

# 2013 Annual Awards Entry Form (Complete one for each entry.)

<b>Entry Name</b>	AHFC Website Redesign				
	Fill out the entry name <i>exactly</i> as you want it listed in the awards program.				
HFA	Alaska Housing Finance Corporation				
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Entry form with description, check(s), and visual aids (optional) must be received by NCSHA by <b>Monday</b> , <b>July 1</b> , <b>2013</b> .					
Use this header on the upper right corner of each page.					
HFA Alaska Housing Finance Corporation					
Entry N	Entry Name AHFC Website Redesign				

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation
□Annual Report □Promotional Materials and Newsletters □Creative Media	□Empowering New Buyers □Home Improvement and Rehabilitation □Encouraging New Production	☐ Federal Advocacy ☐ State Advocacy	□Financial □Human Resources □Operations □Technology
Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
☐Multifamily Management ☐Preservation and Rehabilitation	□Combating Homelessness □Housing for Persons with Special Needs	□Special Achievement	ĭăyes □no

#### **Background**

In 2012, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) undertook a significant update to its website (<a href="www.ahfc.us">www.ahfc.us</a>) with the over-arching goal of providing a useful, valuable and compelling online experience that would become more central to clients, housing professionals, employees, investors and partners during critical phases of the housing lifecycle.

Over the last four decades, AHFC has grown to be a more integral part of the homeownership experience in Alaska, and as such, our offerings and expertise expanded. The prior website expanded as well, housing a vast amount of content that outgrew it's architecture. Our goal was to find a way to better convey our organization's offerings and key messages and to streamline, focus, update and improve the overall user experience, content and presentation of the site.

## Goals & Objectives

With regard to the <u>www.ahfc.us</u> website, we outlined the following high-level, strategic, marketing and communications goals:

- 1. Help position AHFC as the go-to, first-stop housing and finance resource that can deliver ongoing value across the housing lifecycle.
- 2. Deliver fast, easy access to tools and information to a wide variety of audiences.
- 3. Provide meaningful and accurate content that continually solidifies the reputation, value, energy, and voice of the organization's brand.
- 4. Share the breadth and depth of AHFC's programs and—wherever possible—create meaningful connections between AHFC and the client through relatable (or aspirational) imagery, plain-spoken advice, gentle encouragement and shared success.
- 5. Clearly communicate (visually and otherwise) the unique Alaska perspective, understanding, and market expertise that AHFC provides to clients: We know Alaska because we are Alaska.

## **Strategies**

- Help position AHFC as the go-to, first-stop housing and finance resource that can deliver ongoing value across the housing lifecycle.
  - The key to this goal was to design a site that made our offerings more readily accessible and apparent. We often heard: "Oh, I didn't know AHFC did that." By putting the "customer" first as we thought through architecture, we were able to organize the site in a way that would help the browser find what they were looking for quickly, as well as leading them to useful things they may not even have known about. The site was designed around the housing lifecycle—thinking about buying, buying, updating, refinancing, selling—and around professional subsections. While that seems like an intuitive way to organize the site, it's not necessarily how our departments are organized so it took a big internal shift in thinking to get us to the new structure.
- 2. Deliver fast, easy access to tools and information to a wide variety of audiences. The previous site was a vast warehouse of information that could be overwhelming for homebuyers. Professional materials were mixed with documents for first-time homebuyers, which made the overall process of navigating homeownership daunting. We found the best way to organize the site was to first divide it into two main sections for its two primary targets:

the consumers of AHFC's services (the main target market) and housing professionals. To do this, we designed the site to have two points of entry—one for consumers (with intuitive navigation designed around the homeownership lifecycle) and one for professionals (with familiar language that led them directly to the documents or pages that they access often to do their jobs). This allows us to adjust the information, voice, and presentation of information so that it's most valuable for each audience. Consumers are led through the process with straightforward language. Professionals are able to get in and out of the site with quick links to information they use the most, and with access to more in-depth technical documents.

- 3. Provide meaningful, consistent and accurate content that continually solidifies the reputation, value, energy and 'voice' of the organization's brand.
  The existing website had been populated with content from a variety of users from departments all across AHFC. We took on an aggressive approach to editing all existing content for style and consistency, as well as readability. We also distributed sections of the existing website to their respective internal departments to get the expertise of each department and asked if the content was appropriate for the website, up to date, and which pieces should be part of an archive. Content was populated into branded templates that created visual consistency across the site as well as consistency in the way that information is presented. The over-arching message during this process was to keep it simple. Simple, clear and relevant information was much more important than ensuring that every possible piece of information was on the site.
- 4. Share the breadth and depth of AHFC's programs and—wherever possible—create meaningful connections between AHFC and the client through relatable (or aspirational) imagery, plain-spoken advice, gentle encouragement and shared success.
  Our goal at AHFC is to make homeownership attainable for Alaskans. By using plain, understandable language and avoiding industry jargon, we were able to create a connection with browsers and reinforce the message that AHFC is here to help, not confuse. We also used images of real Alaskans in their homes doing relatable and aspirational activities like cooking, having dinner parties, playing with their kids, relaxing on the front porch or even purchasing their new home. These photos reinforce that we are here for Alaskans, and paint the message of "home," which is not about the building but the lives that people build within it.
- 5. Clearly communicate (visually and otherwise) the unique Alaska perspective, understanding, and market expertise that AHFC provides to clients: We know Alaska because we are Alaska. By structuring the site around the housing lifecycle, we were able to show all Alaskans that we are here for more than just the part of the process they are undergoing now. First-time homebuyers have easy access to classes through quick links. Those who are interested in energy efficiency improvements can browse the variety of programs that are available to them. Seniors have a link from the front page that gives an overview of our programs. The front page of the site gives a clear snapshot of the breadth and depth of our capabilities and invites users to find out more by delving into the sections.

## Results

 Help position AHFC as the go-to, first-stop housing and finance resource that can deliver ongoing value across the housing lifecycle.
 While AHFC has long been considered the housing expert across the state, the new website design was lauded during a speech given by Alaska's Governor Sean Parnell as an amazing shift in a state agency putting the customer first.

- Deliver fast, easy access to tools and information for a wide variety of audiences.
   Content can now be accessed with one click through. The most used content is housed on the front page of the website and easily accessible, such as the AHFC homeownership classes, which continue to grow in popularity.
- 3. Provide meaningful, consistent and accurate content that continually solidifies the reputation, value, energy and 'voice' of the organization's brand.
  The collaborative effort to edit and assess all website copy was extremely beneficial in delivering quick results to a problem that could have persisted for months instead of weeks. The added benefit of those with the expertise going through their own content was that it resulted in the best content being presented with a clear, easy path to finding out more information by contacting the right person. The AHFC site is now consistently branded and mirrors our goal to make homeownership attainable in Alaska. The site is now much more accessible to new homeowners and presents information in a clear, easy-to-understand format.
- 4. Share the breadth and depth of AHFC's programs and—wherever possible—create meaningful connections between AHFC and the client through relatable (or aspirational) imagery, plain-spoken advice, gentle encouragement and shared success.

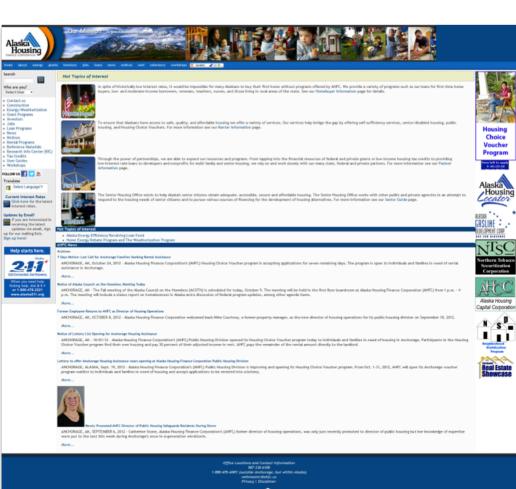
  Because the site is designed by Alaskans and populated with imagery of Alaskans, we've received feedback that the site is much more relatable. The public is beginning to understand that AHFC is here for the purpose of helping Alaskans, which has increased the overall trust in the brand.
- 5. Clearly communicate (visually and otherwise) the unique Alaska perspective, understanding, and market expertise that AHFC provides to clients: We know Alaska because we are Alaska. Now AHFC's site is relevant to almost all people in Alaska, and no matter who the user is, a program that is perfect for them is highlighted and easy to find. No matter where Alaskans are in the housing lifecycle—renting, owning, making improvements or selling—AHFC is their trusted guide in the process.

In addition to our stated goals, we also have benefitted from these great results:

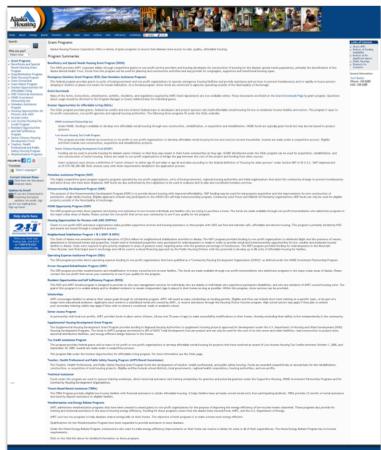
- Users of the former website had to visit an average of 9.44 pages in order to accomplish what they came to do, according to cumulative analytics from 2012. With the new site, this average is 3.87 pages so far (2013 analytics compare April and May). We believe this means visitors are finding the information they need more easily without have to click on a large amount of pages. This was one of the most frequent complaints about the former site and one of our main goals in developing the new site. Through these statistics and positive feedback from all our internal testers, we feel we carried out this important goal.
- The website was accomplished both on time and on budget—we're very proud that by using the resources of our own people, following a comprehensive timeline, and paying close attention to budget requirements we were able to achieve this.

#### **Appendix**

- · Screen shots of former website
- Screen shots of current website
- Applied Microsystems analytics (2012 Statistics)
- Google Analytics for new site (2013 Statistics)







# For more visuals, visit the site at www.ahfc.us.



07/02/13 · Crawlspaces

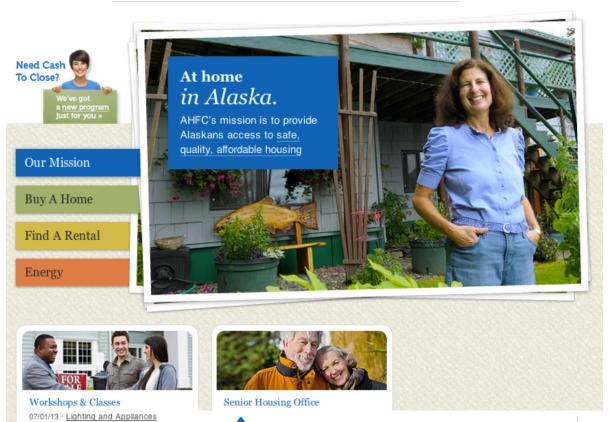
Buy a Home Find a Rental

Energy

For Professionals

ABOUT US WORKSHOPS & CLASSES RIC LIBRARY CONTACT US

Site Search



Buy a Home

Find a Rental

Energy

For Professionals

ABOUT US WORKSHOPS & CLASSES RIC LIBRARY CONTACT US

Site Search

# Find a Rental

Housing

Rental Programs

Applying

Paths to Self-Sufficiency

Search for Rentals

Public Housing Program Locations



# Meeting Alaska's Need for Affordable Rentals

Renting in Alaska is no longer about picking up the newspaper and circling apartments with the features you want in your price range. The availability of quality, affordable housing has not kept pace with Alaska's population growth, and that means that finding a rental can be a

At AHFC, our goal is to ensure all Alaskans have access to quality, affordable rentals.

#### Diverse Support for a Diverse Population

Because Alaskans' housing needs differ, we approach our goal in a variety of ways. We work with partners to fund housing developments like Loussac Place, Alaska's first mixed-income community. We provide housing vouchers to help make rentals more affordable. We also build and manage housing for Alaska's seniors, families, and individuals or families who need rentals with accessible features.

**Investing in Your Success** 

**Last Update:** 02 Jan 2013 - 00:10

**Reported period:** - Year - 2012 OK

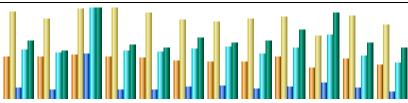


# **Summary**

Reported period	Year 2012				
First visit	01 Jan 2012 - 00:00				
Last visit	31 Dec 2012 - 23:59				
	Unique visitors	Number of visits	<b>Pages</b>	Hits	Bandwidth
Viewed traffic *	<= 136322 Exact value not available in 'Year' view	<b>284377</b> (2.08 visits/visitor)	2684850 (9.44 pages/visit)	<b>10425384</b> (36.66 hits/visit)	<b>238.86 GB</b> (880.75 KB/visit)
Not viewed traffic *			2453168	3874072	40.23 GB

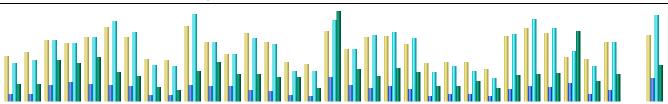
<sup>\*</sup> Not viewed traffic includes traffic generated by robots, worms, or replies with special HTTP status codes.

# **Monthly history**



Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Jan 2012	12104	25432	179292	829995	18.63 GB
Feb 2012	12112	23499	144422	774646	15.45 GB
Mar 2012	12730	26239	749867	1526213	29.41 GB
Apr 2012	12323	26473	145020	809984	17.57 GB
May 2012	12022	25243	137726	783366	16.60 GB
Jun 2012	11009	23158	200983	844783	19.66 GB
Jul 2012	10734	22592	218096	865366	17.99 GB
Aug 2012	10643	23506	165503	746867	18.85 GB
Sep 2012	12087	23919	197654	857288	22.28 GB
Oct 2012	9036	18498	255895	1072981	27.92 GB
Nov 2012	11529	24260	174730	719306	18.09 GB
Dec 2012	9993	21558	115662	594589	16.40 GB
Total	136322	284377	2684850	10425384	238.86 GB

# Days of month





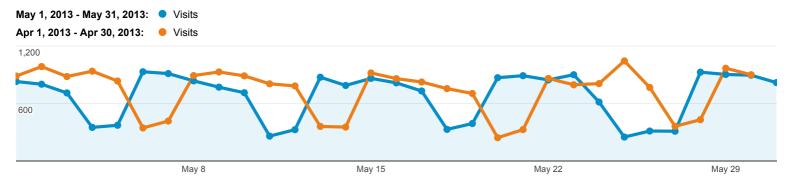
AHFC - http://www.ahfc.us All Web Site Data [DEFAULT]

## **Audience Overview**

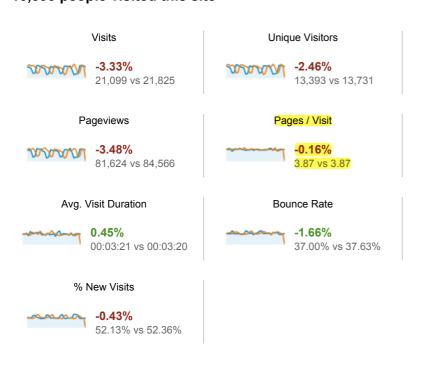
May 1, 2013 - May 31, 2013 Compare to: Apr 1, 2013 - Apr 30, 2013

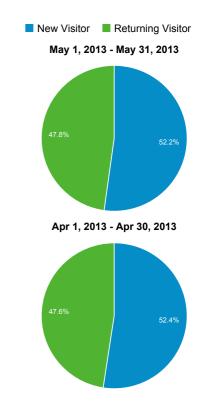
change in % of visits: +0.00%





# 13,393 people visited this site





	Language	Visits	% Visits	
1.	en-us			
	May 1, 2013 - May 31, 2013	20,382	96.6	60%
	Apr 1, 2013 - Apr 30, 2013	21,033	96.3	37%
	% Change	-3.10%	0.24%	
2.	en			
	May 1, 2013 - May 31, 2013	459	2.18%	
	Apr 1, 2013 - Apr 30, 2013	553	2.53%	
	% Change	-17.00%	-14.14%	
3.	zh-cn			
	May 1, 2013 - May 31, 2013	48	0.23%	
	Apr 1. 2013 - Apr 30. 2013	6	0.03%	