



CHA

CHICAGO HOUSING
AUTHORITY™

2015 Owner-Tenant Workshop Series

Communications Plan



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Introduction

Each quarter, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program will host a series of important workshops. The focus of these workshops is to educate Property Owners and Participants on HCV Program topics to help improve the quality of life and their understanding of program operations.

Target Audience

The workshop series includes two primary audiences:

HCV Property Owners and Managers

- Properties owned may vary from 1 to 200+
- New and current owners
- Ages 30-50 years old
- Chicago area

HCV Participants

- Voucher size may vary from 1 to 5+
- New and current tenants
- Ages 25-70 years old
- Chicago area

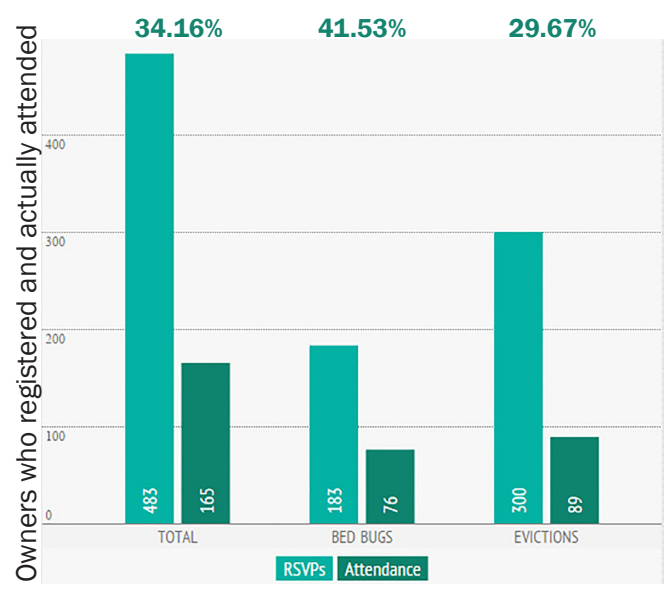
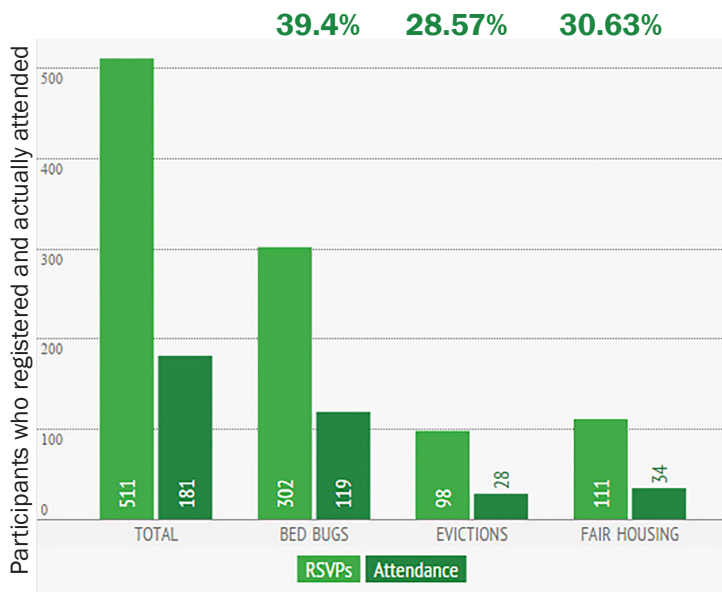
Objectives

The communications plan is intended to outline a course of action for audience outreach and marketing, including:

- **Educate** HCV Owners and Participants about the workshop series i.e. topics, speakers, dates, times, etc.
- **Spark interest** in the workshop series and topics.
- **Persuade** HCV Owners and Participants to RSVP for any of the sessions offered via registration hotline or Eventbrite page links.
- **Encourage** registered guests to attend the session(s) for which they RSVP.
- **Remind** HCV Owners and Participants about the workshop series days leading up to scheduled sessions.

Challenges

The 2014 Owner-Tenant Workshop series resulted in low attendance for all sessions from both target audiences when final calculations of invitations sent, registration, and attendance was determined (refer to 2014 Owner-Tenant Workshop Series Synopsis & Analysis Report or see graphs below). The overall challenge for the 2015 series is to increase the registration rate and attendance rate from last year's series.



Communication Methods

In the past, the CHA HCV Program has employed communication methods regarding the workshops including invitation letters, HCV quarterly newsletters, and posters displayed in the Resource Centers of regional offices. However, additional communication methods can be explored to increase the rate of registration and attendance.

Invitation Letters

While this method is the most costly, it is the most effective in reaching HCV Participants for sharing valuable information about the HCV Program and events. While in 2014, one letter was sent to each household, containing workshop information for the entire year; HCV Marketing Communications proposes that four letters be sent throughout 2015 – one per quarter, listing all of the information for that quarter’s workshop sessions.

By increasing communication to HCV Participants via U.S. postal mail, voucher holders will constantly be reminded about availability and better able to fit workshop sessions into their schedules – not to mention prevent losing the only piece of communication that includes information for the entire year.

HCV Program Staff

Various staff members from Owner Services and Tenant Services interact with the target audience every day. HCV Marketing Communications will draft a script for staff to follow when speaking to Owners and Participants, promoting the workshop sessions for that month or week, and encouraging them to RSVP and attend.

Email Campaign

HCV Marketing Communications will implement an email campaign using the existing Eventbrite account to invite HCV Property Owners and Participants to the workshop series. Email blasts will include information about the topics, speakers, and resources available at each session. Additional reminder emails will be sent out a week prior to the session taking place. Email reminders can also include testimonials from those who have attended similar workshops in the past, in order to encourage guests to register and persuade them to attend.

Mobile Marketing

HCV Marketing Communications will explore mass texting options via existing systems, allowing Participants and Owners to opt-in to receiving text messages regarding workshop session information. Depending on the service providers, fees may apply. While this method has never been explored or implemented in the past, the success rate will be determined via audience feedback.

Social Media Campaign

HCV Marketing Communications will request access to CHA social media accounts i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc. to announce the 2015 workshop series and share registration links. HCV Marketing Communications will generate a social media publishing calendar that includes posts, hashtags, keywords/phrases, registration links, and schedules for posting to each platform. Paid Advertising on Facebook will also be explored, in which HCV Marketing Communications will determine effectiveness in boosting visibility and generating interest from click-through rates.

Office Signage

HCV Marketing Communications will continue last year’s method of creating and posting signage for the CHA regional offices – Central, South, and West. An “at-a-glance” schedule will be created for each quarter, including topics, speakers, dates, times, and locations for that quarter. HCV Marketing Communications will also design and print flyers for the CHA regional offices as well, which will contain similar information to that of the posted signage.

Estimated Cost

HCV Marketing Communications has developed an estimated printing and advertising budget based on the aforementioned communication methods.

Invitation Letters

Hours per Quarter: 1.5 hours

Cost per Quarter: Determined by CHA printing and postage

Invitation Letters hours and cost include drafting and updating the letter from last year's series, submitting for review and approval, obtaining a mailing list for all current HCV Participants, and submitting an HCV Service Request to CHA and Aloha for printing and mailing to 37,000+ households.

HCV Program Staff

Hours per Quarter: 12 hours

Cost per Quarter: N/A

HCV Program Staff hours and cost include generating a script for staff to use and an estimated duration of one hour per multiple audience members per week.

Email Campaign

Hours per Quarter: 10 hours

Cost per Quarter: N/A

Email Campaign hours and cost include Eventbrite workshop page set-up (multiple event topics and multiple sessions), email list set-up, email blast (system restricts to 2,000 emails sent per day; estimated 30 minutes per email blast until approximately 14,000 emails sent), and reminder email blast to registered guests (system restricts to 2,000 emails sent per day; estimated 30 minutes per reminder email blast per RSVP list per session).

Social Media Campaign

Hours per Quarter: 9 hours

Cost per Quarter: N/A

Social Media Campaign hours and cost include content development, submitting for review and approval, and submitting an HCV Service Request to CHA for posting on social media accounts (one hour per post, one post per event day). Hours and cost do not include exploration for paid advertising.

Mobile Marketing

Hours per Quarter: 9 hours

Cost per Quarter: N/A

Mobile Marketing hours and cost include system set-up, content development per message, and distribution (one hour per message, one message per event day).

Office Signage

Hours per Quarter: 2.5 hours

Cost per Quarter: Determined by CHA printing and postage

Office Signage hours and cost include designing and updating the signage from last year's series, submitting for review and approval, applying edits if necessary, submitting an HCV Service Request to CHA and Aloha for printing, and posting to CHA regional offices.

Plan Projection

Measurement

HCV Marketing Communication will utilize several tools to measure the success of the various communication methods:

- **Invitation Letters** – HCV Marketing Communications will monitor registration via the RSVP line and determine estimated attendance prior to each event.
- **HCV Staff** – HCV Marketing Communications will consult staff members from Tenant Services, Owner Services, and the Customer Service Call Center to determine the effectiveness of this communication method (i.e. how many people inquired about the event, how many people seemed interested upon learning about the event, etc.).
- **Email Campaign** – HCV Marketing Communications will monitor Eventbrite’s existing analytics system to determine click-through rate and registration via the email blasts and reminders.
- **Social Media Campaign** – HCV Marketing Communications will monitor Eventbrite’s existing analytics system to determine click-through rate and registration via social media links and websites.
- **Mobile Marketing** – If implemented, HCV Marketing Communications will explore analytics strategies via this method.
- **Office Signage** – HCV Marketing Communications will maintain contact with staff in the CHA Resource Centers to determine flyers distributed and/or restocking needed.

In addition to the methods set in place, HCV Marketing Communications will also determine success of the Communications Plan in other ways:

- **Sign-in sheets** – HCV Marketing Communications will count attendance via signatures on the sign-in sheets from each workshop session.
- **Surveys** – HCV Marketing Communications will compile feedback and data from workshop surveys to determine effectiveness of each method (i.e. answer to the question “How did you hear about this workshop?”).
- **Post workshop report** – HCV Marketing Communications will synthesize all survey and attendance data to determine 1) invitations vs. RSVPs, 2) RSVPs vs. attendance, and 3) invitations vs. attendance, and compare to 2014 data.

Benefits

Benefits of the implemented communications methods include:

1. **Strengthened sense of community** among the CHA HCV Program and its targeted audience i.e. Participants and Property Owners.
2. **Increased exposure** of the 2015 workshops in the physical, digital, and social space.
3. **Improved reach** to the target audiences about the 2015 workshop series.
4. **Additional communication methods** for future events, projects, program updates, etc.
5. **Determine effectiveness** of existing communication methods to improve efficiency.

Moving Forward

Following review and approval of the 2015 Owner-Tenant Workshop Series Communications Plan, HCV Marketing Communications will initiate a kick-off meeting with the Assistant Director of the HCV Program to discuss strategy, goals, and necessary adjustments to the communication methods.