

2014 Entry Form
(Complete one for each entry.)

Fill out the entry name *exactly* as you want it listed in the program.

Entry Name _____

HFA _____

Submission Contact _____

Phone _____ **Email** _____

Qualified Entries must be received by **Tuesday, July 1, 2014.**

For more information about Qualified Entries, [click here to access the 2014 Entry Rules.](#)

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page.

HFA _____

Entry Name _____

| Communications | Homeownership | Rental Housing | Special Needs Housing |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Report <input type="checkbox"/> Promotional Materials and Newsletters <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Media | <input type="checkbox"/> Empowering New Buyers <input type="checkbox"/> Home Improvement and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production | <input type="checkbox"/> Multifamily Management <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production | <input type="checkbox"/> Combating Homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> Housing for Persons with Special Needs |
| Legislative Advocacy | Management Innovation | Special Achievement | Are you providing visual aids? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Advocacy <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Advocacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Achievement | <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |

Holiday eCard

At the close of 2013, the housing market was warming up and CalHFA's new lending programs were still getting underway. CalHFA wanted to reach out to its business partners and stakeholders to capture their interest, in preparation for the additional products that were to come.

At the same time, resource-saving initiatives were high priority, as always. Electronic communications were an ideal solution. CalHFA benefitted from an innovative approach to a traditional communication option: the animated holiday eCard.

Our goal was to warmly re-connect with our partners, re-enforce our name recognition in the industry and engage the imaginations of our clients, partners and shareholders in a creative way, with a memorable message.

Project innovation

Some HFAs send out eCards, but few use video to capitalize on the opportunity to draw traffic to their site (viewers must click on an icon to view video hosted online), gather additional views from YouTube traffic and generate buzz in the business community about the amusement value of the eCard.

Project replication

The video animation was conceived and executed entirely in-house using the Adobe Creative Suite. Music for the video was purchased for \$15 from BeatPick.com. The video was uploaded to YouTube and then embedded in its own custom page on www.calhfa.ca.gov

Reaching target audiences

The eCard was sent by CalHFA senior staff and directors to CalHFA business partners and shareholders. Immediately, senders received feedback from recipients on the appeal of the eCard.

Achieving measurable results

In addition to dozens of individual positive comments, traffic to the eCard web page was 849 visitors from November 2013 to February 2014. Traffic to the calhfa.ca.gov website increased 18% during that same period, compared to the previous year's traffic counts.

Providing benefits that outweigh costs

The return on investment for this project has been excellent. Unmeasurable benefits include a boost in CalHFA's image as an agency that cares, a reminder that we're still in the game and even in the midst of holiday mayhem, we're thinking of our clients, partners and shareholders. The cost for the design and execution of our Holiday eCard was \$15.00. Once a design proposal was selected, our staff created the illustrations for animation, animated them, added music purchased online and published the final video on YouTube for the broadest cross-browser support and additional traffic YouTube provides. The YouTube video was then embedded on a page of www.calhfa.ca.gov. There were no hard costs associated with any elements other than the background music file. The entire process took about 8 hours.

Demonstrating effective use of resources

This project reached hundreds of CalHFA partners and the cost was quite reasonable. The commitment from staff involved only one person to create and animate the illustrations, and one person to publish the final video file to the web site. No tangible resources were used; no landfills padded with printed goods.

Achieving strategic objectives

Our holiday eCard is the sort of communications piece that responds to the public's desire to see us do more with less. This project demonstrates that with very minimal cost and a relatively small time commitment, direct, engaging messaging can produce a desirable impact in the community and assist in supporting the CalHFA brand and mission.

Please take a moment to view the short Holiday eCard on the attached CD.