

## Rebranding: A Way To Survive – and Thrive

Seeking to more accurately communicate their mission, health systems may opt to rebrand, and two who have— Orlando Health and Broward Health—are finding it has increased community awareness of their facilities and services.

“An organization’s name tells you who the organization is,” said Joe Rogers, chief operating officer at Broward Health, a six-hospital, tax-supported health system based in Fort Lauderdale formerly known by the name of its taxing district, the North Broward Hospital District. Research showed Broward County residents did not understand what North Broward Hospital District was or did, even after the district conducted marketing campaigns.

“We thought it was very important if we were going to create recognition for our health system that we have a name that means something to the public,” Rogers said.

John Marzano, vice president of external affairs for Orlando Health, which rebranded from Orlando Regional Healthcare last year, added, “Research indicated there was value in developing a stronger system brand.”

Orlando Health includes eight hospitals and other facilities. Officials wanted to build connectivity between the health system’s components.

“As health care changes and evolves with health-care reform possibilities on the horizon, health-care delivery will have to become more efficient and focus on outpatient care and facilities that are easy to

use and access,” Marzano said. Each facility associated with the health system will carry the Orlando Health brand.

Officials at Miami Jewish Home & Hospital for the Aged at Douglas Gardens are now considering a name change to better reflect its current activities.

“Health care is changing so much and so fast that a lot of organizations are finding the name does not quite fit what they are all about or might become, and that’s the situation we are in,” said Blaise Mercadante, chief marketing officer of Miami Jewish, which has grown from a nursing home to offer a multitude of community health and outpatient services. In addition, aged has a negative connotation for many older adults. Even so, he said, some constituents are very wedded to the name.

“It’s a historic connection, with ties to tradition and identity,” Mercadante said.

However, key elements of the Miami Jewish name no longer hold true. The organization serves not only Miami-Dade County, but also Broward and Palm Beach counties. More than half of the nursing home residents are not Jewish, nor are the majority of people served in the community. Mercadante aims to develop a name that better reflects cur-

rent conditions and use the rebranding as an opportunity to educate the community about the organization’s services.

“We’ll use the launch of the new name as a way to reconnect with the community,” Mercadante said.

### RESEARCH BEFORE ACTION

The Orlando and Broward health systems conducted internal and external quantitative and qualitative research before deciding to rebrand.

“Research indicated the organization had an opportunity to enhance its brand image and awareness,” Marzano said. “There was confusion around the name Orlando Regional Healthcare. Consumers reported they did not always know what it meant and who was a part of the health care system.”

In addition, confusion existed in consumers’ minds about the difference between Orlando Regional Healthcare and Orlando Regional Medical Center, its flagship hospital. Health system officials wanted to keep the hospital’s name but separate it from the system name.

### IMPLEMENTATION

From research to implementation, it took Orlando Health about 18 months to rebrand. Once a decision was made, officials started strategizing about names and a logo and seeking feedback and approval from executives and the board of directors.

“It’s not just flipping a switch and changing your name and logo,” Marzano said.

Research also helped the health systems select new names.

"We kept the best of the old name, which were the words Orlando and health," said Marzano, explaining that Orlando speaks for itself. "And the word health focuses on our mission as a health-care provider and endorses our hospitals and services. It's about what we do."

Orlando Health introduced the new name and its synergy logo in May 2008.

"[The logo] represents an organization on the move, forward thinking and is unique enough to stand out in the region," Marzano said.

Broward Health had reserved and started using the Broward-Health.org URL, before deciding on a name, but after focus groups and other research kept placing that name among the top contenders, Broward Health became the new brand. Rather than come up with an entirely new logo, the health system modified its chevron logo, refreshing it with a more active, three-dimensional look.

"People wanted the name to be related to what we do and where we are," said Sara Howley, vice president of corporate communications and marketing at Broward Health.

Broward Health rolled out the new name and logo internally, building excitement among staff and physicians. Howley called it a methodical kickoff, with T-shirts and banners. The organization did not switch out stationary, business cards or other materials until they ran out. To save money, the system placed banners at its various facilities instead of installing new signs.

"There was no incremental increase in cost, just the cost of replacement over time," Rogers said. "That's how we tried to do this cost effectively."

Orlando Health spent about \$350,000 rebranding, ordering new signs and stationary and other materials. For the most part, officials allowed inventories to run down before launch, not to waste materials.

"It was absolutely worth the investment,"



Marzano said. "There's a truer sense of consistency and continuity as we present ourselves not only in the organization but as we present ourselves in the community and the region."

#### OUTCOMES

Research indicates both health systems have gained brand awareness. After Broward Health's initial campaign, nearly 20% of consumers knew the brand. Now, nearly two years later, that is up to 39%, which Rogers said is the highest name recognition for a health provider in the market.

"We're happy with that and think it's a wonderful success," Howley said.

Likewise, Marzano said, "In the eyes of the consumer, all of our facilities were lifted in awareness and recognition by a system brand affiliation."

Orlando Health's rebranding resulted in an increase of 10 percentage points in "top-of-mind awareness" and an increase of 5 percentage points in "overall preference." Total awareness for Orlando Health is at 73%, which has trended upward over the past year since rollout, Marzano said.

Both health systems reported the rebranding has brought their respective organizations closer together.

"It has drastically improved morale," Rogers said. "People understand they are part of something bigger than the health facility they are working at." ■