



Entry Form 2018 Annual Awards for Program Excellence

Entry Deadline: Friday, June 15, 2018, 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.

The new mission statement of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) is the following: “We partner to provide homes and preserve places for the people of Michigan.” It is an expression of the agency’s efforts to enhance economic and community vitality through housing and historic preservation activities, and in providing financial and technical assistance through public and private partnerships to create and preserve safe and decent affordable housing for the people of Michigan.

Advance Agency Mission and Achieve Strategic Objectives

In this day and age, you have about seven seconds to grab someone’s attention and provide them with content that keeps them engaged. That’s why MSHDA’s communications team set out to create a series of short videos that tell the MSHDA story while painting a more accurate picture of modern affordable housing and the people the agency serves.

As dedicated housing advocates in Michigan, we all work hard in our respective areas to assist residents in obtaining safe and affordable housing, keeping families in their homes and preserving historical spaces. That good work has a widespread ripple effect across the entire state. We also have personal stories about changing lives for the better. This ongoing video series taps into some of those compelling stories that deserve to be shared with a broader audience. Each video is thoughtfully crafted using interviews and location footage from across the state and within the four walls of MSHDA. Residents, developers, service providers, MSHDA staff and elected officials are the storytellers. The value of affordable housing in neighborhoods and communities across the state is the story.

Innovation

Video is one of the most universally preferred ways of consuming content with nine out of ten consumers watching at least one online video per week. Data also shows that businesses with video marketing strategies have an elevated brand perception. The “Your Best Way Home” video series takes an innovative approach by combining first-person storytelling, creative imagery, and programmatic information without being overbearing, self-congratulatory, or overly bureaucratic. As a result, the attention-grabbing videos are informative, stylistic and viewer-friendly. The candid experiences and first-hand accounts of the narrators in each video give real credibility to the video images and messaging.

While the final results are impressive, achieving an effective video campaign in this manner needed a clear, shared vision, and cooperative, professional coordination between MSHDA communications staff and the video production company, Water Hill Creative. On the one hand, MSHDA had dramatic stories of program impact on people and communities, and the video production company had the talent to meld the complex stories and incredible images into bite-size, powerful videos.

Reach Targeted Audiences and Achieve Measurable Results

The video series was created with a wide audience in mind. To maximize ROI our goal was to make these videos relatable, evergreen and usable across many platforms and in many settings.

Primary Audience: Housing industry stakeholders, decision makers and advocates. Top of mind when producing these videos was molding the perception of affordable housing as safe, engaging and blending into the neighborhoods and cities where it is built and preserved. We also wanted to take a deeper look at the people who make affordable housing possible and those who benefit from that work.

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Secondary Audience: Michigan residents as a whole. These videos aim to inspire conversation and influence perceptions about what it means to have low and moderate income neighbors in your backyard and how that adds to the diversity of our neighborhoods and communities.

Measurable Results

To date, there are seven published videos in this series on MSHDA’s YouTube channel boasting more than 21,000 views. Knowing that one of the primary objectives in this project was to maximize reach, MSHDA launched a Facebook advertising campaign to highlight the stories and reach people who may not know much about MSHDA and the work of the Authority.

The Facebook video ad campaign has achieved some astounding results. At the time of this submission, six videos have been used in two week time slots for a 12-week “Your Best Way Home” ad campaign. The videos have garnered:

- 947,454 impressions
- Reached 431,015 people
- 705 shares
- 1639 reactions (likes, hearts, laughs, etc)

Replicable, Benefit/Costs, and Effective Use of Resources

The “Your Best Way Home” video series cost an approximate total of \$60,000 to produce. Each video’s cost combines one-on-one green screen interviews, b-roll secondary recordings at various sites, editing, and music. However, costs savings were achieved along the way by the following methods: (1) each one-on-one interview was recorded in a day with 9 – 11 additional interviews for other videos; (2) MSHDA investments and city landmarks were intentionally shot as timeless evergreen b-roll recordings; and (3) the music licenses purchased will allow for multiple uses. In the acquisition phase, MSHDA was able to build up its library of material that can now be utilized in a variety of ways and across multiple platforms. MSDHA can also share it with local housing partners so that they may also reap the benefits of professionally acquired video content and only worry about the cost of editing.

The cost for HFAs is scalable under varying circumstances. Depending on the size of the budget, a video series like this one may be reduced or expanded in number to reflect the available dollars to invest in the project. For example, a series of 3 storytelling videos may be completed and launched as a similar campaign but, obviously, at an overall lower cost. But you can look at this a different way. As increasing the number of videos increases cost, more content is being captured and providing additional future opportunities for use. For example, MSHDA had a Facebook banner video built using the secondary b-roll recordings of various site visits. The cost of shooting all of those for the sole purpose of making a Facebook video would not be cost effective. But since the agency already owned the recordings and video capture, it was just a matter of paying for editing costs.

What may be less easy to replicate – yet still very possible and achievable for most HFAs – is forming a shared vision for a video promotional campaign that focuses on storytelling and establishing an effective, creative working relationship with a skilled communications firm. MSHDA specifically set out to draw stories from 4 different perspectives: resident, homeowner, developer and service provider. This gave us a varied cache of content allowing us to tailor-make future videos based on a targeted audience. We made sure to ask questions during the interview portion of the project that were as close to a timeless evergreen approach as possible. The

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interviews focused on the importance of safe and affordable housing, and what affordable housing looks like today. As the faces of MSHDA leadership change and the programs fluctuate based on funding, the agency can always go back to this content to craft a video that takes message to the root of our mission and then video record new content as needed to keep the message up-to-date.

In the short term, MSHDA’s levels of online views, impressions, and shares has been record-breaking. Also, MSHDA’s has received excellent feedback from our partners and wonderful remarks from conference attendees who were exposed to these stories.

HFAs are sitting on a gold mine of success stories and with effective outreach and cooperation with statewide housing partners, the stories may be told for the unique perspectives of people who are impacted by the program results. Combining the words and stories with dynamic video images conveys an impactful message to stakeholders across the state or targeted service area.

“Your Best Way Home” Video Series (Links go to MSHDA YouTube Channel):

- [Who is MSHDA?](#)
MSHDA Executive Director Earl Poleski introduces the Michigan State Housing Development Authority and the agency's work in providing Michigan with affordable housing.
- [What is Affordable Housing? Roosevelt School Project](#)
MSHDA highlights Roosevelt School in Muskegon Heights as an attractive example of affordable housing in Michigan.
- [Forest Arms Apartments Project](#)
Developer Scott Lowell tells how, after a major fire, historic tax-credits were leveraged to restore the beautiful Forest Arms apartment building in Detroit, Michigan. Historic preservation is important for attracting and keeping people in the city, ultimately leading to a healthier city.
- [Saving the Grandview Marquette](#)
Chip Windisch, of ONB Community Equity, shares insight into the creative financing efforts behind the Grandview Marquette restoration. Affordable housing helps to save cities and towns while delivering positive economic impact for downtown districts. Investing in Grandview Marquette not only saved a building but also provided affordable housing for Marquette.
- [Menominee Lloyd Building](#)
Playwright Anthony Lamalfa tells about what it's like living at Menominee's refurbished Lloyd Building. This is affordable housing.
- [Who is SHPO?](#)
Michigan's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) preserves historic places and community character. Historic buildings help to give communities their identity. What can you learn from your town's past?
- [Foundation Hotel Project](#)
General Manager Bob Lambert gives you a tour of the Foundation Hotel, created from the Detroit fire department headquarters, originally built in 1929. The importance of historic preservation. Others have paved the way for the story you are now able to tell.