



2013 Annual Awards Entry Form
(Complete one for each entry.)

Entry Name Taking the "NEW" New Hampshire Housing on a Road Trip

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

HFA New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority

Submission Contact Amanda Flitter

Phone 603-310-9371

Email aflitter@nhhfa.org

Program Contact Ignatius MacLellan

Phone 603-310-9270

Email imaclellan@nhhfa.org

Entry form with description, check(s), and visual aids (optional) must be received by NCSHA by **Monday, July 1, 2013**.

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

HFA: New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority

Entry Name: Taking the "NEW" New Hampshire Housing on a Road Trip

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Report <input type="checkbox"/> Promotional Materials and Newsletters <input checked="" 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"/> Federal Advocacy <input type="checkbox"/> State Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Technology
Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
<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	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Achievement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

NCSHA Annual Awards Program for Excellence

Communications – Creative Media | New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA)

Taking the “NEW” New Hampshire Housing on a Road Trip

2012 was a year of change for New Hampshire Housing as we adapted to market conditions and adopted new ways of doing business. To announce these changes, specifically the ones to our homeownership programs, we decided to do a public and business relations “splash” across the state by taking a road trip to educate and connect with our partners on an individual level.

New Hampshire Housing is known for having mortgage products designed specifically for first-time homebuyers. For 35 years, these products were supported through the sale of tax-exempt bonds; however, the bond market changed and became a less viable source for funding and supporting our programs. To adapt to the changing market, New Hampshire Housing adopted a new model of selling loans as whole loans and mortgage backed securities to Fannie Mae and Ginnie Mae.

The change in business model meant we would no longer be bound by as many rules and regulations as to who could use our products. For the first time, we would be able to offer mortgage products and unique features, like down payment and closing cost assistance, to homeowners looking to reenter the market as well as to our traditional first-time buyers. In addition to this freedom for our borrowers, there would be less “red tape” for lenders who participated in our programs. We knew that changing to this new model meant rebranding ourselves and re-educating our business partners after having the same rules for our mortgage products for over three decades.

Taking the Road Trip

Since we rely on the help of lenders and real estate professionals to educate potential homebuyers about our programs, we knew it was important to reach out to these business partners in a direct, attention-getting way when the new mortgage options became available. An idea for a promotional “road trip” formed and took two months of planning and preparation, beginning with the design of our new marketing materials in April 2012.

One of the key goals for this initiative was to ensure these new marketing materials would be more user-friendly and spell out our programs in clear, approachable terms. The first step was to create graphics that would stand out and that could be repurposed for future use. In collaboration with wedü, a marketing and advertising agency in Manchester, New Hampshire, we designed an informational folder that expressed our connection to both borrowers and lenders. It featured a neighborhood with multi-colored houses on the front and back. Inside were eight, tabbed information sheets about the new programs as well as concise information about what New Hampshire Housing does, our homebuyer education opportunities, frequently asked questions, and how we can help lenders and real estate professional serve borrowers. The folders also contained fact sheets so lenders had all the details about our programs in an easy to read format.

The “road trip” portion was designed to meet our second goal: delivering this new information to our key business partners—most notably our participating lenders and real estate professionals. Rather than a traditional approach of a group conference call or business meeting, homeownership staff visited individual offices to hand-deliver the informational folders along with fun promotional items to share information and excitement about the “NEW” New Hampshire Housing. Each business partner received a house-shaped piggy bank with our logo and logo-embossed chocolate coins inside. The coins symbolized the underlying message of “it’s time for change.” The bank was wrapped in cellophane and sat on a green shredded-paper “lawn.” Staff also gave business partners the prop of a blue New Hampshire Housing

New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority
Taking the “NEW” New Hampshire Housing on a Road Trip

foam finger to use when taking photos documenting our road trip. During the road trip, which took place June 4-5, 2012, our staff traveled 1,357 miles and visited 160 business partners.

Staff dedication and involvement was key to the success of the road trip and marked another transition for us as an organization—creating brand ambassadors and involving staff members of all levels in our marketing efforts. Homeownership Division staff assembled the banks with chocolate coins, drove the miles, and met one-on-one with business partners, but the Division as a whole also made sure to bring the results back to all staff members and inform them of the new programs.

During an all-staff meeting, Homeownership Division staff did a presentation about their trip and showed photos documenting the whole process, from assembling banks and folders to meeting with lenders and real estate professionals. They also explained the changes that were taking place in our programs and how the “NEW” New Hampshire Housing included all homebuyers. To add a bit of fun, staff members came in to informational postcards and chocolate coins on their desk on the first day of the program rollout. By informing all staff members across all divisions about the changes, we were working to create brand ambassadors.

Results

Our business-to-business road trip kicked off a process of rebranding ourselves, which continues today. The new graphics used on the materials introduced a friendlier, more approachable look that we have continued to use when creating marketing and educational materials for our new homeownership programs and homebuyer education initiatives. The New Hampshire Housing logo within a row of multi-colored houses is now featured on Homeownership Division staff business cards, and they are a recurring theme on informational materials we provide to prospective homebuyers. This provides a feel of bringing New Hampshire Housing into your local neighborhood. The graphics and style of the folders have also been used for our new online education courses and in paid advertising. The consistent use of these images has given our Homeownership Division a new, more recognizable branding.

As a result of our direct business-to-business approach, real estate professionals and lenders have continued to refer their customers to New Hampshire Housing mortgage products, as is demonstrated by the fact that our loan volume has remained consistent in the face of these large-scale changes. Due to the changes in business model it is difficult to draw accurate comparisons before and after the launch of the new products; however, what we can say is that even with large changes we have been able to produce both upfront revenue and long term servicing income that will fund New Hampshire Housing’s valuable programs for the future.

As we continue to rebrand ourselves and educate both business partners and borrowers about our new image, we believe that we will be able to grow our loan volume and serve a more diverse range of homebuyers in New Hampshire.

Replication

Our “road trip” strategy is something that other HFAs can easily replicate with planning and active staff involvement. HFAs can create lists of targeted business partners to visit when events or new initiatives are about to be announced. For larger states, these lists can even be targeted around certain regions depending on budget and staff time constraints. Hand-delivering informational materials with some fun marketing items can help foster individual business connections, make a memorable impression, and help spread the word about the important impact a specific HFA program is making in local communities.

New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority
Taking the “NEW” New Hampshire Housing on a Road Trip

Visual Aids



Staff members stuff New Hampshire Housing piggy banks with logo-embossed chocolate coins.



New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority
Taking the “NEW” New Hampshire Housing on a Road Trip



Lenders and real estate professionals love the “NEW” New Hampshire Housing!



New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority
Taking the “NEW” New Hampshire Housing on a Road Trip



Lenders and real estate professionals met one-on-one with New Hampshire Housing staff to hear about our new programs.

