

Lansing Board of Water & Light
Tactics – Video Programs, 40+ Year Careers

Background & Research

The Lansing Board of Water & Light's (BWL) tagline, "Hometown People Hometown Power," is passionately embodied by the team members who serve our customers. Of our 700 employees, the BWL had 14 people who had been with the company for over 40 years, combining for nearly 600 years of experience. With an aging workforce and as a career recruiting and retention tool, the BWL's communications manager conceptualized and coordinated an ad campaign to celebrate our staff's years of service and promote the value of a lifelong, stable and productive career at one company in the Greater Lansing, Michigan region.

The human resources department helped identify team members with over 40 years of service, and the communications department reached out and coordinated their participation.

Planning

Part of planning included finding the original ID photo taken for all 14 employees from when they were hired. All of the interviews were shot on one day, with a thank you reception immediately following where they were presented with a certificate of appreciation by the general manager and executive director of human resources.

Our intended audience for the final videos was targeted to young adults in the Greater Lansing region. The objectives were to give customers a look behind the curtain at the experience our employees bring, demonstrate that the company is a great place to have a career and build a life, plus generate at least 65,000 views online.

Execution

During their taped interview, each participant was given their ID photo, which elicited a genuine reminder of the journey they've all been on for over 40 years—some starting in maintenance and as administrative assistants, rising to directors and even general manager. Each interview was a humble walk through their history, and fun to listen and watch as each participant reminisced about their time at the BWL.

The piece was shot and edited by a local, contracted production firm under a yearly retainer. They created two versions of the commercial, one 60 second spot for broadcast and one long form piece for social media.

The campaign was run on local and cable TV from March to May with a placement budget of approximately \$40,000, and a paid Facebook campaign of \$1,500.

Evaluation

Before the public launch, 21 random people were shown the video and surveyed about their opinions on the BWL's corporate image, how they saw the company as an employer and on the success of the 40+ Years Career video. Before watching it, overall satisfaction levels were quite high with an average of 7.48, and increased slightly after the video to an average of 7.67. Pre-video, respondents gave an average of 6.90 when it came to viewing the BWL as a strong employer in the area, which rose to 7.76 after. Respondents gave an average of 8.48 when asked how good of a job the video does to recognize the utility's longest-serving employees.

After public launch, the impact of the spots was profound. It was easily the most watched video BWL has ever produced with over 72,000 views online, however, the numeric impact is dwarfed by the community response we received anecdotally. Other local organizations, government officials and customers have all reached out sharing how powerful the video was, and how well the piece communicated exactly who we are as an organization. A customer even spoke to the general manager with complaints about other, unrelated matters, but ended his call saying how impactful the 40+ video was to him.

Internally, employees routinely shared how impressive the video was, and how proud it made them feel to work for a utility company that was proud of its employees. Since production, about half of the employees in the video have retired, while another handful have joined the ranks of having served for over 40 years.