



NACCHO Public Health Communications Committee

# Identity and Branding for Public Health

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## Ottawa County, MI



Rural county in West Michigan  
(on Lake Michigan)

Pop. 276,300

- | Age           | Gender       | Ethnicity       |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| • 19% (0-19)  | • 51% Female | • 90% White     |
| • 29% (20-39) | • 49% Male   | • 10% non-White |
| • 27% (40-59) |              |                 |
| • 25% (60+)   |              |                 |
- \$60,350 median household income
  - 9% live below federal poverty line
  - known as a conservative and religious community with Dutch origins
  - Striving to become more diverse and inclusive
  - popular vacation destination (e.g., beaches, parks, farmer markets, Tulip Time festival, Coast Guard festival)

## City of Cambridge, MA



Urban city in eastern Massachusetts  
(across the river from Boston)

Pop. 107,000

- 28% foreign-born
- 14% live below federal poverty line
- 47% earn \$100,000+ a year

Strong commitment to social justice and health equity

Innovation Hub: Harvard, MIT, biotech



# WHAT is a **BRAND?**

**Every interaction** is a  
brand building opportunity.



# Branding Process

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Who *are* we  
as an  
organization?

Who do we  
*want* to be?

How do  
others *see* us?

How do we  
*want* them to  
see us?



# Branding Process

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## 1. Engage Leadership & Staff

Buy-in from leadership | Engage Staff | Define Project | Secure Resources

## 2. Discovery

SWOT/C analysis | Stakeholder Perceptions | Competitors | Communication Audit

## 3. Build the Brand Strategy

Vision, Mission & Values | Brand Goals | Brand Articulation | Verbal Identity | Visual Identity

## 4. Live the New Brand

Brand Ambassadors | Brand Roll-Out & Training | Brand Guidelines | Brand Messaging  
Integrate Brand into other Organizational Practices



# SWOT Analysis

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## *mi*Ottawa Department of Public Health

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Internal <b>Strengths</b>	Internal <b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dedicated employees.</li><li>• Exceptional customer service.</li><li>• Cooperation and teamwork.</li><li>• Responsive to emerging issues.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bureaucracy and limited flexibility.</li><li>• Limited resources for planning and evaluation</li><li>• Limited in how we collect data.</li></ul>
External <b>Opportunities</b>	External <b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase Public Health awareness as issues emerge.</li><li>• Collaboration with community partners.</li><li>• Increase contact with the media (proactive).</li><li>• New policy implementation.</li></ul> <p><i>OCDPH 2010 Analysis</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decrease in funds; resulting in less opportunity to share the value of PH.</li><li>• Limited understanding of PH in the community. If we don't intentionally shape our identity, others will.</li></ul>

**Case Study:** *Ottawa County Department of Public Health (Michigan)*



# Survey Questions by Audience

*Case Study:* Cambridge Public Health Department



Q. What do you think the health department does for the community, in a few words or sentences?\*

Q. When you think of the health department, what are three words that come to mind?\*\*

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Partners

Q. In your opinion, what are the most important roles for the health department? *Multiple choice*

Q. Complete this sentence: "Cambridge Public Health Department is the go-to agency for..."

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Staff

Q. When you think of other departments or agencies serving our community, what, in your opinion, sets us apart?

Q. "What does the Cambridge Public Health Department do?" When asked this question by residents or professional colleagues, what do you typically say?

\* Included on public and partner surveys

\*\* Included on all three surveys



# Reality Check

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“Our health department is the glue that binds everyone else (other agencies etc.) together.”



Staff

“Unaware that it exists.”

“I have no idea.”



Public

# Internal Communications Audit

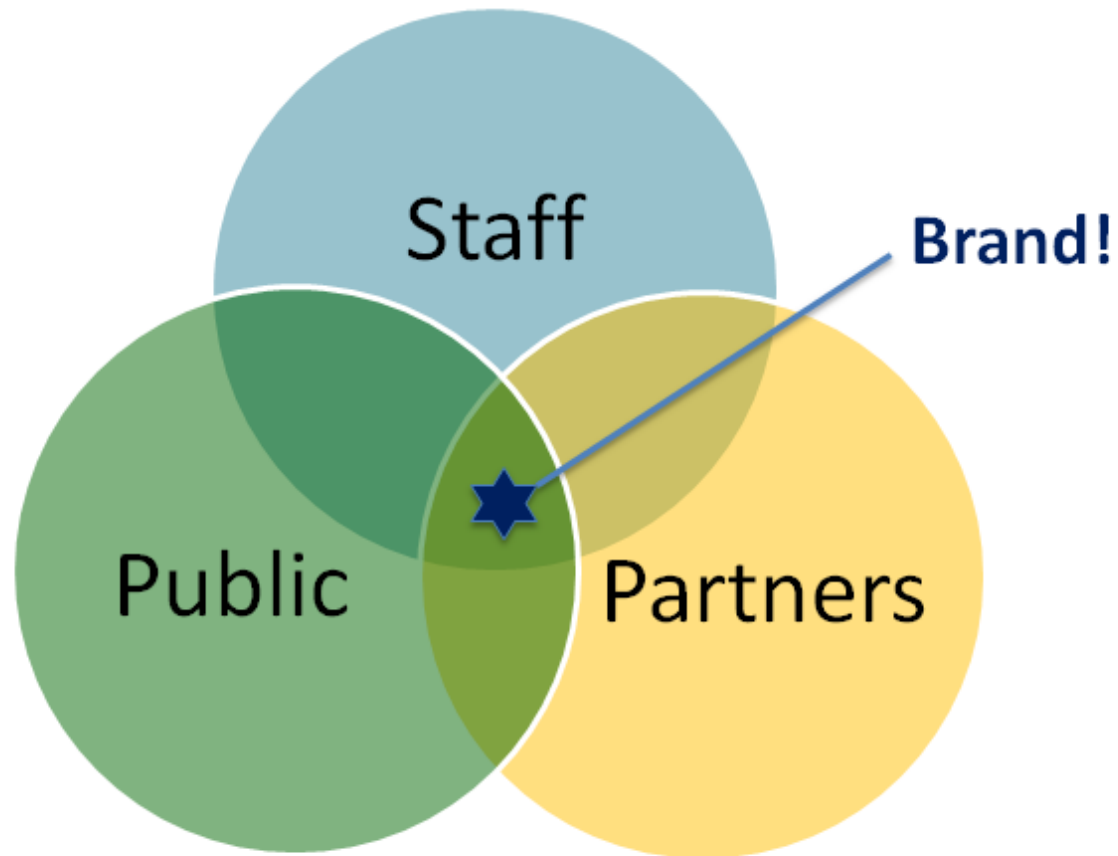




# Build the Brand Strategy

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*Find Common Themes*





# Build the Brand Strategy

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**Vision**

**Mission**

**Values**

**Brand Goals**





# Brand Articulation

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## **Position**

Succinctly communicates what your health department stands for; what sets it apart; and what is meaningful to supporters.

## **Personality**

Describes the character of your organization as if it were a person.

## **Promise**

A short, compelling statement that sums up what your health department can do for the people it serves.



# Visual Identity

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## Logo

A mark or symbol, logotype (e.g., *font type, size, style*) and tagline.

## Tagline

A simple, poignant word or phrase paired with an organization's name that defines it, connects stakeholders to its mission, offers a call to action or a combination of these three functions.



# Verbal Identity

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## Elevator Pitch

A short description of what your organization does and why it's important. *You should be able to deliver it in 30 seconds or less.*

## Boilerplate

A sentence describing your health department.  
*(Also suitable for a news release or other written documents. Not a tagline!)*

## Brand Story

A short narrative of the challenge, response, and action behind the creation or work of your health department. Your story should connect with your audience, instill an emotion, and give a memorable experience with your organization. *(Also suitable for a website's "About" page or printed materials.)*

## Message Platform

Targeted departmental messages to key audiences.



# Message Platform Worksheet

Audiences				
Families	Engaged Residents	Tribal Leadership	Businesses	Nonprofits
<b>Messages</b> What does each audience need know, believe or care about to become engaged with our health department?				
<b>Ask</b> What action(s) do we want each audience to take? How can each audience amplify our health department's efforts?				



## Living your brand

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- Be brand ambassadors
- Consistent brand use  
*logo, templates, messages, etc.*
- Rollout brand to the public  
*If feasible, hire or contract a communications specialist, graphic designer, marketing and public relations professional, writer or an intern.*
- Train staff members and provide brand guidelines  
OCDPH <http://bit.ly/1OXJoP5>
- Create strategic communication plans  
OCDPH <http://bit.ly/1M3a29q> plan worksheet
- Have consistent, unified, relevant, timely and creditable messages, and when necessary, a call to action
- Ensure organizational practices
  - Everyone committed to the vision, mission, values and goals
  - Excellent customer service engagement
  - Positive interactions and experiences with clients
- Maintain a clean and accessible facility
- Seek input from community members and clients via surveys, assessments or face-to-face.
  - What do they want from your agency?
  - How do they perceive you?
  - How can you improve?

## Deliverables

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- Media releases
- Grant applications
- Annual Reports
- Brochures
- Videos and podcasts
- Website
- Business cards
- Letterhead
- Social media posts
- Television appearances
- Newsletters
- Paid advertising
- Posters and signs
- Share success and personal stories; evoke an emotional connection and response.



Public health is about protecting the health of an entire population. For us, that means all people who live, learn, work, or spend time in Cambridge.

Cambridge is a close-knit community of people of different races, ethnicities, cultures, languages, faiths, incomes, and lifestyles. To increase opportunities for all people to live healthy lives, the Cambridge Public Health Department provides services, analyzes and shares information, implements policies, and enforces regulations in ways that benefit everyone. After all, improving quality of life is what public health—and Cambridge—are all about.



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# Resources

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- [Cambridgepublichealth.org](http://Cambridgepublichealth.org)  
Survey questions: <http://bit.ly/1p2ltaS>
- [miOttawa.org/miHealth](http://miOttawa.org/miHealth)  
OCDPH Resources - <http://bit.ly/1LatAh9>
- [naccho.org/communications](http://naccho.org/communications)
- NACCHO Stories from the Field  
*Our Branding Process: Improving Public Health Communications (OCDPH)*  
[nacchostories.org/our-branding-process-improving-public-health-communications](http://nacchostories.org/our-branding-process-improving-public-health-communications)
- NACCHO Exchange newsletter  
*RiverStone Health: The Value of a Brand* <http://bit.ly/1O6IDTB> (pages 4-7)
- Public Communication Resources <http://bit.ly/1UNDqYs>  
NACCHO Public Health Communications Committee members
- National Public Health Information Coalition [nphic.org](http://nphic.org)
- CDC Social Marketing for Nutrition and Physical Activity web course  
<http://1.usa.gov/1o7rgNc>



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