



WORKING WITH PROFESSIONALS

GUIDE TO ORGANIZING A
RENOVATION MONTH CAMPAIGN
 IN YOUR LOCAL HBA



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INTRODUCTION

A Brief Background

Renovation Month (RM) is the first and only nation-wide marketing campaign to focus exclusively on Canada's renovation industry. For more than two decades, Renovation Month has played a significant role in establishing renovation as a professional activity and positioning the CHBA as the voice of the residential renovation industry.

At the centre of Renovation Month is the local HBA campaign, designed to inform the public about the many aspects of home renovation and encourage them to work with a professional renovator. At the national level, the CHBA works with national partners to support local HBAs in their efforts.

Objectives of Renovation Month

- Encourage homeowners to “do it right”—to hire a professional contractor for their home renovations.
- Inform consumers about renovations and the renovation process, so they can make wise decisions about their home.
- Discourage the use of underground contractors, by informing consumers of the importance of “getting it in writing”.
- Create public awareness of the CHBA as the voice of the residential renovation industry, and of local HBAs as a key resource for information about renovation and the home of professional renovators in the community.
- Promote RenoMark™ (where the program exists).
- Create recognition for Renovation Month partners.

Who Can Participate?

In a word, just about everyone. In each local HBA, the core participants are the renovator members who should be encouraged to take a lead role. Beyond that, the campaign is well suited for broad collaboration, and all segments of the membership can get involved in, and benefit from, the campaign, including:

- Manufacturers and suppliers
- Financial institutions
- Mortgage insurers

- Utility companies
- Real estate companies
- Energy and environmental consultants
- Local media
- Municipal government representatives
- And many others

Opportunities for Participants at a Glance

- For renovators and partners: exposure, recognition and business opportunities.
- For local HBAs: increased service to existing members, recruitment of new members and greater public awareness.

(See next page for a detailed listing of the benefits of participation.)

Campaign Overview

Local HBAs are free to choose what type of activities to organize for Renovation Month. The range of activities you will decide to take on usually depends on a number of factors, including the size of your HBA, the number of renovator members, the availability of renovation projects for public display, the lead-time you have, the number of partners you can enlist, and so on.

Generally, it is recommended that the campaign consist of several elements:

- **Events**
Events serve as a focal point for the campaign. *Consumer-oriented events* allow renovators and other participants to meet with the public, to display products, services and projects, and to provide information. *Industry events* provide a framework for networking, collaboration and recruitment of association members. (See page 12 for more information.)
- **Media campaign**
Homeowners have a strong and abiding interest in information and stories about home renovation, whether it's the latest trends, new products, home makeovers or profiles of renovators. (See page 16 for more information.)
 - > Traditional media (print, radio and television) will cover what interests their audiences, and can help to support the Renovation Month campaign through tabloids, stories and articles, as well as announcements and coverage of your events. Make sure to provide lots of background information, ready-to-print materials and easy access to experts.
 - > Social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, can create additional awareness, promote events and provide information, with links to your HBA's website.
- **Consumer information.** This covers handouts such as brochures and fact sheets, as well as web information that people can bookmark, download or print. (See page 19 for more information.)

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION

Participation in Renovation Month is a business decision. Planning, executing and contributing to the campaign will take time, work and resources, but the benefits are many and varied, both in the short and the long term.

LOCAL HBAS

- Increased service to existing members
 - Opportunity to recruit new members (renovators, suppliers, etc.)
 - Greater public awareness of the HBA and its members
 - Opportunity to promote RenoMark™
 - Increased recognition of the association logo
 - Strengthened relations with the local media
 - Improved relations with municipal government officials
- ...all of which can result in stronger and more effective HBAs.*

RENOVATORS

- Opportunity to display projects
 - Opportunity to generate traffic and meet potential clients
 - Greater visibility in the community
 - Recognition as an association member
 - More leads as result of public inquiries to the local HBA for lists of members
 - Closer cooperation with suppliers and manufacturers
 - Recognition from the media
 - Closer working relationships with local government officials
 - Opportunity to be active in local HBA affairs
- ...all of which can result in more business.*

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, MANUFACTURERS, SUPPLIERS, UTILITIES AND OTHER PARTNERS

- Increased public recognition
 - Closer working relationships with renovators
 - Opportunity to become more active in local HBA affairs
 - Opportunity to display products and services
 - Opportunity to interact with buying public
 - Opportunity to conduct market research
- ...all of which can result in more sales.*

In other words, for each participating organization there is a range of benefits. Customize each invitation to participate, stressing the benefits of greatest importance to the particular organization.

ORGANIZE YOUR CAMPAIGN IN FIVE EASY STEPS

STEP ONE: Set up a Committee

- You may want to use an existing group or committee, e.g. the Renovation Committee or your Marketing or Events Committee, or you can set up a new special Renovation Month Committee.
- Ideally, the core members of the committee are renovators, with other members representing partners, other participants and other groups.
- The key is to have committed and enthusiastic committee members who are willing and ready to work together and share the workload.

STEP TWO: Start Planning

- Decide on a timeframe. While national Renovation Month is in October, some HBAs prefer to hold it at other times.
- Set objectives for your campaign, to make it easier to plan the campaign and assess the results at the end. The objectives can include providing information to consumers and increasing the visibility of the local association and its professional renovator members.
- Decide on campaign activities (events, media relations and consumer information).
- Determine the resources available for the campaign, financial and in-kind. Lack of financial resources should not be a deterrent. Identify what companies and organizations can make in-kind contributions, including:
 - > Promotional materials (brochures, fact sheets, posters, CDs, and so on, for handouts or display at public events).
 - > Special displays at their place of business.
 - > Loan of display booth equipment.
 - > Provision of display and event locations.
 - > Advertising (print, radio, television, independent or cooperative).
 - > Other promotion (e.g. website/social media marketing, bill stuffers with utility bills or bank statements).
 - > Participation in events (e.g. speakers at seminars, staffing a booth)
 - > Preferred rates (e.g. for printing, advertising, materials).
 - > Identifying others who may contribute to the campaign.

MAKE SURE TO **THANK** PARTNERS, CONTRIBUTORS AND ALL VOLUNTEERS FORMALLY FOR THEIR EFFORTS. IN THE CASE OF AN OPEN HOUSE TOUR OR PARADE OF RENOVATIONS, THE LOCAL HBA SHOULD ALSO SEND A LETTER OF THANKS TO THE HOMEOWNERS.

STEP THREE: Set the Plan in Motion

- Follow the plan as set out in your meetings.
- Meet the timelines set out in your plan.
- Check that everything has been done according to the timelines.
- Stay within your budget.
- Convene regular meetings of the committee to ensure everything is on track, and troubleshoot where needed. Keep meetings brief.

STEP FOUR: Monitor the Campaign

- Track and keep a record of what takes place during the campaign, so you can assess the relative success and effectiveness of your activities. For instance:
 - > Attendance at seminars, open houses, displays and other events.
 - > Public feedback from events (survey to find out how they heard about it, what brought them out and what they thought, or general comments).
 - > Media coverage (what, where, how often, tone and extent).
 - > Distribution of information (types, quantity, public response).
 - > Website visitors (numbers, origin, length of stay, pages visited, questions and comments, and so on).
 - > Social media response and feedback (e.g. Facebook, Twitter).

STEP FIVE: Evaluate the Results

- No matter how large or small the campaign, the committee needs to evaluate it once completed, with a view to repeats and improvements the following year.
 - > Get feedback from the participants—renovators, partners and others who had a role in the campaign.
 - > Prepare a brief results report, based on your records of events (step four) and the participants' feedback.
 - > Include recommendations and suggestions for the coming year.

SUGGESTED TIMELINES FOR ORGANIZING RENOVATION MONTH

TASK	APRIL	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPT.	OCT.
Set up committee			— — — —	— — — —		
Decide on major events	—————			— — — —		
Enlist local partners	—————					
CHBA materials available			—————			
Begin media relations (for supplement)		—————			— — — —	— — — —
Produce/collect marketing materials (brochures, posters, etc.)		—————				
Firm up all plans					—————	
Initiate promotional campaign/events					—————	— — — —
Launch Reno Month						—————
Evaluate your campaign						—————➔

AGENDA

RENOVATION MONTH COMMITTEE OF

_____, 201 ____

Items

1. **Introductory remarks by convener of meeting**
2. **Briefing on Renovation Month by convener**
3. **Selection of committee chairperson**
4. **Discussion of key events**
 - public, industry and charity
 - tie-in with existing events—for instance, home shows
5. **Identification of other individuals, groups and organizations for potential participation**
6. **Discussion and assignment of roles and responsibilities**
 - enlisting renovator participation
 - enlisting local partners
 - preparation of preliminary budget
 - preparation of planning schedule
 - media liaison
 - on-site coordinator(s)
7. **Identifying other sources of promotion and information materials**
8. **Decisions on how the committee will operate**
 - meeting how often and where
 - preparation and distribution of agenda
 - preparation and distribution of minutes
 - communication between meetings
 - communication with Board of Directors and membership

AGENDA

RENOVATION MONTH COMMITTEE OF

_____, 201 ____

Items

1. Progress reports

- events coordination
- media campaign
- promotional tools (handouts)

2. Local partners participation update

- contributions (financial and in-kind)
- recognition and visibility

3. Confirmation/adjustment of schedule

4. Budget update

5. Other business

Sample Agenda (*final planning meeting*)

AGENDA

RENOVATION MONTH COMMITTEE OF

_____, 201 ____

Items

- 1. Updates on all responsibility areas**
- 2. Confirmation of events and schedules**
- 3. Verification of human resources for all planned activities**
- 4. Verification of support materials (brochures, signs, etc.)**

AGENDA

RENOVATION MONTH COMMITTEE OF

_____, 201 ____

Items

1. Feedback and evaluation by committee members
2. Report on the campaign by activities and events
3. Thank-you letters to partners and, if appropriate, to contributing homeowners

MENU OF EVENTS

When planning your Renovation Month campaign, local HBAs can choose from a range of events that have been tested and proved effective over the years.

Consumer Seminars

Consumer seminars are among the most successful and popular Renovation Month activities, and are a great vehicle for providing the public with in-depth information from “the experts”. Seminars are usually well attended, and often covered by the media.

- **It doesn't have to cost much to put on a consumer seminar.** They are particularly suitable for collaboration among any number of partners, including renovators, manufacturers, lending institutions, designers, suppliers, real estate agencies and others who can contribute as speakers or emcees, or provide promotion or information materials.
- **There is a wide range of appropriate seminar topics,** including:
 - > The importance of working with professional renovators
 - > *Get it in Writing!*
 - > RenoMark™
 - > Selecting and contracting with a renovator
 - > Permits and inspections
 - > Renovation financing
 - > “Green” renovations
 - > Designs and trends
 - > ... and so on.
- **Consumer seminars offer a great opportunity for media relations.** Ask the local media to promote your seminars as a public service, free of charge. Invite them to attend and encourage them to provide coverage of the seminar.
- **Arrange for a display by renovators and/or manufacturers/suppliers** at the seminar, with time for people to visit the displays and talk with company representatives following the seminar.

Parades of Renovations/Open Houses

A parade of renovations, or open house tour, is one of the best tools available for meeting the objectives of Renovation Month. Typically, it attracts a lot of visitors who appreciate the opportunity to see a variety of renovation projects, and meet the professionals in their community face to face.

- Open houses can be organized and promoted as a cooperative parade of renovations (or home tour) with participation of the renovators of the individual projects and Renovation Month partners.
- Renovators need to get the permission of homeowners, in writing, to use their project as an open house. If homeowners are happy with their renovations, most will gladly accommodate an open house. In fact, some homeowners are so proud of their “new” homes that they want to take an active role in the open house.
- Typically, parades and house tours take place in a single day on a weekend—a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. If homeowners are agreeable, it can be extended to both days.
- A well-orchestrated promotional plan will generate lots of media coverage, traffic and qualified leads—in larger centres, it is common to have hundreds of people through the homes in a single afternoon. Consider:
 - > Give the media plenty of lead-time, with detailed information about the homes, at least one good photo, preferably before-and-after photos, and contact information, so they can run a pre-event story.
 - > Get on local media’s “what’s new this week” calendar.
 - > Send flyers to homeowners in every neighbourhood of display homes (they may well be the renovator’s next clients).
 - > Do a targeted mail/e-mail distribution of flyers according to each renovator’s mailing list.
 - > Post an open house notice on the local HBA’s website as well as participating renovators’ sites.
 - > Talk about the event on social media with a link to your HBA’s website.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

Homeowners have two major areas of concern, namely **security** and **clean-up**. Here are some hints for renovators to address these concerns:

- Show only the renovation project, not the whole house—keep all other areas off limit.
- Exercise traffic control—“overstaff” to be able to handle large crowds.
- Plan the route through the house to avoid a bottleneck. If possible, have people enter and leave the house through different doors.
- Plan for bad weather. Set up a canopy or tent by the door to protect people in a line-up. This is also a perfect opportunity to display information and have conversations with people waiting to get into a home.
- Remove valuables.
- Check the insurance.
- Damage-proof the house with runners and slippers, or bags for visitors’ shoes.
- Pay for a cleaning of the renovated area after the tour.
- Thank the homeowners and be generous—flowers, gift certificate, etc.
- Enter the project in your association’s SAM awards and invite the homeowners as your guests.

Displays and Shows

Staffed displays or shows at strategic locations in the community can be a good alternative to open houses and parades where these events are not possible, still allowing renovators to meet with consumers face to face.

- The major challenge is to find a place with high traffic and adequate potential for reaching the desired target audience.
 - > Displays in shopping malls have significant potential to raise the public awareness of the local HBA and renovator members, but may not generate many qualified leads, unless the display has been well promoted to attract potential renovation customers as well as passers-by.
 - > By comparison, a display organized in a manufacturer’s showroom, for instance, as a “renovation show” with a number of participating contractors, may draw a smaller audience, but result in a higher number of qualified leads.
- Before-and-after displays tend to be very popular with consumers.
- Collect donations for a designated charity to signal that your HBA and its members care about the community and its people.
- Use the opportunity to conduct consumer surveys on awareness, attitudes, needs, and so on.

Home Shows

Home shows are great for reaching a large number of people over a short period of time. If your community offers a home show, whether managed by your HBA or by others, it is worthwhile considering creating a Renovation Month presence—that is, a collective presentation of renovator members under the auspices of the local HBA. Individual renovation companies may also want to have their own separate corporate booth.

- The cost and time requirements of participating in a home show can be shared among all participants—the local association, renovator members, suppliers and subtrades.
- Home show activities can include displays and information booths, consumer seminars, videos, website tours, consultations (some HBAs offer a 15-minute session with a renovator, free of charge), and of course, lots of opportunities for people to meet and talk with renovators.
- Have plenty of consumer handouts available—general information and individual company business cards and literature. (See page 19.)
- Before the show begins, discuss and develop a plan for follow-up by your HBA and/or individual renovators. Home shows can generate a lot of leads but unless there is a plan for follow-up, these leads can easily fall through the cracks, as everyone is too busy to deal with them appropriately. This is bad for business and reflects poorly on all participants.

Community Charities

The renovation industry can demonstrate its commitment to the community by getting involved in charity projects. Renovation Month provides a high-profile framework for renovators to donate labour and services to worthy causes, while suppliers and manufacturers can be enlisted to donate materials and equipment. As a staple component of your campaign, your committee might want to undertake a different charity project each year, as is done by some associations.

The size of the project should be commensurate with the number of professional renovators involved. For instance, smaller groups might undertake to provide handicap access to a community building (e.g. ramps and wide entrances), while a larger group may be able to rehabilitate entire buildings.

Industry Events

Renovation Month has been exceedingly successful in increasing public and media awareness of the association and the professional renovation industry. However, the value of the campaign does not stop there. It is also a great focal point for other efforts such as:

- > Rallying the existing renovation sector of the association.
- > Enlisting new members.
- > Gaining recognition of the association as the voice of the renovation industry by local media and by local authorities.
- Ideas for industry events include a breakfast/luncheon/dinner for members and special guests, such as the mayor. Include a presentation by a good speaker on a timely topic. Raise funds for your designated charity. Use as a recruitment tool and invite non-member renovators to attend the event. Consider opening the event to the public to increase participation.
- Other ideas include a renovators' seminar under the auspices of Renovation Month for companies that might be interested in joining the association.

Or, invite members of your municipal council to a construction challenge—cut a 2 x 4, hammer a spike into a 4 x 4, and so on. It is fun, entertaining, and gives everyone a chance to interact in a casual way.

THE MEDIA CAMPAIGN

The media—both print and electronic—plays an important role in promoting Renovation Month. Newspapers are traditionally the most commonly used advertising venue in the residential construction industry, and they are also the primary vehicle for getting campaign information to the public as news stories, feature articles and listings of events.

Media Mix

Media campaigns can easily be adapted to available resources. Hence, both small and large HBAs can carry out effective media programs within their available means.

A media campaign includes one or more of the following elements:

- 1) A self-contained tabloid (or newspaper supplement)
- 2) Other print coverage (articles, features, listings of activities, etc. in newspapers and magazines)
- 3) Radio and television
- 4) Social media

Each of these elements can be reinforced by advertising and public service announcements.

Tabloids

Most newspapers regularly publish self-contained tabloids (or supplements) devoted to a particular topic or event. The cost of producing a supplement is offset by the sale of advertising space according to a predetermined ratio of editorial content to advertisements. Many committees are successful in negotiating good terms with their local papers.

■ General Approach to Getting a Supplement Produced

The committee should arrange a meeting with the editor of the newspaper early on. This is important because newspapers commit themselves to, and start planning for, supplements months in advance.

It is useful to prepare a media kit (hard copy, CD or available online) for the meeting to show that much of the work required to create a supplement has already been done.

Include Renovation Month backgrounders and graphic artwork from the CHBA national office (posted in the Members Area of the CHBA website), as well as information on the local HBA, renovator members, partners and any activities planned for Renovation Month.

Ask the newspaper to print extra copies of the tabloid for you to distribute at open houses, seminars, displays and so on.

Other Print Coverage

A supplement may not always be possible or the way to go. They are expensive to produce, require a significant investment in advertising and can force committees or locals into a situation where they spend too much time trying to find partners.

Instead, discuss with your local paper the opportunities for having a series of articles and stories published. If you have an ongoing relationship with the media in your area, this should not pose a problem. If your HBA has a regular column or page in a local paper, use the Renovation Month backgrounders during your designated campaign period.

Don't limit your media contact to a single publication.

Radio and Television

All local radio and television stations should be approached. Given the enormous public interest in renovation issues, local stations may welcome the opportunity to promote the campaign through their various local news programs, consumer programs and talk shows.

Focus radio coverage on the two weeks leading up to your event—that way, the information is fresh and timely.

In smaller markets, television advertising can be very reasonably priced and has proven to be a viable alternative to other forms of advertising.

Public service announcements (PSAs) can further help to promote Renovation Month. Ask local radio and television stations about their PSA policy and how the committee might best take advantage of this service. (See next page for more information on PSAs.)

Also keep in mind that the media have their own online subscribers and e-mail “clubs”, which can help to extend your coverage and increase your visibility.

Social Media

The advantage of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and so on, is that you are in control of getting information out. If your HBA uses social media, you can also spread the word about Renovation Month and activities through those venues. For instance, during an open house tour, you can “tweet” while the event is still going on, encouraging your followers to “come and join us right now”.

NEWS RELEASES

USE EVERY EVENT OR ACTIVITY YOU PLAN FOR RENOVATION MONTH AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEND OUT NEWS RELEASES TO BOTH PRINT AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA. FOLLOW UP WITH A QUICK CALL THE DAY BEFORE THE EVENT.

A FEW HINTS ABOUT PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Public service announcements (PSAs) are short messages with information that is in the public interest. Radio and television stations donate a certain percentage of their airtime for PSAs, and print media will also insert them interspersed among news articles and paid advertisements.

PSAs are a unique way of getting messages out to the public, to complement and reinforce other efforts. The Renovation Month tool kit includes suggestions for PSAs that local HBAs can tailor and adapt for their own use. Here are a few helpful hints for writing and placing PSAs.

- PSAs can be provided to the media as scripts only, or they can be taped (audio or video). Generally, the more complete the PSAs, the greater the likelihood that the media will run them. Contact the radio and television stations in your area and find out if they are willing to accept scripts only, and what requirements they have.
- Because the media run PSAs for free, you can't control when or how often they are run.
- PSAs are brief, usually from 10 to 30 seconds long. That's not a lot of time to get your message out, so keep your language brief and make every word count. Get advice from your local media on preferred length.
- Don't cram too many messages into a single PSA. If you have a number of important messages, spread them out over several different PSAs.
- Have a clear call to action. What do you want people to do as a result of seeing or hearing the PSA? Contact your association for information? Come to your booth at the home show? Sign up for a public seminar?
- Use a simple "hook" to get people's attention. "It's Renovation Month" or "Thinking about a home renovation?" works for people who are interested in renovation. Don't be too "clever"; a PSA is not advertising.
- Find out how much lead-time the media requires.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of your PSAs when possible. Registration and exit surveys at association events such as a seminar or parade of renovations should include a question on how people heard about your event.
- After the PSAs have stopped running, thank the media for their efforts and share any positive results with them.

CONSUMER INFORMATION

Handout materials and website information are important elements of the campaign.

Create Your Own Print Pieces

Use the Renovation Month backgrounders from the CHBA (see page 21 for more information) as simple and inexpensive information sheets. Feel free to tailor the text to reflect your own members and HBA, or to reformat it to fit a different layout, e.g. folded or a different size. If desired, you can apply elements of the graphic poster design (also available from the CHBA) to the backgrounders. Don't forget to add your own HBA logo, perhaps with contact information (telephone and/or e-mail address).

Or you can start from scratch, developing your own messages and graphic presentation.

Use Existing Association Materials

This includes materials from your own HBA, as well as suitable materials from the provincial and national levels.

Use Partner Materials

Review brochures, flyers, posters, and so on, provided by participants, to determine if any would be suitable as consumer handouts or for use in displays.

Other Materials

Whether or not they are partners, there are number of organizations that may be interested in providing consumer handouts for your campaign. For instance:

- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (a wide range of brochures and publications on renovation).
- Natural Resources Canada (information on energy-efficient and environmentally responsible renovation, including grants and incentives).
- Provincial government (consumer and renovation advice, grants).
- Municipal government (permits and inspections, grants).

ASK MEMBERS TO CHECK THAT THEIR COMPANY'S LISTING ON THE LOCAL HBA WEBSITE AS WELL AS THE CHBA WEBSITE IS ACCURATE AND UP TO DATE, AND INCLUDES A LINK TO THEIR OWN SITE.

Website Information

The Internet offers a range of options, from creating a Renovation Month section on the local HBA website to having participants promote specific events on their own websites or provide complementary information. Discuss within the committee what your HBA should do online, and what each participant may be able to do on their sites, including tracking traffic and responding to inquiries.

- Post all campaign events and activities on your HBA's website. Include a contact for more information.
- Create a Renovation Month section on your site. Post articles, backgrounders, and anything else your association has developed for your campaign.
- Use Facebook, Twitter and other social media to direct people to your website.
- Encourage participating renovators with a website to post a Renovation Month note, with a link to your HBA's website for more information. Similarly, partners and other participants with a public website can link to your site.
- Direct consumers to helpful renovation websites with valuable consumer information, for instance:
 - > www.chba.ca
 - > www.cmhc.ca
 - > www.oeenrcan.gc.ca

CHBA CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Each year, the CHBA national office prepares a range of materials for use by local HBAs in their Renovation Month campaigns. Individual pieces may be revised and updated from year to year, and new materials are created as required to maintain a fresh approach and provide new, timely information.

The materials are downloadable from the Members Area of the CHBA website, under Tools for HBAs and Tools for Members.

Artwork and Tagline

The CHBA creates a new graphic image and tagline every year to give each campaign a distinct theme and look.

Downloadable in various formats, the image is ready for tabloid front covers, advertisements, flyers, brochures and other print pieces. As well, it can be applied to your HBA's website to promote Renovation Month, and individual members are encouraged to use it on their own sites or materials.

The tagline is a simple statement of a few words designed to capture the theme and the message of each year's campaign. The tagline is usually reflected in a number of the written materials.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

- Whether you create your own ads to promote your events, or you have someone else (newspaper, graphic designer) do it, use the Renovation Month tagline as your headline and the graphic image as the main design element.
- For the text (in addition to possible event-specific local information) adapt one of the public service announcements or use an excerpt from a backgrounder. For a large ad, consider using a copy of the signed proclamation (see next page).

News Release

The news release is the announcement of Renovation Month, designed to inform the media about the initiative and stimulate interest. The committee may wish to alter it by adding information of local interest such as the time, place and nature of the activities in your community, or the name of your president.

Backgrounders

A number of background information pieces—or consumer articles—are developed each year by the CHBA. They are all designed to help consumers become more familiar with the home renovation process, and the importance of hiring a professional renovator.

Use the backgrounders as is, or you can tailor them to your own circumstances and add local information. If you make significant changes to the CHBA materials, make sure to check your facts before making them public.

Also, consider writing your own backgrounders about your HBA's involvement in the community, individual participating members, the local housing market, and so on.

The backgrounders have multiple uses:

- Send them to the media, as part of a Renovation Month media kit. They provide the contents for a tabloid, or for a series of articles or other coverage. Often, the media will use the information exactly as presented. Or they may use the backgrounders as reference material to create their own articles and reports. (See page 16, The Media Campaign.)
- Copy and distribute the backgrounders at consumer seminars and home shows, or use as point-of-sale materials during open houses. Add your own logo and contact information.
- Post them on your HBA's website.
- Encourage renovator members to make use of the backgrounders with their own customers—as information handouts or posted online.
- Encourage other campaign participants and partners to post the backgrounders on their site.
- Use the backgrounders, in full or in part, as ads in newspapers and magazines.
- Include backgrounders with mailings to potential new members as part of your membership recruitment drive as an example of your association's activities to benefit members and consumers alike.

Renovation Month Proclamation

An official proclamation by your premier, mayor or other government official enhances the credibility of your campaign. The actual signing of it presents an ideal opportunity for media coverage.

Contact the appropriate government officials and make sure they are well informed about Renovation Month and willing to support it. Work closely with them to select the best time and format for the signing of the proclamation. Suggested formats include:

- Press conference
- Ribbon-cutting ceremony
- Project opening
- Association luncheon (or other event)

The committee can use the text provided by the CHBA, or adapt it to suit local practices. **Include only copies of a signed proclamation in your media kits.**

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

- Take your own photos of the proclamation signing and send to the media along with a brief news release (if the media doesn't show up at the event).
- Similarly, if no suitable event is possible, arrange to take pictures in the mayor's office as the proclamation is signed. Then issue a news release with a photo.
- In all cases, post the news release and/or proclamation and photo on your HBA's website, and use social media to spread the word and generate traffic to the website.
- Incorporate signed copies in your ads (get permission from the mayor's office first) or direct mail flyers.
- Display copies at open houses, parades, and so on.

Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

Complete the prepared text provided by CHBA by adding the pertinent information about your own events and contact information. You can also create your own PSAs from scratch.

Most of the PSAs use the tagline line created for the campaign. Some are also suitable for use in advertisements, on flyers and other promotional materials.

Creating Your Media Kit

When approaching the media in your community—both print and electronic—it is helpful to provide them with a media kit with a range of information about your campaign, along with ready-to-use materials, and contact information.

Your committee should contact the editors of the local media and invite them to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the campaign.

Present each with a media kit in print, electronically, or both. Make sure that you allow plenty of lead-time, especially if you are asking newspapers to produce a supplement (see page 16).

Create Renovation Month media kits using the following materials:

- News release
- Backgrounders
- Proclamation
- Public service announcements
- Renovation Month graphic image and tagline
- RenoMark™ information
- Local HBA literature
- Profiles of participating renovators
- Main HBA contact (with list of renovation experts, as appropriate).

ADVICE TO INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Renovation Month is a membership service, with many benefits for the individual renovator members and others, as noted earlier (see page 4).

An important role for your HBA is to help your members get as much out of the campaign as possible, to make sure they know what's available and encourage them to take full advantage of all possible opportunities.

CHBA Tools for Members

In addition to the Renovation Month materials, members have access to a number of other CHBA tools to help them market their company, promote their professionalism and provide important information to customers—during Renovation Month and throughout the year.

- Members should check that their company information in the *Find a Member* search engine on the CHBA's website is up-to-date, and that their website is linked to it.
- Members should be encouraged to use the CHBA member logo on all their printed materials and online.
- Similarly, RenoMark™ renovators should display the RenoMark™ logo on all materials.
- A link to the CHBA website can be embedded on members' own website for direct access to a lot of valuable renovation information (there is a ready-to-install "button" on CHBA's website, Members Area, Tools for Members).
- The Tools section also contains consumer brochures that members can download and print, or order through the CHBA office.
- The *Get it in Writing!* website is a great source of third-party information on the importance of hiring a professional renovator. Members can download and print a brochure to hand out to potential customers.
- *Solution Providers*, the website of the CHBA Manufacturers' Council, offers lots of valuable product information, including downloadable consumer handouts, as well as access to both technical and marketing assistance.
- Participation in the CHBA National SAM Awards is an opportunity for members to set themselves apart and gain extra visibility and credibility. Finalists and winners are featured on CHBA's website.

BEYOND RENOVATION MONTH

While Renovation Month provides a focus for a campaign, the promotion of professional renovators and information outreach to consumers is a continuous undertaking, 12 months of the year. The materials developed for Renovation Month can be used year-round.

Backgrounders

The backgrounders provide solid valuable consumer information that is not quickly dated or obsolescent.

- They can be posted on your HBA's website anytime and left up for some time without concern that they are no longer timely.
- The backgrounders can also be given to the media for year-round use. Articles on renovation appear regularly through the year in magazines and newspapers throughout the country. The backgrounders enable your HBA to be proactive with media who may be grateful to receive ready-to-publish information. The result is a good working relationship with the media, and greater visibility and credibility for the association and its members.

Graphic Image

Similarly, the graphic image for the campaign can be used year-round—on your HBA website, brochures or flyers, display boards, ads and so on. Or, you may want to print posters that you can display at home shows or other public events, or hang in your office—your members may want copies for their own offices or events.

Web Links

There is a lot of information online that is helpful to homeowners anytime of the year.

- Put a link to CHBA on your HBA website to give people easy access to a wide range of information about renovation, CHBA SAM awards, and more.
- Encourage your members to do the same—they can use the icons in the CHBA Members Area in the Tools section.
- Also encourage your members to check the CHBA website regularly for new publications and other tools that can help them be more effective and successful with their customers.



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