



Entry Form 2017 Annual Awards for Program Excellence

Entry Deadline: Thursday, June 15, 2017, Midnight ET

Each entry must include a completed entry form. Please complete a form for each entry your HFA is submitting. The completed entry form will become the first page of your entry.

This form is a fillable PDF. Type your information into the entry form and save it as a PDF. Please do not write on or scan the entry form. **Questions: Call 202-624-7710 or email awards@ncsha.org.**

Entry Title: Enter your entry's title exactly as you wish it to be published on the NCSHA website and in the awards program.

Category:

Subcategory:

Entry Summary: A 15-word (max) summary of the program, project, or practice you are entering.

HFA:

HFA Staff Contact:

Phone:

Email:

Visual Aids:

Are you mailing to NCSHA 10 copies of any visual aids that cannot be included in your entry PDF? Yes No

Payment:

My HFA is mailing a check to NCSHA.
My HFA is emailing the credit card authorization form to awards@ncsha.org.

Background

Each year, Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency uses its annual report to share the agency's accomplishments and financial health with its stakeholders and the public. Shrinking budgets and a shift toward digital communications mean an adjustment in the way the agency communicates with audiences.

OHFA has switched from a printed annual report to an online annual report as a way to reduce costs and expand reach. With just a few clicks of a button and virtually zero expense, OHFA can utilize a custom annual report website, robust email lists, and an active Facebook page to disseminate content electronically to its employees, community partners, customers, developers, elected officials, lenders and investors.

Situation

[Research](#) states that the average attention span of a person is 8.25 seconds. Humans have even been compared to having the attention span of a gold fish. In addition, people are bombarded with a ton of information on a daily basis.

With that in mind, OHFA needed to break through the clutter with an [annual report](#) that was both visual and compelling. We recognized that while the financials are an important part of the OHFA's annual report, it is our customers' stories and testimonials that best communicate the agency's mission and impact. People are why affordable housing matters.

Solution

Since the beginning of time, humans have used storytelling to engage and connect with others. Instead of writing on cave walls, we can now tell stories with video. [Research](#) shows consumers prefer video to reading, and they want to see more video content.

Video is a format that communicates both motion and emotion in a way that cannot be matched by print and audio. By harnessing the power of video storytelling, we made it possible for people to see and hear OHFA customers speak directly about their experiences and how OHFA's programs have changed their lives for the better.

Videography can be very costly, but OHFA's Communications Team accomplished it all using their own skills and in-house equipment (DSLR camera, tripod, microphone, and Final Cut Pro software) to produce five annual report videos that focus on individual stories of hope and home. The videos and accompanying stories are curated on a custom Wordpress site, also designed by the Communications Team.

Implementation

The theme of OHFA's [2016 Annual Report](#) is "HOME: This is my story." The annual report website uses a template that simulates a book. Visitors navigate through the annual report by turning the pages of the book. Prominently displayed and embedded on the inside pages are the five videos and brief stories.

The videos highlight people who experienced the life-changing impact of five OHFA programs: OHFA Advantage Homebuyer Program, Affordable Housing Tax Credits, Housing Trust Fund, Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher/Family Self-Sufficiency Program, and the Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME).

Each video tells a memorable story about a housing issue and how OHFA helped solve it. The impact OHFA's work had on the individuals, the family or the entire community is highlighted.

Narration was not used in the videos because we wanted the voices of our customers to be heard directly. No one can tell their story more authentically than they can. In one video, an interviewee had tears in her eyes when discussing the group home that was built for disabled individuals using HOME funds. With video, viewers can see for themselves the emotions of hope, joy, and gratefulness of the people OHFA has helped.

Given that OHFA celebrated 40 years of service to the state in 2016, historic program milestones are offered alongside accomplishments from the past fiscal year.

The website's responsive design makes the website and videos viewable on any device including mobile phones. This was important since the annual report and videos were shared via email, social media and SMS/text message.

Budget

The price of equipment to shoot and edit high-quality, professional video has radically decreased. After the initial investment in video equipment a few years ago, OHFA has been able to create multiple videos with replicable cost savings.

OHFA's two-person Communications Team created all of the digital content for the annual report. They conducted the customer interviews, shot and produced all of the videos, wrote the stories, took the photographs, and designed the website. The only out-of-pocket costs incurred were for travel expenses, graphics, audio music, and the website template which totaled less than \$500.

Response and Conclusion

The [2016 annual report](#) provided OHFA with a dramatic return on investment. While a single video of the same length and quality would cost thousands of dollars to be created by an external firm, OHFA was able to produce five videos for its annual report for less than \$100 each. In two months, the videos have garnered more than 600 views.

The videos of our customers' stories have generated positive feedback from members of OHFA's Board of Trustees, employees, customers, and the interviewees themselves. Several people could not believe that such high-quality videos were produced internally. One of OHFA's community partners, Neighborhood Housing Services, featured in one of the videos showed that video at its board of directors meeting. NHS also asked for permission to post the video on the [NHS website](#).

The ability to create videos in-house provides additional value because the Communications Team can easily repurpose video content for other uses. Clips from the annual report videos were repurposed into a short video about the agency that OHFA's Executive Director and Legislative Liaison used when lobbying on Capitol Hill during NCSHA's Legislative Conference. They reported back that the video was much more engaging and effective in conveying OHFA's story than the brochures they used in the past. Again, this provided OHFA significant value and cost savings.

In summary, video storytelling has transformed OHFA's annual report from words and pictures on a website where we are the ones telling our customers' stories to short films featuring our customers telling their own story.

VISUAL AIDS

Website Link:

[OHFA 2016 Annual Report | HOME: This is my story](#)

5 Annual Report Videos:

1. [OHFA Advantage Homebuyer Program](#)



2. [Affordable Housing Tax Credits](#)



3. [Housing Trust Fund](#)



4. [Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher/Family Self-Sufficiency Program](#)



5. [Home Investment Partnerships Program](#)

