

NCSHA Annual Awards for Program Excellence
Description of Entry
Communications—Annual Report
2007 Annual Report—IT FEELS GOOD TO BE HOME

Mission and Project Overview

The mission of Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) is “to provide Alaskans access to safe, quality, affordable housing.” In meeting this mission, we offer a variety of loan, rental, weatherization, and grant programs to Alaskans at various income levels. AHFC serves as Alaska’s leader in providing first-time homebuyer and rural loan programs, weatherization assistance, and incentives to expand affordable housing.

The objectives of the annual report are to provide to the governor, the legislature, and AHFC’s many partners:

- visual and personal stories of Alaskans who benefit from AHFC’s programs
- statistics of the people served by AHFC’s programs in that fiscal year
- dollars invested in housing-related programs that serve as a testimonial to the role AHFC plays in a vibrant economy for Alaska
- overviews of the myriad programs AHFC provides
- accurate fiscal year financial statements
- a document that is attractive, informative, and understandable

The annual report is widely distributed to legislators, community leaders, housing partners, investors, and members of the media. The combination of printed highlights and electronic financials makes it small enough to carry to meetings, home shows, and other events for additional distribution to partners and the public.

A PDF version of the annual report is posted to our website, so the entire document is available 24/7 to anyone who visits the site.

Implementation

Planning and conceptual design began early in the fiscal year. After four years of doing the report entirely in a CD format, we decided to combine a printed version of the photos and stories with a CD of the financials.

AHFC’s corporate communications officer served as project manager and writer/editor, while AHFC’s contracted marketing/public relations firm completed all other aspects of production and distribution.

The project manager arranged photo opportunities throughout the year, and held ongoing meetings with staff from various departments, the marketing/public relations firm, and the designer to determine the layout, and select relevant stories and photos.

Why this Annual Report Should be Considered for an Award

AHFC's 2007 Annual Report is attractive, informative, and cost-effective. For many years, AHFC produced a printed annual report that included printed financials. The CD provides fast access to financials for investors at a much-reduced cost to printing.

- ***Innovation***—The combination of a printed format with electronic financials provides an excellent means to highlight a variety of programs, people, and communities, while achieving the cost savings of not printing financials.
- ***Replicable***—This format would be easily replicable by other HFAs. Because fingerprints show up so easily on the royal blue of the cover, I would recommend not using a dark color where it might generally be handled.
- ***Reached target audience***—After four years of a totally electronic format, we concluded that legislators, housing leaders, or other partners might be more inclined to read a printed report, or at least look through it and keep it handy in their office, as opposed to taking time to view a CD of the programs.
- ***Achieved measurable results***—The annual report is one of the major ways information about AHFC and its programs is relayed to the governor and legislature. Although AHFC is self-supporting, its budget must be submitted to the governor and approved by the legislature. Soon after AHFC distributed the 2007 annual report, the legislature fully funded our 2009 operating budget. In addition, much of AHFC's capital budget has been reallocated for non-housing-related programs in recent years. However, the 2008 legislature approved an additional \$300 million for weatherization programs, programs AHFC has successful run—but at a much lower budget—for many years.
- ***Effectively communicated HFA achievements and mission***—The annual report provided a visual overview of our mission and the accomplishments AHFC has made toward fulfilling that mission. This is done through the stories and photos, which include people of various ages and sexes, walks of life, rural and urban, and ethnicities—the diversity of the people AHFC serves throughout the year. It also served as a means to highlight our hard-working and dedicated employees.
- ***Effective use of resources***—AHFC is required by statute to provide an annual report to the legislature, and we use this opportunity to produce a promotional piece for our other audiences. AHFC operates with its own corporate receipts and does not receive any general fund money; however, its capital and operating budgets must be approved by the

governor and legislature. Therefore, the annual report helps convey to the governor, legislature, and other key audiences how important AHFC's programs are to the people served throughout Alaska and to the overall Alaska economy.

The combination printed and CD format is an economical way to produce an annual report:

- Copies produced: 2,000; total cost for contractor: \$23,400 (includes subcontractors to design, print covers, make copies, label, and mail)
- Photography: \$4,200 (AHFC has negotiated to own the rights to the photos, so we use them for numerous other marketing and public relations efforts throughout the year. Therefore, these expenses are budgeted in a separate consulting line item, not as part of the annual report budget. The photographer is respected and widely used throughout the state. Since it is necessary to fly in order to access most areas of Alaska, we arrange photo shoots in locations the photographer is scheduled to travel for other jobs, where we are able to share travel expenses.)
- AHFC is a self-supporting public corporation. The annual report is a line item in the Corporate Communication's operating budget.

The 2007 Annual Report provides a visual opportunity to showcase AHFC's accomplishments. In so doing, it demonstrates to our target audiences and all Alaskans the importance of AHFC's programs to the individual Alaskans throughout the state and to the overall economy of Alaska.