

2010 NCSHA Award Nomination—Ohio Housing Finance Agency

Communications—Newsletter

Revitalizing a Key Informational Tool

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The Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) provides customers, partners, staff members, stakeholders and legislators with up-to-date information and highlights of Agency accomplishments through the OHFA Quarterly Update. To increase the relevancy of the publication, the Agency embarked on a redesign with the Spring 2010 News edition. By making the design cleaner, more approachable and more reflective of OHFA branding, the Agency created a more effective marketing and informational tool.

Timely articles are paired with customer photos and a mix of color and black and white imagery. The color palette closely follows Agency brand standards, featuring bright hues of blue, green and yellow balanced by a deep grey shade that provides a professional feel. Font size was increased and made bold by placement and color. Whitespace provides a clean background that highlights the copy, graphics and photography that are all created in-house. Copy in the newsletter features not only timely programmatic and informational announcements from the Agency but also creates a forum for sharing internal accomplishments and events. Staff members throughout the Agency contribute articles to the publication to provide a well-rounded perspective of the programs and initiatives that serve our customers. Staff news stories and photos help foster Agency and employee name recognition to external partners while encouraging employee connection to OHFA's mission. Active links within the 8.5" X 11" piece provide even more interaction and information.

The newsletter is now an improved, cost-effective vehicle to market the Agency's name, reputation and expertise to a broad audience. The publication is distributed electronically, eliminating any outside design, copywriting, proofreading or printing costs. Feedback from readers has been strong and favorable, with several new readers added to the distribution list since the redesign. OHFA utilizes Constant Contact, an email marketing system that allows the Agency to distribute the quarterly newsletter to a self-selected group of 1,341 contacts including Ohio legislators, OHFA board and staff members and external partners and stakeholders who have requested to receive the publication. Through Constant Contact, OHFA is able to pull reports based on distribution, read receipts and click-throughs, tracking the number of people who receive this valuable information. OHFA continues to look for ways to keep the newsletter an interactive, relevant and timely compilation of information that provides maximum benefit to the Agency and to readers.