

REBRANDING CASE STUDY

Association for the Healthcare Environment (AHE)



AWARD: Graphic Design USA Winner

CHALLENGE: After 25 years, the American Society for Healthcare Environmental Services, (ASHES) saw the need to rebrand the organization to better align the perceptions of the membership and constituents for the opportunities of the next 25 years. The overarching goal is to position the organization as the premier resource in the profession to attract more members, vendor exhibitors, and platform sponsors, thereby increasing revenue. Increased revenue enables the organization to bring its programs to additional markets.

APPROACH: We conducted extensive research to validate suspected issues with the former brand and from that data, advised the Board of Directors that there was overwhelming agreement among respondents — members, vendors, sponsors, and other constituents — that a complete re-branding, right down to the name of the organization, was needed. We vetted suitable names, based on the results of one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and survey results, and presented them to the Board for approval. Because this was so radical a change and many of the original founders were active Board members, we first had to make the compelling case for change, based on research findings. Eventually a new name was chosen, and while legal ran it through the United States Patent and Trademark Office, we concurrently developed design concepts for review and approval. This package included a 12-page “Design Directives” manual that outlines mandatory brand management guidelines. We then approached key messages, the mission statement, and the roadmap going forward. We handled the national public relations side of the brand launch in addition to a traditional print and online advertising campaign.

OUTCOME: The following is a list of client-reported results following the launch of the AHE brand:

- 6% increase in membership
- Retention up 76% so net growth is about 4%
- Corporate support/sponsorship is up 31%
- Requests to speak are up nearly 150%
- Requests for input on key initiatives is up over 50%

“Recognition and respect are incalculable but leadership recognizes the difference, as do the members. As the executive, I absolutely can report a major shift in attitude toward members and the organization as a whole. Perception is reality. I never could have imagined a name and logo change would have as dramatic an effect in such a short time. The recognition was nearly immediate, within 6 months. We anticipated 18-24 months for the new brand to be assimilated.”

Patti Costello - AHE Executive Director