

# Home Is Key

## **MaineHousing**

Communications: Integrated Campaign

### **HFA Staff Contact**

Amanda Ouellette

[aouellette@mainehousing.org](mailto:aouellette@mainehousing.org)

## An Affordable Home Is Key

MaineHousing understands that home is at the core of peoples' lives and that is foundational to an individual's well-being and overall stability. Affordable housing is essential—it has a ripple effect that positively impacts all sectors of our communities. To support our efforts of advocating for and providing guidance to Maine residents, we worked with Rinck Advertising to create the “Home is Key” campaign as a platform to showcase our overall services. Each service we have ladders up to the Home is Key messaging. An Affordable Home is Key integrated campaign was created for the First Home Program to lean into the benefits of the First Home Loan and the importance of affordability.

The housing landscape has shifted drastically since the pandemic. Like all other states throughout the country, homeownership has become less attainable for those in our state, with nearly 72% of households in Maine unable to afford a median-priced home. The home buying market has been flipped on its side with purchases made above the asking price, sometimes sight unseen, with inspections waived and housing stock dwindling. To help counter this, we adjusted the First Home Loan program by increasing purchase price limits and single-home/multi-unit Advantage benefits to help with down payments. However, the landscape still made first-time homeownership difficult for many to acquire. Due to this, we focused on the program's overall benefits so that we could be there for those who were in a place to purchase but also stay top of mind for those who would be ready in the future.

### **Strategic Objective**

Our objective was to drive potential first-time homebuyers and influencers to the First Home Loan landing page to learn more about the program and its benefits.

### **Strategy**

Acknowledging the barriers and opportunities for the program, we developed an integrated strategy to raise top-of-mind awareness for the First Home Program. We do this by highlighting testimonials from people who have successfully used the program.

The campaign was leveraged through a strategic digital media plan to reach prospective homebuyers while they are actively searching for housing related items, passively scrolling through social feeds, or perusing the web. Each tactic of the plan was developed to amplify all other tactics to ensure our budget would stretch as far as possible. The plan focused on reaching potential homebuyers and influencers throughout the state—we leveraged key audience learnings and media optimizations to realize more qualified reach and meet key media performance indicators. Additionally, we implemented a broad targeting approach to ensure we stayed within Fair housing guidelines.

### **Execution**

The campaign was developed to gather assets over two days of production so that it could be used for various mediums and be reworked to last beyond the initial year. The video was taken in 4K so that we could pull still photographs from what was filmed instead of bringing a photographer to be a part of the production. From the two day shoots our team developed the following to help support the campaign: long format videos, :15 / :10 videos, digital assets, and digital imagery for the website. Additionally, opportunistic videos were filmed during production so that they could be integrated into other initiatives of the Home is Key campaign.

Our first day of production was spent with Catherine Buxton and her partner, capturing moments around their house, and discussing how MaineHousing helped make her dream of being a Portland homeowner possible. Her story educates and

inspires others who may not have thought homeownership was possible.

We then spent a day with Ronn Collington at his multi-unit home. Raised by his mother in an apartment in Brooklyn, homeownership wasn't something Ronn thought was possible. He was only 18 when his mother passed, leaving him unsettled. Coming to Maine years later and learning about MaineHousing programs, Ronn began to dream about having something to pass on to his family. MaineHousing helped make his vision a reality.

Each of these stories connects seamlessly to the importance and meaning of home, as well as to the benefits of the program.

## Results

The Affordable Home is Key campaign rolled out in late September 2022. Since then, over 5.7 million impressions have been served to people in Maine through paid Meta, YouTube, and programmatic advertising. The First Home Loan program ended 2022 with record-breaking success, closing over 177.7 million dollars' worth of loans during the calendar year.

In addition to these efforts, the First Home Loan program is supported through an ongoing paid search engine marketing program, serving ads to people actively searching for homeownership services online and through Maine Public Broadcast News with its "News Connect" program. The News Connect programs allowed us to reach the New Mainer population within our state (New Mainer refers to immigrants or refugees who now call Maine home). The program features translated videos in French, Spanish, Somali, and Portuguese that are featured in weekly video podcasts and newsletters translated into the previously stated languages, Khmer, and Arabic. This content is shared with over 300 community partners through the MPBN web, WhatsApp, and YouTube, as well as public access channels. Each video podcast is viewed 1200 times or more each week.

- Total Visits to the Landing page: 13K+ (Sept – Dec)
- Total Impressions Served: 5.7M+ (Sept – Dec)
- Total Loans Closed: 918
- Total Loan Volume: \$177.7M+

## Replicable

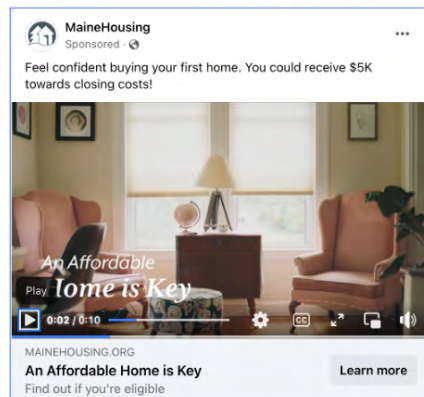
Housing agencies throughout the country help people every day, and there is no one better to speak on behalf of these agencies than someone who has gone through the program. Many people trust reviews and testimonials over messaging from a brand. This approach allows the audience to hear from peers, which can be a stronger and more impactful influence than from a business itself.

Digital media is much more efficient and cost-effective than traditional media and can be launched on any scale. A testimonial campaign like this is replicable and can be developed using the same framework. Depending on the budget, testimonials can be filmed on smartphones and cut together using various editing software.

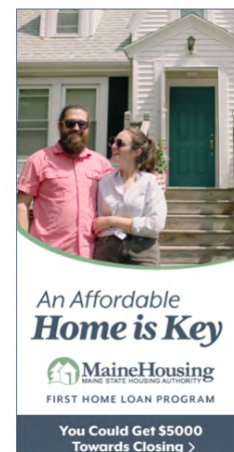
# Appendix A Campaign Assets



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5EyNV2i15rU>



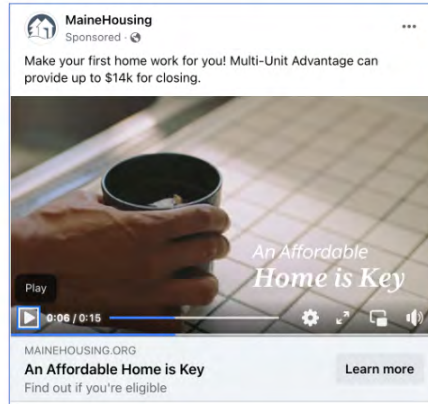
<https://fb.me/1SPuIBEDYPQB4ww>



# Appendix A

## Campaign Assets (continued)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=px3voN-lgy8>



<https://fb.me/97QFAnNjOqYzGm>