$100,000.00
Commercial			
	Earned	\$100,000.00	
			\$100,000.00
Agriculture			
	Earned	\$120,000.00	
			\$120,000.00
Autogas			
	Earned	\$250,000.00	
			\$250,000.00
Material Handling			
	Earned	\$125,000.00	
			\$125,000.00
Off Road			
	Earned	\$125,000.00	
			\$125,000.00
Energy Thought Leadership			
	Earned	\$150,000.00	
	Production	\$50,000.00	
			\$200,000.00
Digital Strategy & Development			

	Content Strategy + Updates	\$350,000.00	
	Development of Content/ Features/Tools	\$100,000	
			\$450,000.00
Corporate Communications / Cross Market			
	Annual Report	\$8,000.00	
	Organic Social Boosting	\$16,676.00	
	Consumer Research	\$150,000.00	
	Agency Fees & Retainer	\$620,000.00	
	National Propane Day	\$20,600.00	
	Hootsuite Subscription and Service	\$50,676.00	
			\$865,952.00
		Docket Total:	\$4,735,952.00