

Education

One of the major incentives for building owners to participate in the Atlanta BBC (“ABBC”) is the available free educational programming. Providing educational programs for participants allows for participants to understand the ins and outs of the energy and water efficiency (“EE”) retrofit implementation process involved in the ABBC. Such programs also provide the opportunity for more seasoned participants to focus on particular areas of EE retrofitting (e.g., finding vendors for lighting) to meet their particular EE needs. The educational programs provided range on a spectrum, offering different educational options to different building owners based on their level of expertise and progress on their projects: educational options range from a Buyer’s Guide, giving general information about all topics for business owners, to “Lunch and Learns” focused on EE technologies and “Meet Your Match” events for business owners who are ready to start purchasing EE equipment or implementing their projects to learn about what EE equipment and service solutions are available. This section will focus on the various educational programs offered to participants, as well as the process of implementing the programs.

Buyer’s Guide

In response to the overwhelming interest of local vendors and experts who wish to become a part of the ABBC, as well as in an effort to educate building owners, the ABBC intends to create a Buyer’s Guide. This Buyer’s Guide will be available for local ABBC chapters, including non-commercial information about the ABBC process, Energy Star and Education, Energy and Water Reduction Project types, and Project Execution. The Buyer’s Guide will serve as a provision of general information about the entire process of the ABBC, written by local experts and vendors that have extensive experience in the areas in which they have written.

To date, the process has been to determine the target audience of the Buyer’s Guide, which the ABBC has determined to be building owners looking for self-educational opportunities and programs to prepare owners to become participants in the ABBC. After finding the target audience, the ABBC has developed implementation areas of focus to educate the target audience about: namely Energy and Water Reduction Project types and Project Execution methods, including project financing. The ABBC then approaches local industry experts about authorship of these chapters of the Buyer’s Guide: in exchange for their authorship of the noncommercial chapters, the ABBC offers advertising space in the Buyer’s Guide for the experts and vendors.

While the Buyer’s Guide will provide general information on important EE topics relevant to the ABBC, each local chapter of ABBC need not make their own: other local ABBC chapters may simply opt to adopt the Buyer’s Guide being developed by the ABBC and may update chapters with their own local industry experts as needed.

See: Atlanta BBC Chapter Listing Handout

Program Orientation

Once a building owner has agreed to become a participant in the ABBC, the committees of the program hold a participant orientation seminar. This orientation provides new ABBC participants with general information about the process of the ABBC. The chair of each subcommittee will provide information about the process from their part of the ABBC, including discussions about marketing outreach, educational opportunities, sources of funding for projects, and more.

Lunch and Learns

Offered on a monthly basis and administered by U.S. Green Building Council of Georgia (“USGBA-GA”), these free Lunch and Learns provide an opportunity for participants and their facilities’ support staff to hear panels of approximately two or three experts discussing EE technologies and best practices for use in their EE retrofit projects. Participants are able to engage with vendors and manufacturers at these programs not only to learn specific information about EE equipment and implementation strategies, but also to begin to identify sources of equipment to use in their EE retrofitting projects.

The topics for the Lunch and Learns are determined with input from the participants of the ABBC: the ABBC provides a survey for building owners to identify potential topics. Based on the responses, the ABBC will find speakers that have expertise in such areas, and will calendar the Lunch and Learns based on availability. For the rest of the 2012 Calendar year, the ABBC has already determined the topics and speakers for each Lunch and Learn.

The venues for Lunch and Learns have been generally donated by either vendors or partners, and the catered meals are generally donated by the vendors. Vendors are willing to provide lunch and venue space for these programs because they are given the opportunity for further outreach with the participants. In the case of vendors not providing lunch or venue spaces, the funds donated by the sponsors are used.

LEED Workshops

The ABBC also offers free LEED for Existing Buildings Workshop provided by USGBA-GA for participants to attend, which a participant would generally have to pay for to attend. The LEED Workshop provides an overview of the LEED framework, concepts of integrated design, as well as policies and procedures for working within the LEED program. Participants will be given information about resources available and gain an understanding of sustainable design strategies in the built environment for site management, water and energy use, resource management, and indoor environmental quality for their existing buildings.

In order to provide the free workshop to participants, the ABBC must use sponsor money to pay LEED instructors to lead the half-day workshop. As sponsors have

been found to be particularly favorable to educational programming for participants, there have not been issues in providing such programs to participants with no charge.

Retrofit Financing Workshops

Retrofit Financing Workshops, also provided free to the ABBC participants, provide participants with information about innovative financing options for their building EE retrofits. The ABBC leverages its relationships with local experts and vendors to provide information about EE financial solutions, and how participants can secure such funding for their retrofitting projects.

Scholarships

While the ABBC provides an extensive selection of educational programming for participants, there are still other programs available. The ABBC is currently exploring the possibility of providing scholarships for participants through sponsorship support to seek out other relevant education training programs relating to energy and water efficiency not provided by the ABBC.

Conclusion

Through its educational programming opportunities, the ABBC will continue to increase participant understanding of EE retrofitting and available services and strategies for retrofitting. The ABBC will continue to leverage its relationships with local vendors and experts in order to host the educational programs, while those vendors and experts gain additional marketing exposure opportunities through presenting noncommercial programs for participants. By increasing the sophistication of participants in their knowledge of EE technologies and processes and providing additional opportunities for participants and experts and vendors to interact, the ABBC will bridge the supply and demand elements of the EE marketplace, reducing transactional costs.