American Water

AMERICAN WATER

A Brand Launch that Delivered 400% ROI

Sector: Publicly traded water services utility

Elements: Identity, brochures/collateral, direct marketing, website, interactive annual reports

Despite delivering water service to 16 million people in 35 states and two Canadian provinces every day, American Water's name was known by only about half its customers. On the eve of an IPO, American Water needed to distinguish itself and build interest.

Our creative strategy was to move from "source" (rivers and streams) photography to dynamic photos of American Water employees, shifting to a conversational and engaging brand voice. Bold, memorable statements would be emphasized with powerful type and a color palette integrating sepia-tone and color images with a signature bright blue.

The rebranding – spanning a new logo, collateral, website, lobby overhaul and premiums – was unveiled at 200+ locations nationwide and the New York Stock Exchange on April 23, 2008.

An outside study found that every $1 invested in rebranding yielded an additional $4 in value.

Research showed this to be the first brand launch of its kind, energizing the industry and American Water employees while providing a blueprint for the future and a renewed focus on customer communications.

Integrating a new corporate identity, print collateral, direct marketing, internal communications and new media, this rebranding campaign made a point as clear as American Water's product: utilities that deliver essential resources can also deliver essential communications.

To learn more about Creative Co-op and our approach to creating distinctive and powerful brand communications for your business, call 603.658.1600.

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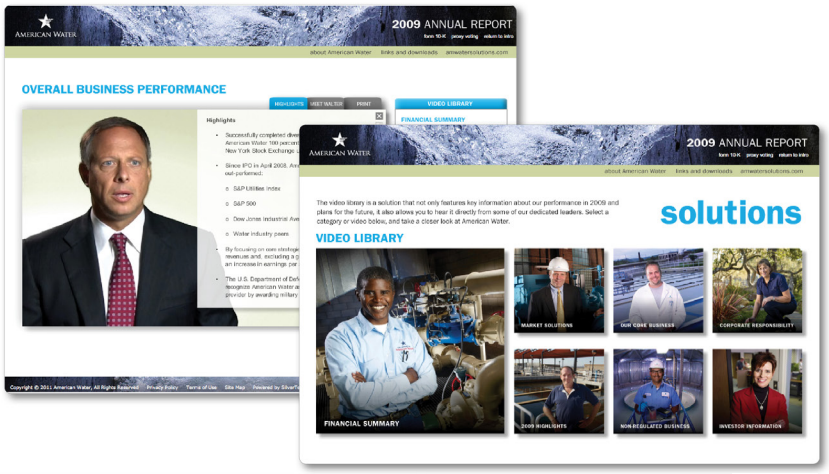
REBRANDING

Regional Brochure



2009

Interactive Annual Reports 2008

2010

Unlike a traditional printed report, the interactive annual report saved an estimated $50,000, 330 trees and 98,000 gallons of water by replacing paper with 53 videos featuring seven members of the American Water leadership team. Making a powerful statement about water conservation, it also won "Best in Class" honors in the utility category at the 2008 Interactive Media Awards. Similar online reports followed in 2009 and 2010.

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REBRANDING

Print Collateral and Integrated Marketing Materials

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Internal Campaign

RESULTS

After initial launch, research indicated that American Water met and surpassed virtually all performance targets they had set for the rebranding initiative:

- American Water wanted to increase brand advocacy of those customers who consider American Water a “local company” by 15%. We helped to increase it by 28%
- American Water wanted to increase the percent of customers who could correctly identify the name of the company by 11%. We helped to increase it by 18.5%

Most significant were the findings of an independent marketing consultant hired by American Water to assess the overall cost and value drivers of the rebranding effort.

According to the study:

- Total costs were approximately $1.5 million for the time period assessed
- Every $1 that American Water invested in the rebranding yielded an extra $4 in value