

Entry Title: Boeing Relocation Presentation

Entrant's Name: Jill Harrison

Division/Category: B19: Presentations

Need / Opportunity:

In August, 2010, The Boeing Company announced they would be relocating approximately 550 positions from their Long Beach, Calif., facility to Oklahoma City.

These jobs were desired 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 with their families from Long Beach to Oklahoma City. In similar relocations, Boeing knew that around 10 percent of employees who were offered relocation packages would agree 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 comprehensive multimedia presentation would be given in Long Beach to help familiarize those contemplating the move with Oklahoma City and answer specific question and concerns they might have about the city and the region.

Goals/Objectives:

Goal: To inform and educate essential Boeing employees and their families about all aspects of working and living in the greater Oklahoma City region.

Objectives: To improve the percentage of Boeing employees willing to relocate and exceed the 10 percent “usual” acceptance rate.

Audience:

The target audience was the 550 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, partners, 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 with a dynamic quality of life.

The Boeing relocation represented a global company bringing hundreds of high-paying jobs to the Greater Oklahoma City region. Having a speaker and PowerPoint, or one of the Chamber’s past relocation videos would not suffice. It was decided to start with a multimedia presentation with a high-level, diverse and engaging group of speakers. The center of this presentation would be a dynamic video that highlighted Oklahoma City’s positive aspects and directly answered many concerns of the potential relocated employees. The total general session presentation was one hour in length. This was followed by eight breakout sessions on specific topical areas.

The speakers broke down as followed:

- Welcome: Mike Harris, VP of Weapons Systems Modernization, Boeing
- Oklahoma City Overview: Mick Cornett, Oklahoma City Mayor
- Oklahoma City Industry: Natalie Shirley, Oklahoma Secretary of Commerce
- Oklahoma City Economy: Roy Williams, President & CEO of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber
- What to do in your free time: Xavier Neira, Director of Manhattan Construction Group
- Culture: Gena Timberman, Executive Director of the American Indian Cultural Center

The Chamber wanted to customize a presentation to fit the Long Beach residents’ specific concerns. Through a focus group lead by Boeing, the Chamber was able to learn what issues most concerned those contemplating the move. Issues like housing costs, schools, weather, quality of life amenities and the economy (ease of job hunting for spouse) were at the top of

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the list. The Chamber also wanted to point out Oklahoma City's positives in comparison to Long Beach such as shorter drive times, lower tax rates and favorable cost of living.

Details of Implementation:

The event was planned for Tuesday, Sept. 7 in Long Beach. The event date was driven by the fact that Boeing employees would be offered relocation packages and some needed to decide by the following week.

The event date brought about interesting challenges. The Chamber staff was given just two weeks to design and execute an hour presentation that would take place halfway across the country and the Tuesday after a three-day weekend. Some existing assets could be repurposed for the presentation, but a lot of video and data would have to be gathered from scratch.

The Chamber worked with advertising and marketing firm Ackerman McQueen to help produce the presentation. Over a two week period, the Chamber staff gathered info and developed messages for Ackerman. These new assets were combined with existing archival footage to produce a seamless, dynamic relocation video presentation.

The presentation focused on direct concerns raised by the Boeing focus groups: housing costs, schools, cultural activities, quality of life issues and weather. Breakout sessions took place after the presentation to go further in depth on topics covered in the video.

Budget:

The total budget spent on the actual presentation was \$120,000. This included speech writing, planning, graphic design and the filming of new video segments. All totaled, more than 60 separate videos were used to make the overall presentation. Also, the short lead time of two weeks factored into the cost. Ackerman McQueen devoted a great deal of their agency's manpower to the project to meet the deadline.

An additional \$49,640 was spent through PDC Productions for the audio/visual needs of the presentation. This included transporting PDC staff and equipment from Oklahoma City to Long Beach.

Measurement/Evaluation:

From Chamber executives to Boeing leadership, the Boeing relocation presentation was deemed a huge success by all of those involved.

Anecdotally, a large number of the attendees were overheard talking about how much they learned about Oklahoma City from the presentation and how favorably the region compared to California. Their perceptions of Oklahoma City and "middle America" changed over the course of an afternoon and evening.

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 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."

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

Not only was the increase rate improved upon, but it greatly surpassed all expectations. At the end of the process, 84 percent of employees offered relocation packages (to date) in Long Beach accepted the company's offer 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, such as the recent Continental Resources HQ relocation.