

NEXTCLIMATE.ORG

BUSINESS PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT

Our goal is to inspire people and communities to take action on climate change. Our unique approach is to connect climate-conscious consumers with cost-saving methods for improving their energy efficiency.

BUSINESS CASE

Our strategy is to use the internet to raise awareness about climate change and to connect concerned citizens and communities with energy efficiency solutions.

While nearly all people are aware of climate change, the implications are not thoroughly understood. Most climate science is presented to the public in abstract terms: global temperature, sea level rise, ice cap melt, etc. The implications of these changes, on a local level, have not been well communicated. People are left wondering – what does climate change mean for me? This means there is a large gap between the severity of the impacts of climate change and people's motivation to act. Our goal is to increase awareness of the local impacts of climate change as a way to inspire communities to take action.

Taking action on climate change is usually quantified in terms of reducing your carbon footprint. The carbon footprint is the sum total greenhouse gas emissions that can be attributed to your actions. For most people and organizations, the largest part of their carbon footprint is energy from the combustion of fossil fuels. Fortunately there are many options to improve energy efficiency – ways to reduce greenhouse gases while at the same time saving money due to avoided energy costs.

However, when people are motivated to reduce their carbon footprint, they are faced with a wide array of confusing options. Firstly, the most effective options vary from place to place. While home roof-top solar panels are likely to be cost-effective in Arizona, they may be of less value in cloudy Seattle. Extra insulation would likely be a better option. Second, solutions

designed for the local environment are likely to be more cost-effective than nationally advertised options. Consider some of the most well-communicated ways to reduce your carbon footprint: compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs) and hybrid electric cars. CFLs are helpful, but only a small part of total energy use. Hybrid electric cars are more efficient, but are costly compared to conventional fuel-efficient cars. Accordingly, when people are interested in reducing their carbon footprint, they don't have the information they need. There are many, locally available energy efficiency options that can both save money, due to lower energy costs, and maximize reductions in greenhouse gases.

In summary, the twin problems we seek to solve are

1. people are not sufficiently concerned about climate change, because they are not aware of the consequences to their local area
2. people make inefficient decisions when trying to mitigate climate change, because they are not aware of options that are most cost-effective for their local area

Our hypothesis is that if people were more informed of the local-level risks of climate change, and were immediately connected with services and products in their community, they would make choices to improve their energy-efficiency, save money, and reduce their carbon footprint.

BUSINESS STRATEGY

To solve these problems in an economically sustainable way, we will develop web tools to connect people with energy efficiency services and solutions in their local area.

This is a two part effort.

The first is to develop a web page that allows people to really explore climate change information on a local level. Users will enter their zip code, and be shown compelling graphics displaying the risks and vulnerabilities due to climate change in their area. This content will be sourced from the international scientific community as well as developed by our research team. Furthermore, we will develop tools that will easily allow the scientific community to share their climate change findings, at a local scale, on our website. Users will be provided the opportunity to comment and share this information with their friends and colleagues.

When confronted with local-scale risks of climate change, users will be encouraged to click a button labeled “Act Now!”. This brings the user to the second phase.

Based on the user’s zipcode, they are shown a list of energy-efficiency technologies, cost-saving techniques, and tips that are relevant for that user’s zipcode. The user is invited to provide information to better refine the options.

At this point, we have identified a user, in a particular location, that is interested in making a purchase to improve energy efficiency and save energy expenses. To provide a sustainable stream of income, we will sell sponsorships, on a zip code / metro area basis, for companies and products that provide such services. We will rigorously screen potential sponsors and only present products and services that are effective, robust, and credible. A fraction of the presented options will be reserved for public service information – energy efficiency tips that have no obvious paying sponsor.

STATEMENT OF VALUE ADDED

We are adding value by funnelling climate-conscious consumers to credible, local providers of energy-efficiency products and services. Our hypothesis is that green technology and service companies are willing to pay to sponsor this activity.

BUDGET

Year 1

Revenues	(\$)
Grants	5,000
Web sponsors	200

Expenses	(\$)
Computing	5,200

Year 2

Revenues	(\$)
Grants	5,000
Web sponsors	4,000

Expenses	(\$)
Computing	5,000
Office space	4,000

Year 3

Revenues	(\$)
Web sponsors	10,000

Expenses	(\$)
Computing	5,000
Office space	5,000