

**Entry Title:** A Better Life OKC Website

**Entrant's Name:** Jill Harrison

**Division/Category:** B12, Internet

**Need / Opportunity:**

Throughout 2010, the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber worked with the Boeing Company behind the scenes on a potential relocation of 550 jobs from Long Beach, Calif., to Oklahoma City. In August, 2010, the potential became reality as Boeing announced that the jobs would be relocated to Oklahoma City.

These jobs were coveted because they represented highly-skilled, highly-paid workers. In order to get the most efficiency out of the move, Boeing needed a high percentage of those employees deemed "essential personnel" to move their families from Long Beach to Oklahoma City. In similar relocations, Boeing had around 10 percent of employees who agreed to relocate. These employees had years of training and knowledge that would be difficult to replace. Simply hiring new employees to fill these roles would be cost prohibitive.

In order to increase the number of those who would relocate, Boeing partnered with the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber. It was decided by Boeing and the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber that a multimedia presentation would be given in Long Beach on September 6 to help familiarize those contemplating the move with Oklahoma City.

This left just under a month between the August 2 announcement and formal presentation on September 6. The Chamber decided this was a crucial period in the decision-making period for the Boeing employees, and too long of a timeframe without contact between Oklahoma City and the employees.

To help bridge the gap between announcement and presentation, the Chamber decided to build and launch a website, [www.ABetterLifeOKC.com](http://www.ABetterLifeOKC.com), and launch it by the August 2 announcement date.

This economic development project was critical and the Chamber did not want there to be an information gap for employees who knew little of the Oklahoma City region.

**Goals/Objectives:**

*Goal:* To create a one-stop, all-inclusive website to inform and educate essential employees of Boeing about all aspects of working and living in the greater Oklahoma City region.

*Objectives:* To improve the percentage of Boeing employees willing to relocate over past, similar relocations the company had undertaken to more than 10 percent.

**Audience:**

The target audience was a group of employees Boeing deemed essential personnel because of their training and institutional knowledge. This group consisted of engineers who are highly educated and very analytical. The employees' families were also a target audience. The Chamber not only needed to sell the employee on Oklahoma City but their spouse, significant other, children and any other family members.

**Solution Overview:**

When recruiting talent to Oklahoma City (especially from California) the Chamber had to combat certain stereotypes and opinions about "middle America". It was important to engage these employees directly and show them that Oklahoma City is a culturally vibrant community.

Later in the process, Boeing would conduct focus groups to research what concerns their employees had about Oklahoma City. However, that information would not be available until after the August 2 announcement and

**Entry Title:** A Better Life OKC Website

**Entrant's Name:** Jill Harrison

**Division/Category:** B12, Internet

after the website was launched. The Chamber would use the focus group findings to customize the website later in the process, but for the launch the team had to use topics that had come up in previous relocations projects.

For launch, six main topics were covered on the website: About OKC; Housing; Schools; Employment; Climate; and What to Do. Each category featured statistics, videos, pictures, links and in-depth data on each subject.

**Details of Implementation:**

The most challenging aspect of the project was the schedule. The Chamber staff was given three weeks to build a complete, dynamic site from the ground up before the August 2 announcement from Boeing.

The site was built in house by the Marketing and Communications department using existing assets and data. The Economic Development team provided additional research support in any areas where existing information was lacking. The website focused on issues most common with relocation projects: housing costs, schools, cultural activities, quality of life issues and weather.

**Budget:**

The website was completely built and designed in house. Outside of employee hours, the only cost associated with the project was \$950 paid to local company Element Fusion for html work and an additional \$70 per month to host the website.

**Measurement/Evaluation:**

Expectedly, just about 50 percent of the website's total hits have come from the state of California alone. Boeing and Chamber leadership felt the website did a great job of meeting the needs of the employees. The website was such a success it is being expanded and will serve as the Chamber's relocation website for future projects.

Going through the process with Boeing allowed the Chamber staff to gain better insight into what concerns and issues are most critical to new residents. The website was updated with those concerns and new features are being added to this day. A social media tool that allows visitors to see what is being said about the region and a weekly blog that introduces new residents and employees about what there is to do in Oklahoma City are some of the newest features.

While praise from Boeing leadership and employees was nice, the ultimate goal was to help recruit Boeing personnel from Long Beach to Oklahoma City.

In past cross-state relocations, Boeing's relocation rate was around 10 percent. The Chamber's goal was to improve on that rate.

Not only was the increase rate improved upon but it greatly surpassed all expectations. At the end of the process, 85 percent of employees offered relocation packages in Long Beach accepted the company's offers to move to Oklahoma City.

The program was such a success that it has already been used as the guide and blueprint for similar relocation projects by the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber.

Later, Steve Hendrickson, Director of Government Relations for the Boeing Company, said, "The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce worked in a seamless manner to provide access to key public policy

**Entry Title:** A Better Life OKC Website

**Entrant's Name:** Jill Harrison

**Division/Category:** B12, Internet

officials and community leaders to address employee concerns at no cost to Boeing. Boeing has identified these ongoing efforts as a "best practice" benchmark for future business decisions."

SAMPLE