

Busting Common Myths About Energy Efficiency

How to break down preexisting barriers in consumers' minds.

When it comes to earning consumer trust, one of the biggest barriers contractors are up against is misinformation. In an age when bad information is more widely available than the reliable sort, it's no surprise that consumers often form inaccurate ideas about contractors and energy efficiency based on their own research. Here's what you can do to respond to common myths you may encounter.

Busting 5 Common Myths About Energy Efficiency

1

The Myth: "One upgrade will make my entire home more energy efficient."

The Reality: Individual upgrades are just one part of the bigger picture.

How to bust the myth: Use examples that put building performance into context. For example, a new furnace won't make as much of an impact as it should if a home's outer shell is poorly sealed or insulated; energy-efficient lights and appliances won't lower energy bills if they're overused or left on, etc.

What to say: "One upgrade can help, but it most likely won't make your home as energy efficient as it could be. Your home's systems are interconnected. Let's take a look at how your home is working as a complete unit."

2

The Myth: "Contractors are always trying to upsell."

The Reality: Contractors recommend solutions that will make more of an impact together than individual upgrades would alone.

How to bust the myth: By demonstrating the connections between the upgrades you're recommending, you can reassure the customer by proving you're not adding on random, one-off line items. Show the total energy and cost savings of your proposal.

What to say: "Upgrades can only work effectively if your home's systems are working together. Let me show you how your upgrades will work together."

3

The Myth: "My house is new. Everything is already energy efficient."

The Reality: New does not equal the most energy efficient.

How to bust the myth: Explain the differences. Without getting too technical, explain what makes an energy-efficient product work better. Emphasize the connections between home upgrades and home layout, user behavior, and the interaction between temperature, air flow, and moisture. Show the whole picture.

What to say: "New doesn't necessarily mean energy efficient. Energy efficiency depends on much more than just products and appliances—it incorporates factors like how you use energy, the number of people in your household, and climate. Let's take a closer look at your home's energy performance."

4

The Myth: “I can do energy upgrades myself.”

The Reality: Reaping the full benefits of energy efficiency takes a professional.

How to bust the myth: Discuss all the factors at play. The average person isn’t familiar with the concept of building performance, and doesn’t understand the interdependence of the systems in their home. In addition, they lack the experience and expertise to properly install major upgrades such as heating and cooling units and ventilation systems, which can significantly impact their ability to see return on their investment.

What to say: “You absolutely can do some upgrades yourself, and I’d be happy to tell you which ones they are. But for others, the relationships between temperature, air flow, and moisture are at play. Building performance professionals deeply understand that science.”

5

The Myth: “Energy efficiency upgrades must be expensive and highly involved.”

The Reality: Smart planning can make an energy efficiency project fit your schedule and budget.

How to bust the myth: Make it manageable. Let customers know which upgrades they can do on their own. For the more expensive long-term improvements, recommend a phased approach. By breaking down the process and resetting expectations from the get-go, you can alleviate the customer’s apprehension about the unknown, and provide a tangible blueprint for energy and cost savings.

What to say: “Everything is manageable with the right plan. Certain upgrades you can do yourself. Others require proper planning and prioritization. Let’s talk about a phased approach that makes sense for your goals, timeline, and budget.”

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