

An abstract, multi-colored blob graphic in shades of blue, purple, pink, and yellow, positioned behind the main text.

AESP ANNUAL

**Toto, I Don't Think We're in 2019 Anymore:
Rethinking Customer Messaging in the New Normal**

February 27 - March 2

2023

Background

How have customers adjusted to the “new normal” after the first few years of the COVID-19 pandemic?



452 completed surveys
13 completed follow up interviews



Mixed mode phone/web
August 2022



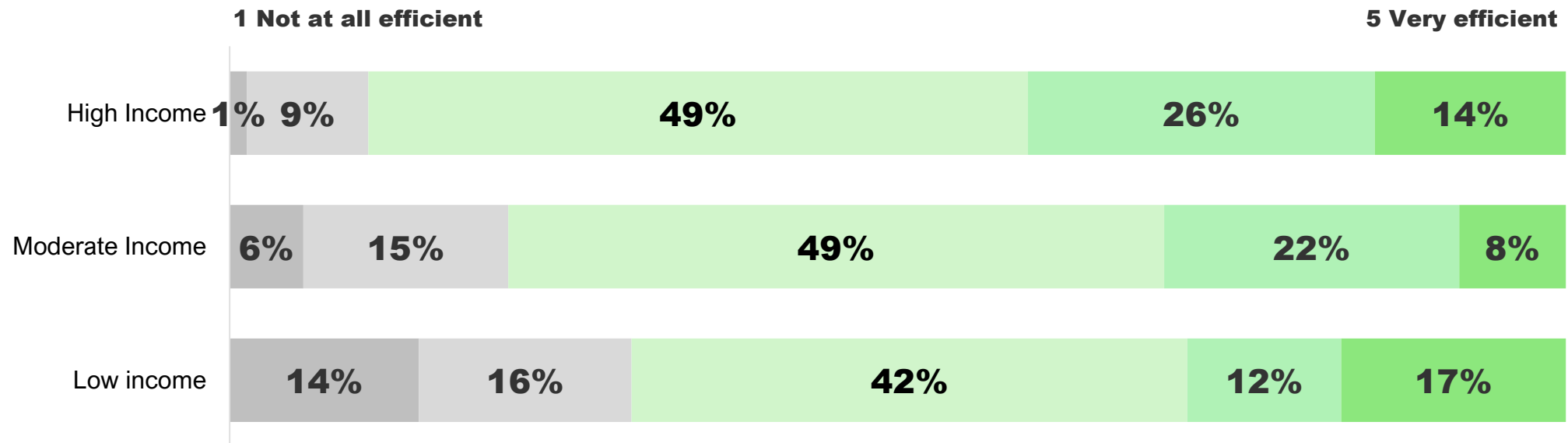
Representative sample,
especially across income



Key Finding 1: Customers with Low Incomes and COVID-19

Customers experiencing low incomes continue to need our help and services the most, and COVID-19 exacerbated these gaps.

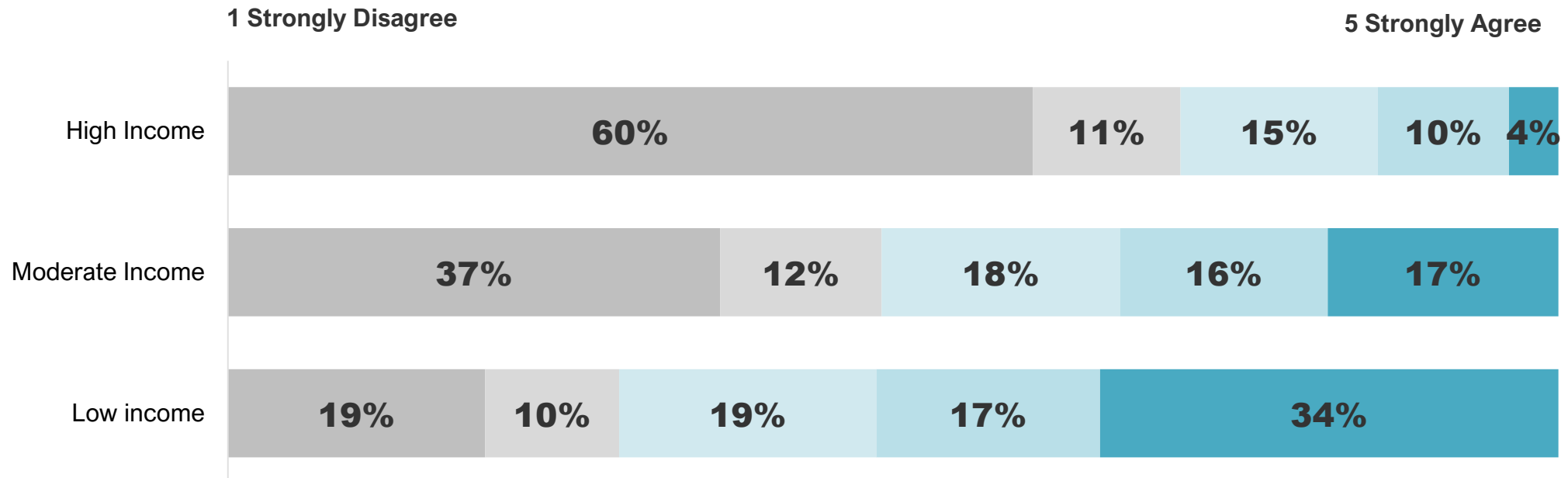
Efficiency of Homes



Financial Impacts of COVID-19

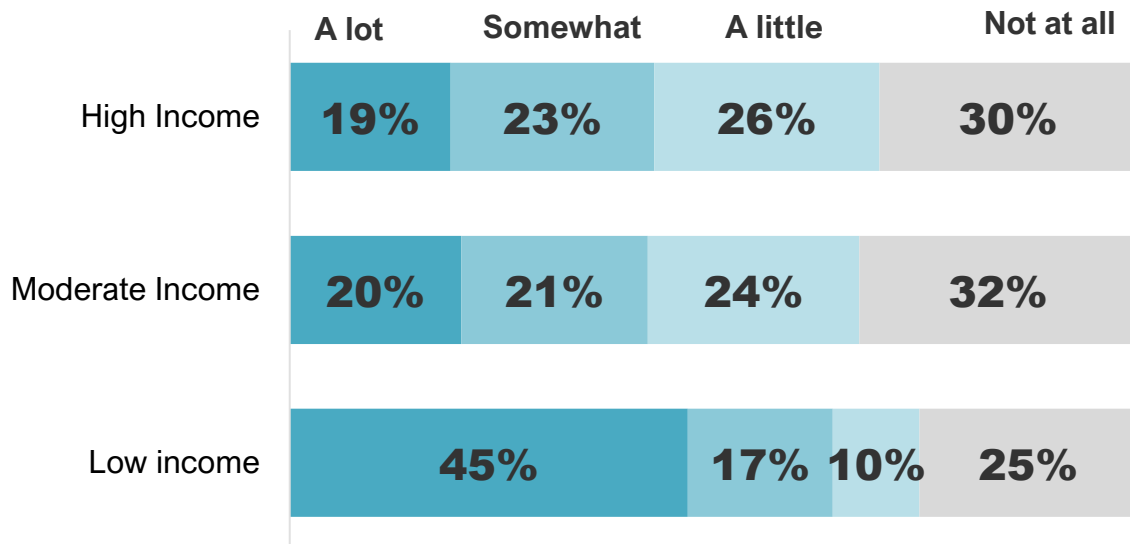
Many more customers experiencing low incomes worry about their ability to pay their energy bill.

Agreement with *“I worry about whether there is enough money to pay my energy/utility bills”*

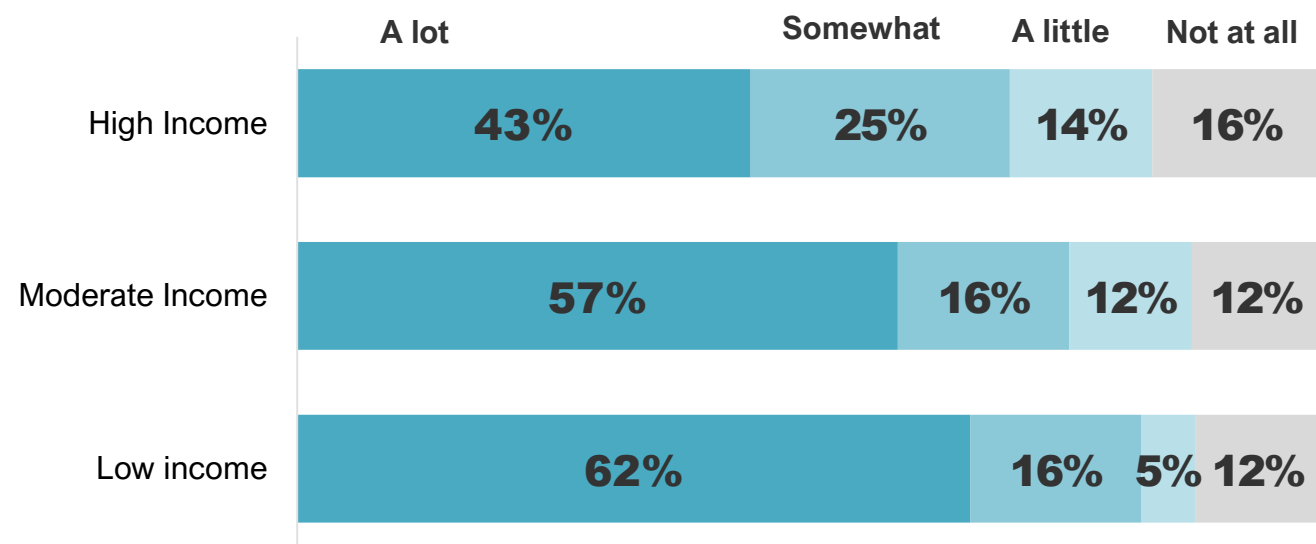


Financial Impacts of COVID-19

When it comes to improving their homes, COVID-19 has impacted customers with low incomes much more than high- and moderate-income customers.



Inflation is also on people's minds and is holding them back from making improvements in their home.



Key Finding 2: Marketing Channels

Customers with low incomes in particular watch both their energy bills as well as communication channels from their utilities for sources of help.

Strongly agree with: I pay close attention to my energy bills

Low income (n=120)	Moderate Income (n=173)	High Income (n=80)
64%	59%	48%

Very likely to notice communication about EE through emails

Low income (n=120)	Moderate Income (n=173)	High Income (n=80)
62%	47%	44%

Key Finding 3: Renting

Most respondents with a low income are renters, and this was the #1 reason they had not or could not improve their home.

Many requested help working with their landlords.

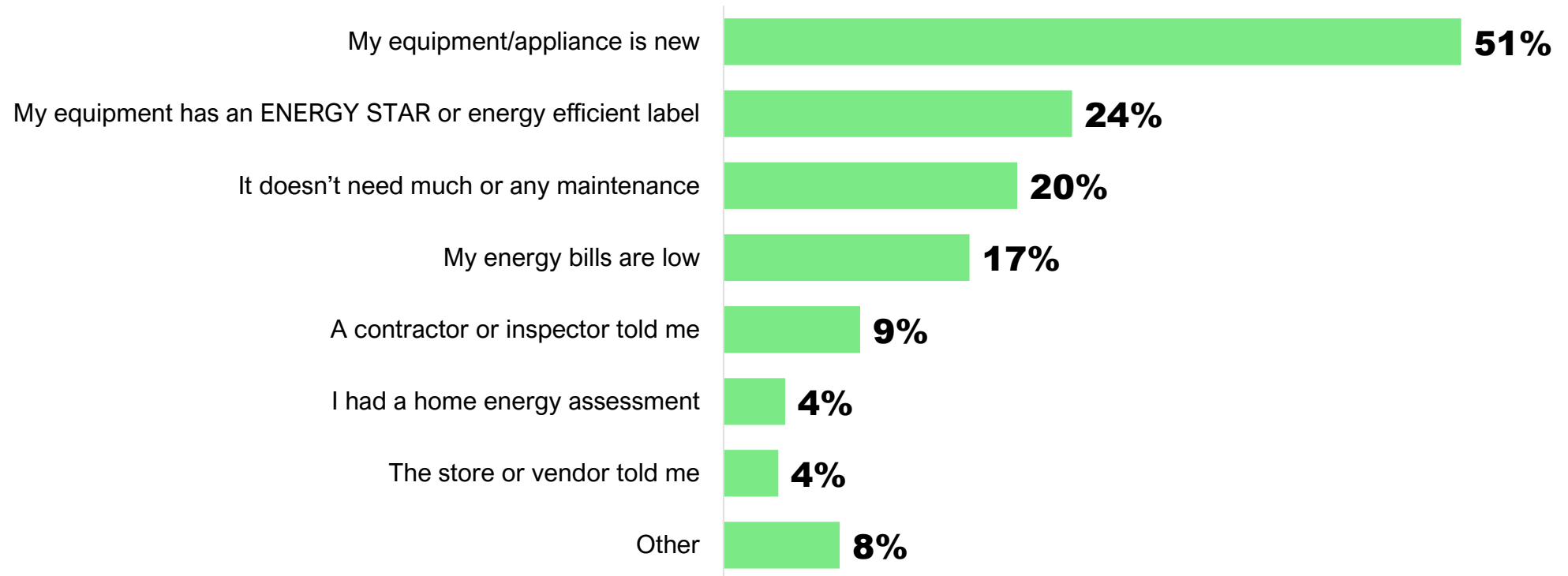
“*Just **landlords being slow**, and the fact that we’re renters and don’t own it. **Our energy prices skyrocket because we can’t make any improvements on our own.** We can’t go out and make improvements on the furnace, which I think is older than me.”*

“*If there was something that was open to renters... renters have very limited resources, there is **not very much we can do** without messing up our lease. If landlords were a little bit more responsive and responsible....If there were types of organizations or something even with **being a liaison between the tenant and the management** and encouraging the management and say hey, **you can keep tenants longer if you made more repairs and were responsive and kept things within a livable price range.**”*

Key Finding 4

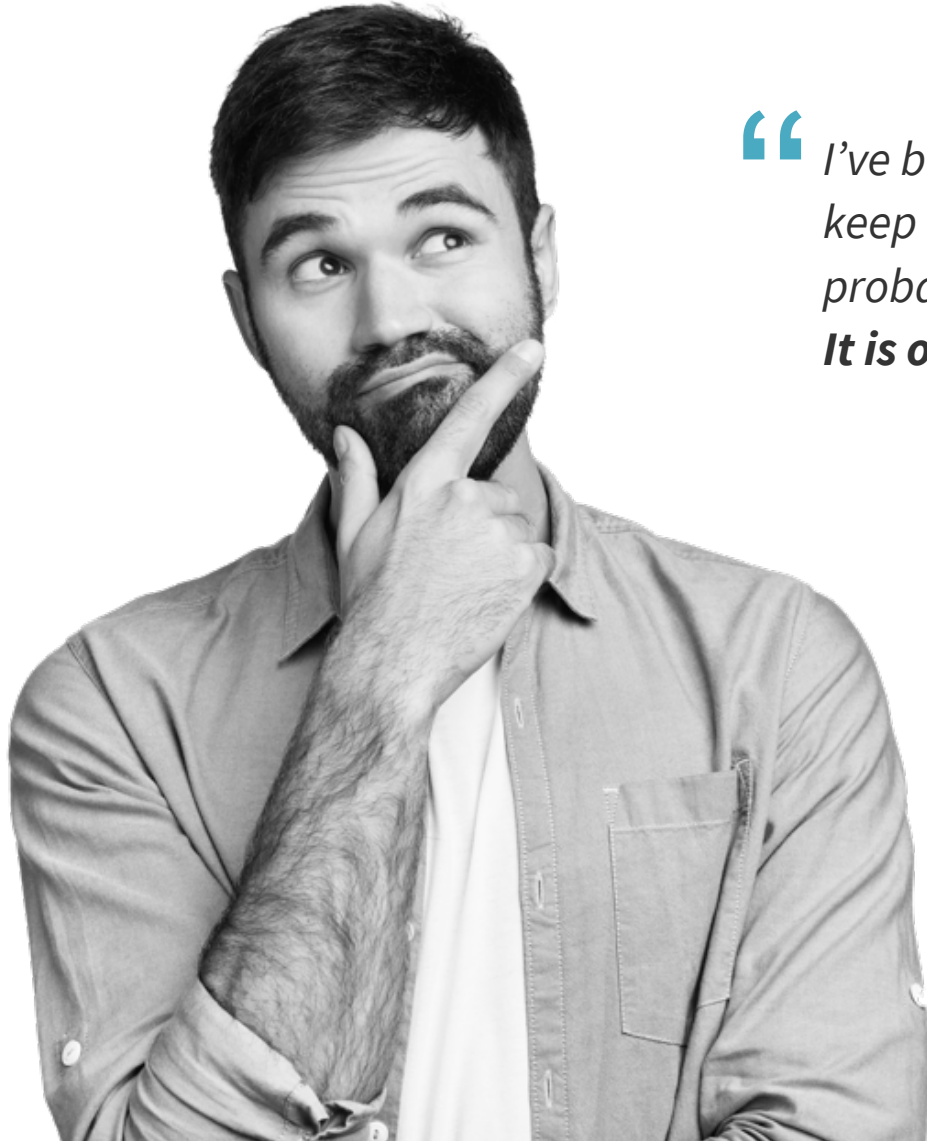
In some cases, we might not be using the same language as our customers when we talk about energy efficiency, and it might be frustrating them.

Respondent reasons for believing their cooling equipment was efficient



How Customers Think About EE

ILLUME



“ I’ve been doing everything that I can possibly do to keep my bill down. They can give tips, but I’m probably doing everything that they’ve suggested. **It is out of my control.** ”

Marketing and Outreach Strategy



Situation Overview

Research & New Cycle provide new opportunity to connect with LMI customers



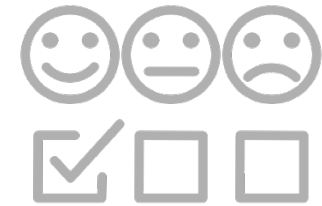
Research Findings

LMI customers have a lower awareness and participation in Energy Efficiency programs



Georgia Power Focus

New cycle calls for a +330% increase in participation across all residential energy efficiency programs



Customer Satisfaction

Enhanced outreach around EE offerings will drive adoption and positive sentiment among LMI customers -- measurable by NPS and CSAT scores

Objective

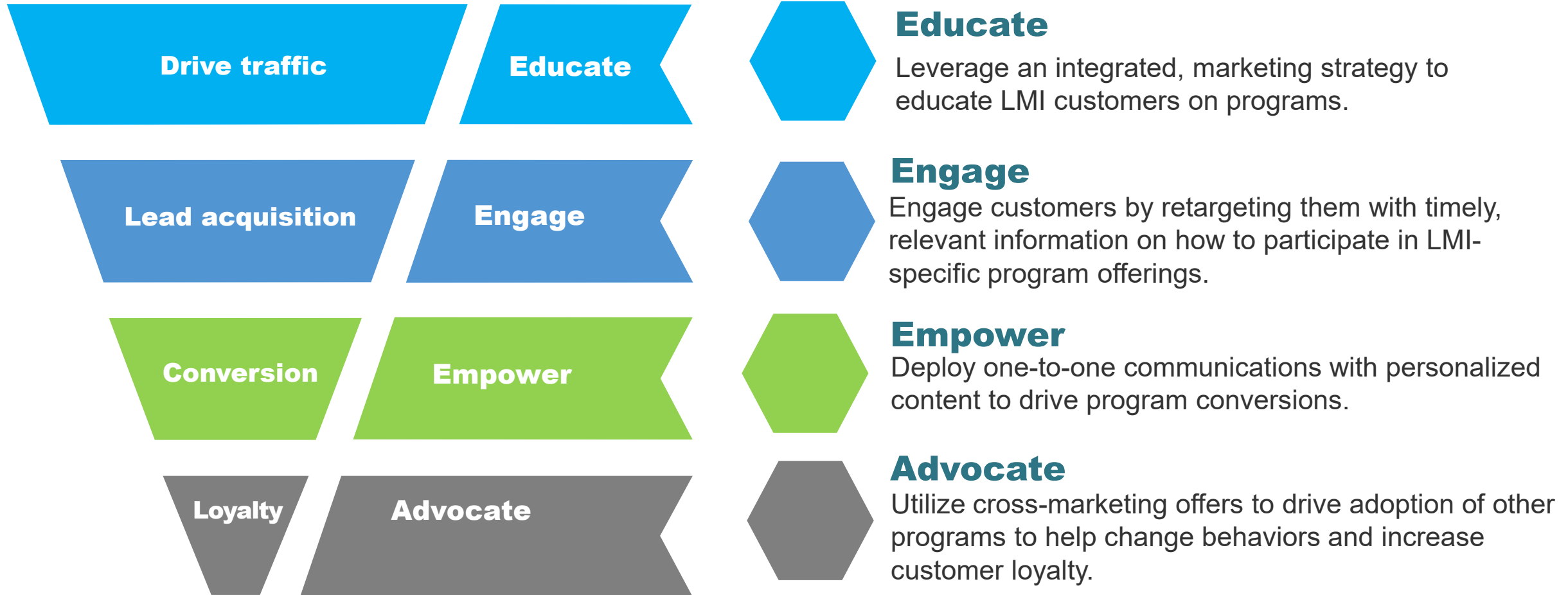
Increase engagement, program adoption and behavioral changes among LMI customers

Goals

- Drive the awareness and participation in ALL EE programs among LMI customers
- Connect with hard-to-reach LMI customers outside of large metro areas
- Foster positive brand sentiment among ALL customers



Marketing Strategy



Messaging Framework

ILLUME

*Aligning messaging
with customers' words*

Industry Message	Customers' Words
Save Energy	Lower bills, reduce, cut, keep costs down, keep bills down, keep bills from going up Save money
Assistance	Discount, discount program, incentives, lower rate, payment arrangement Low income, seniors, help families; struggle, money trouble
Efficient	Energy efficient lights, energy efficient appliances, energy saving devices/bulbs, low energy Working well, running well, clean well (“efficient” means things are running well)
Comfort	Keep warm, keep/stay cool, keep it the same, maintain temp, warm
Improve or upgrade	Replace, new, update, change
Weatherization	Air leaks, cracks, gaps, leaks; windows Air sealing, weatherproof, winterize, weather-stripping, fix
Home Assessment	Check, inspect; home efficiency
Tips	Money-saving tips, ways to save, suggestions, how to lower my bill Practical, everyday
Air Quality	Clean air; mold, allergens, humid
Community	Active in community, help the community, charities, serve

Marketing Approach



Leverage customer experiences to drive credibility and lower “scam concerns”

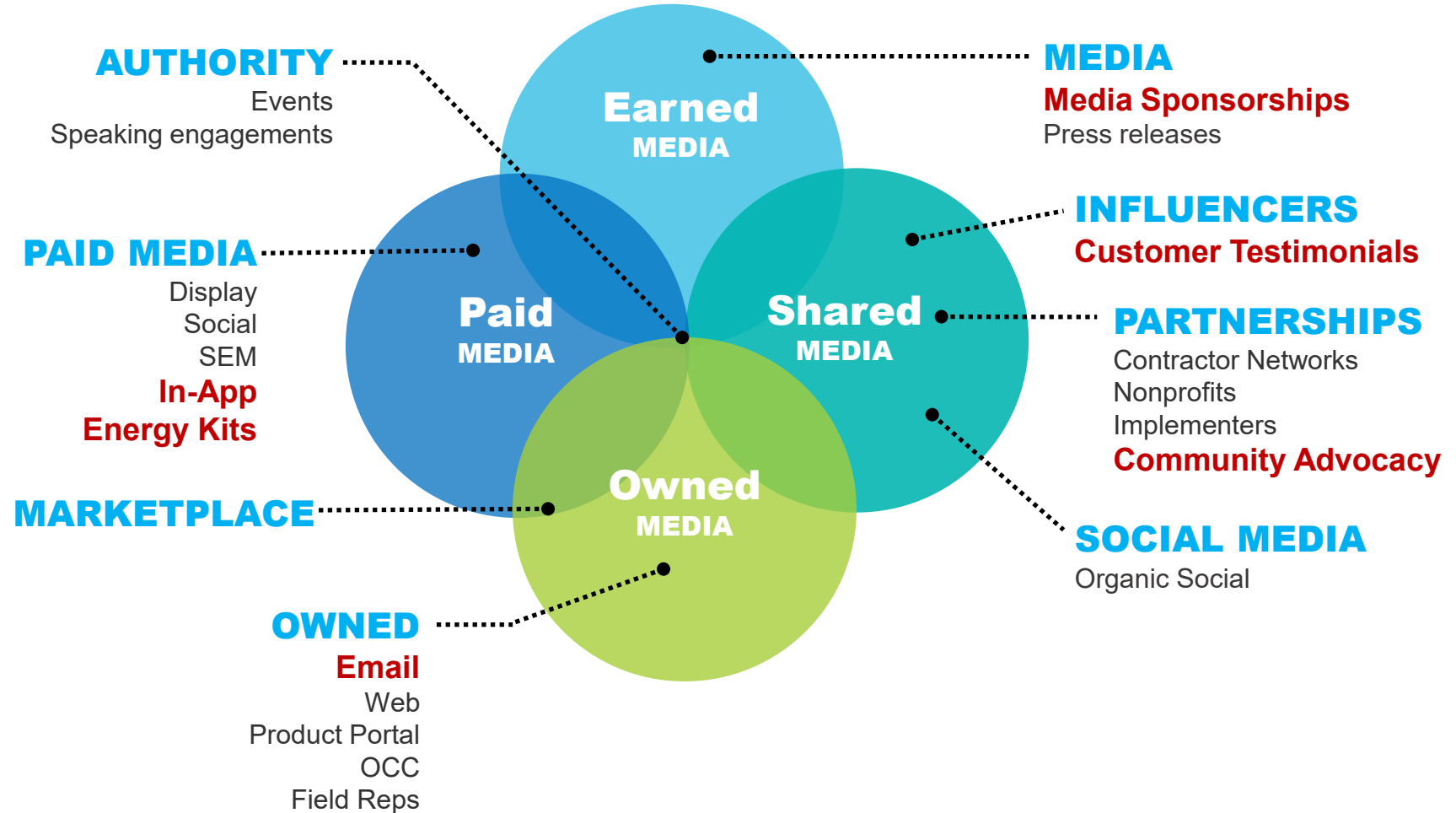


Leverage a multichannel marketing campaign to drive engagement at every stage of the marketing funnel



Reduce spend on mass awareness campaigns and focus spend on targeted campaigns

Marketing Channels



Measuring Success

- Satisfied Customers
- Baseline Marketing KPIs exceeded
- LMI kWh savings goals met or exceeded for all programs



Let us help you save energy and reduce your bill.

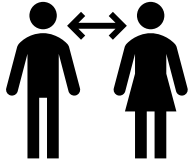
[20222345_CSS_EE_HEEAP Testimonial Lower Thirds_VIDEO_FINAL \(brightcove.net\)](#)



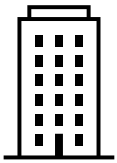
Conclusions



Conclusions



The COVID-19 pandemic has widened gaps for customers experiencing low incomes.



Deepened focus on underserved multifamily buildings and single-family rental properties is needed to reach customers experiencing low incomes.



Need to learn the language customers use, and make sure our messages are actionable, not frustrating