



Status Update:

Chefluencer Strategy Pilot

December 18, 2024

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Introduction

CalMTA's exploration of the Induction Cooking market transformation idea (MTI) identified the need to test interventions and messaging that could effectively influence public opinion and awareness on the benefits of induction cooking technology and ultimately grow market demand.



Chefluencer events provide opportunities for the public to learn about and interact with induction cooking technology.

The Induction Cooking Chefluencer Event Testing Strategy Pilot aims to learn from and build upon the Building Decarbonization Coalition's (BDC) successful "Chefluencer" program, which features experienced chefs to lead engaging, multilingual, culturally relevant cooking demonstrations using induction stovetops at live events. These events have the potential to address an identified barrier to induction cooking market adoption - lack of awareness - by offering attendees firsthand experience with induction cooking from knowledgeable and credible hosts. This Strategy Pilot, designed to inform development of a full MTI Plan and future

interventions, is complete. A full assessment report on the outcomes, findings, and recommendations will be publicly available in early 2025 and shared through CalMTA's regular news updates. In the meantime, this memo serves to provide a summary of the work undertaken and a status of progress. For the full scope of work for this effort, visit [the CalMTA website](#).

Background

To implement the Strategy Pilot, CalMTA initially sought to collaborate with BDC to apply the Chefluencer approach and messaging at events conducted in partnership with big box retailers. This initial scope was developed with the goal of better understanding how effectively seeing and hearing about the benefits of induction technology in a retail location could change the hearts and minds of prospective consumers.

After discussing the Chefluencer pilot with big box retailers such as Lowe's, Best Buy, and Nationwide, CalMTA learned that corporate timeframes for such events require internal certification processes that often take one year or more for approval. Due to CalMTA's intent to incorporate findings from this Strategy Pilot into the development of the Induction Cooking MTI Plan, a different approach was required to accelerate the timeline for completion in 2024.

CalMTA subsequently [modified the scope of work](#) to shift the focus to Chefluencer events occurring at farmer's markets, community centers, and community learning events throughout

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Chefluencers cook on a portable induction cooktop while sharing tips and tricks for induction cooking at an event in Morgan Hill, California.

California. BDC provides experienced “Chefluencers” at these events to lead induction cooking demonstrations; and local partners promote the events to community members, including many in environmental social justice communities (ESJ).

CalMTA provides a gift card incentive to attendees who complete a post-event survey, which aims to gauge attendee opinions on induction cooking, their likelihood of purchasing an induction appliance in the future, and the effectiveness of messaging approaches.

Strategy Pilot Objectives

The modified Strategy Pilot targets the following objectives:

- 1) **Determine whether Chefluencer events or similar public education can change public opinion.** The pilot targeted 10-15 Chefluencer events over a three-month period. These events featured an experienced chef who introduced induction technology, demonstrated cooking on an induction appliance, discussed the benefits of induction cooking, and answered audience questions. At the close of each event, the CalMTA team deployed a survey to gather attendee experiences, gauging their opinions on induction cooking and their likelihood to purchase an induction appliance in the future.
- 2) **Identify key messages on the benefits of induction cooking that resonate the most with consumers.** BDC has built a library of tools and messaging in multiple languages on induction that are delivered during the Chefluencer events and concurrent promotional campaigns. Analysis of survey data will help determine which messaging resonates the most with event attendees and inform messaging for a consumer campaign that may be part of [Phase III: Market Deployment](#) for this MTI.

Evaluation objectives and implementation steps

Final evaluation findings are currently under development to be delivered in early 2025. The subsequent report will seek to answer research questions using the metrics described below in alignment with the Strategy Pilot evaluation approach.

Table 1. Evaluation research objectives

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Strategy Pilot objectives	Evaluation research objectives or metrics
1) Do Chefluencer events change public opinion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure difference in opinion of attendees about induction cooking before and after the event • Measure difference in the likelihood of attendees purchasing an induction appliance before and after the event • Gather data on what influenced attendees to change their opinion about induction during the event
2) Which messages regarding the benefits of induction cooking resonate the most with consumers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine which messages about the benefits of induction cooking resonate the most with consumers

Evaluation activities being conducted before, during, and after the Strategy Pilot to support the evaluation objectives in Table 1 include:

- Interviews with BDC and CalMTA staff and collaborative review of survey responses
- In collaboration with BDC, development and execution of a digital survey (via QR code scan) to gather attendee experiences, gauge their opinions on induction cooking and their likelihood to purchase an induction appliance in the future, targeting a 50% response rate
- Interim evaluation of event attendee survey results.

Findings will be shared via a public webinar, to which CalMTA will invite key stakeholders such as the Market Transformation Advisory Board (MTAB), California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), Program Administrators (PAs), and community-based organizations.

Status of activities

The [Strategy Pilot statement of work and subsequent pilot change memo](#) describe activities and specific deliverables, which officially kicked off in August 2024 and are ongoing. Below is a summary of those activities and the status as of December 2024.

Engage implementation contractor and partners

CalMTA engaged and contracted with BDC to host a series of Chefluencer events throughout California between August - October 2024. BDC coordinated all event logistics and provided a Chefluencer and additional staff at each event to facilitate and lead the induction cooking presentation.

BDC also secured host partners for each Chefluencer event. These hosts provided the space for the event and promoted it to their communities, members, and/or the general public, depending on the event. Examples of host organizations include cities, community-based organizations and other non-profit groups.

Deploy survey at Chefluencer events

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CalMTA distributed surveys at 12 Chefluencer events as part of the Strategy Pilot. Details of completed events can be found in Table 2.

Table 2. Completed Strategy Pilot Chefluencer events

Date	City	Location	Partner Organization
August 21	Richmond, CA	Richmond Memorial Auditorium and Convention Center	Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment Action
September 13	Los Angeles, CA*	Jeff Seymour Family Center	Basset & Avocado Heights Advanced Energy Community Heights
September 28	San Francisco, CA	Life's Better Electric: Electrification Fair at the Women's Building	San Francisco Environment Department
September 29	Foster City, CA	Clean Air Fair at Foster City Library	California Clean Air Day
October 1	Brentwood, CA	Brentwood Library	Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN)
October 1	Morgan Hill, CA	Morgan Hill Library	City of Morgan Hill
October 8	Bakersfield, CA	Bakersfield College	Bakersfield College
October 18	Sherman Oaks, CA	Neighborhood Block Party	Private Event
October 22	Studio City, CA	Studio City Library	Los Angeles Neighborhood Sustainability Council
October 24	South San Francisco, CA	South San Francisco Library	BayREN
October 24	San Diego, CA	Salt Creek Community Center	San Diego LEARN
October 30	Los Angeles, CA	Little Tokyo	Private event with Association for Energy Affordability

Initial findings

Initial findings¹ from 270 completed surveys are outlined in the following sections.

¹ It is important to note that most attendees at the Basset Avocado Heights event (n=18) were already familiar with induction cooking due to community electrification efforts and installation programs. While the awareness of induction cooktops is desirable, it created a misalignment with the goal of the Chefluencer events, which were

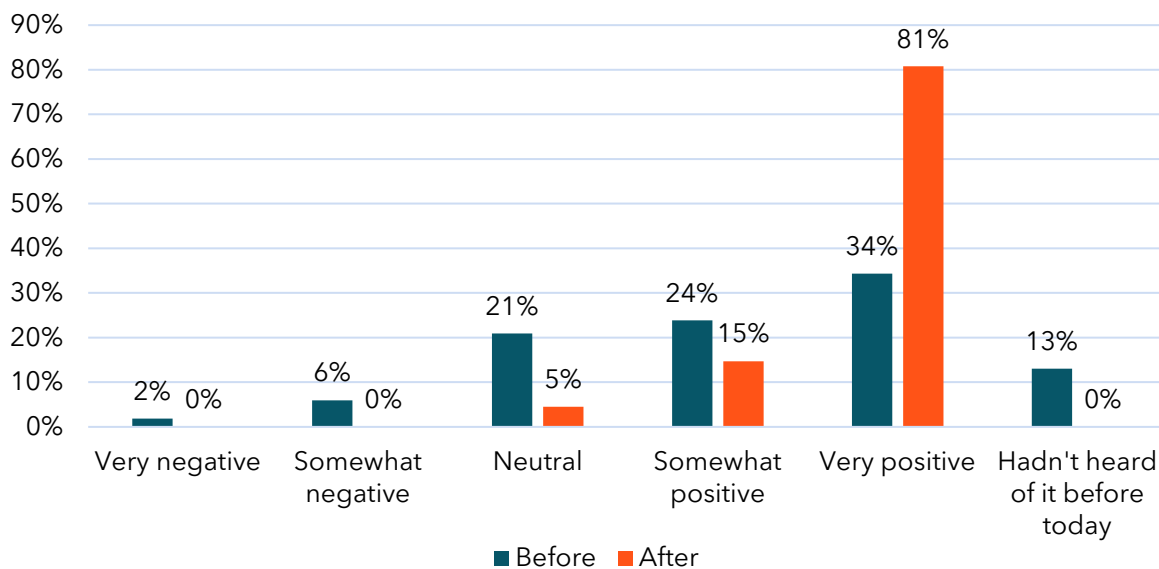


Finding #1: Respondents' opinions of induction appliances increased after attending Chefluencer events.

Event attendees who completed the survey were asked about their views regarding induction appliances, which found the following:

- Before attending a Chefluencer event, most respondents (68%) had a positive opinion of induction appliances, with 34% stating they had a “very positive” opinion. Notably, 13% stated they had not heard of induction appliances before the Chefluencer event.
- Respondent opinion toward induction appliances became more positive after the Chefluencer event: 81% said they had a “very positive” opinion. No respondents said they had a negative opinion.

Figure 1. Respondent opinion of induction appliances



Finding #2: Respondents viewed environmental benefits and safety features as most important features of induction appliances.

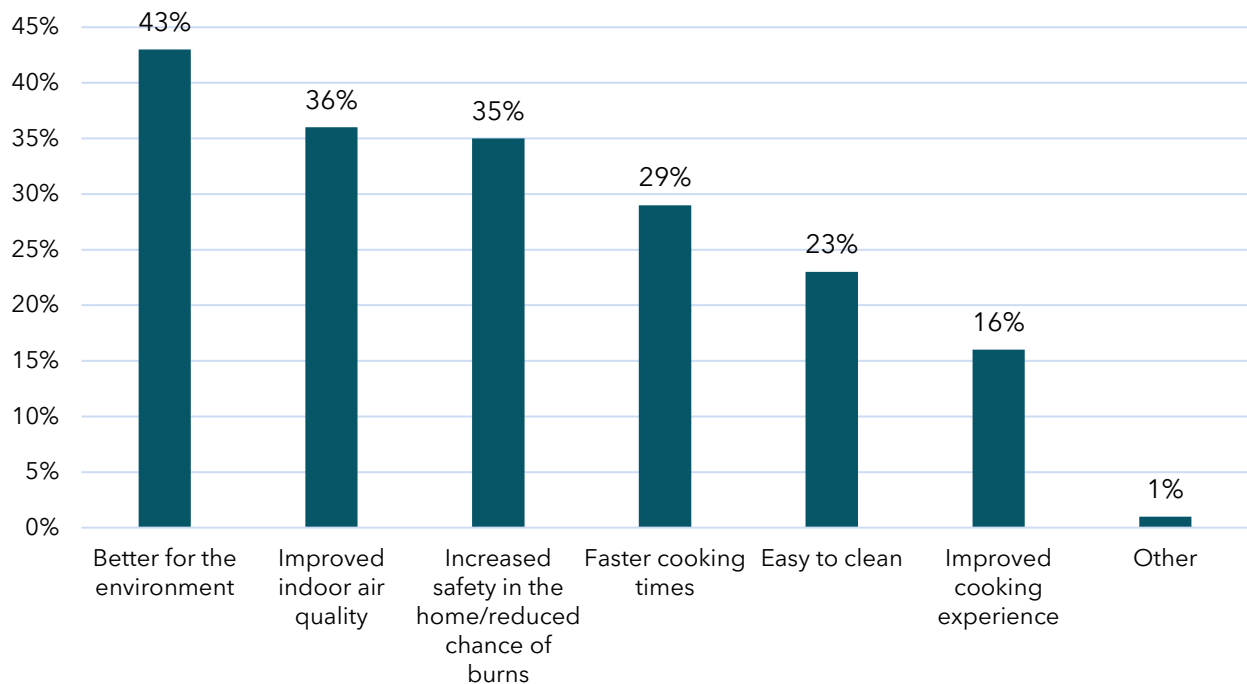
Respondents were asked to select the two benefits of induction appliances that were most important to them from a list of possible options. As shown in Figure 1, environmental benefits and improved air quality were selected most often. Respondents who selected “Other” were

tailored toward educating attendees with little to no experience with the technology. Because of this, responses from participants at the Basset Avocado height location were not included in the survey analysis reported here, although unique analysis of this data may be conducted later.



given the option to supply a qualitative response. Of these responses (n=4), three respondents loosely described the types of dishes that could be prepared on an induction appliance and one complimented the stovetop itself.

Figure 2. Importance of induction appliance benefits



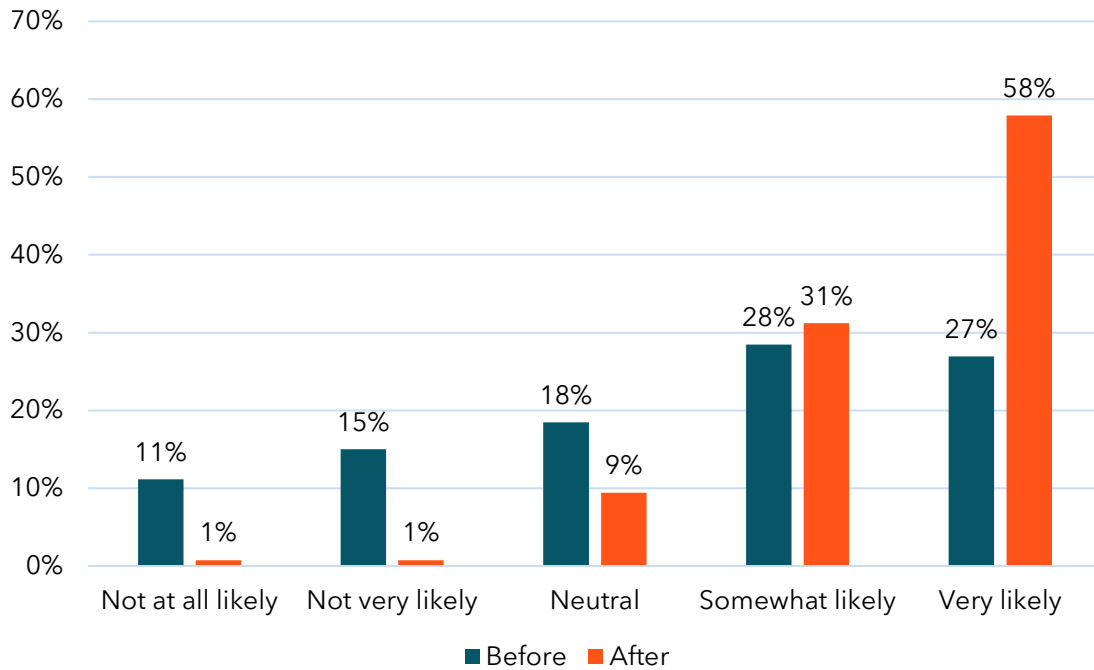
Respondents were more likely to purchase an induction appliance after attending a Chefluencer event.

Before the Chefluencer event, respondents (n=260) were divided in their likelihood of purchasing an induction appliance if their current appliance broke or if they were remodeling their kitchen. As shown in Figure 3, respondents were more likely to buy induction appliances after attending an event, indicating that the event influenced perception of the technology. Two participants offered qualitative answers to why they were unlikely to purchase an induction appliance, both related to cost.

While not included in the above analysis, respondents from the Basset Avocado Heights location also showed a change in opinion before and after the event. Before the event, 71% of these respondents said they were somewhat or very likely to buy an induction appliance if their current one broke or were remodeling their kitchen. After the event this percentage rose to 94%.



Figure 3. Likelihood of buying an induction appliance



While not included in the figure above, most (92%) respondents also said they would suggest induction appliances to their friends and family.

