



City of Easton Strategic Branding Initiative

Background

In 2015, City Council voted to support the development of new marketing for the city. At that time, the city did not have any marketing assets to speak of and had been utilizing a business start-up guide (Ready.Set.Easton) for over 10 years. The city did not have any other marketing assets that it owned (photography, video, website for attraction, brochures, maps, etc.) therefore it was decided that new marketing needed to be developed.

The first phase of the new marketing initiative was to establish a new brand identity. This would include a logo, a brand territory, and possibly a tag line. After this initial strategy was developed, it would then be applied to all the new assets (listed above).

The marketing team began by reaching out to the local Easton community and conducted four focus groups to receive feedback on what resident thought was unique about Easton. From these ideas, three brand “territories” were developed.

What makes a good brand?

- Distinctive and ownable
- Defendable – based in reality
- Meaningful and understandable to different audiences
- Aspirational
- Versatile
 - Provides implementation options and flexibility across city departments
 - Longevity: will evolve with the city’s needs
- Actionable: How can we bring it to life in actions and deeds?

Different audiences to consider

- Visitors from elsewhere in Lehigh Valley, New Jersey, New York, Philly and suburbs



- Businesses looking to open, relocate, sustain
- Current City of Easton residents – both old and new

Qualities to reconcile with positioning

- History and future
- Existing perception
- Congruence with city's "brand personality"
- Four distinct neighborhoods
- Rivers/geography
- Bugler logo
- Attractions and events: Crayola, Public Market, Lafayette, State Theater, DaVinci, National Canal Museum, more
- Need for widespread adoption
- Forward looking

The three brand territories or big ideas were: independence, confluence, and creativity. After numerous discussions, city council finally adopted independence as the final brand concept. This was based on the following:

- **Distinctive and ownable:** No other regional municipality has "independence" as its positioning. While the City of Philadelphia has strong ties to the idea of "historical independence," the connection to the higher-order idea of personal independence is not nearly as strong.
- **Defendable- Based in reality:** Easton's history legitimizes the idea. Comments from the public show the concept of "personal independence" is evident throughout the city. In addition, of the three concepts, it is the one that is most contextually relevant to the bugler logo.
- **Meaningful and understandable to different audiences:** It's a strong concept for business recruitment. It resonates with visitors to Easton who are seeing unique experiences and the chance to express themselves. "Independence" is a cherished concept evident in the city's diversity and originality. While the idea of "confluence" appeals strongly to Eastonians, it is not as compelling and attractive to external audiences. Further, it is an idea that



appeals to most demographic groups; it resonates more with millennials than the other two.

- **Aspirational:** It's a bold, inspirational idea that incites action, whereas the other two options are more passive.
- **Versatile:** "Independence" is more translatable than the other two options in terms of visuals, video and words. We will be able to develop a stronger sense of the positioning than the softer concepts of "confluence" and "creativity."
- **Actionable- How we can bring it to life in actions and deeds?:** The boldness of the idea will translate more effectively and memorably into tangible items and visual assets that will be used to promote the city.

From the chosen brand concept, 15 taglines were developed. Over a series of 4 meetings (two public) the taglines were narrowed down to two. These were determined based upon:

- The higher order idea of *independence*. It's something that defines who we are as a city and a people. It's the common thing that we can wrap all of our communications around.

The idea of independence has already been adopted by City Council, so the tagline needs to revolve around that.

- Target Audiences- Needs to appeal to residents and want-to-be residents, visitors and tourists, and businesses. Needs to resolve the idea and tagline as a promise to each of them about what Easton offers.
- Unique- We want it to be something that other nearby cities cannot say or own.
- Ideally, it needs to work with the logo that has been adopted.

The two finalists are

- Independent at heart



- A revolution in the making

A revolution in the making.

Speaks to Easton's dramatic progress over the last 10 years and hints that even more is ahead. To residents, it says that they're part of something big happening here, which we heard over and over again in our community meetings. To visitors, it says that the city acknowledges and is proud of its progress. To businesses, it speaks to a favorable business climate with a city that is headed in the right direction.

Independent at heart.

This speaks to the city and its people. The very idea of independence has been part of the city since the Declaration of Independence was read here. It lives today in independent businesses in our markets and along our streets. It lives in the spirit of the residents, who are welcoming of different people and ideas. To visitors, it conveys a sense of warmth and pride in who you are and what you stand for.

Rarely is there consensus on any particular mark or line. The question we'd like your feedback about is not whether you like it personally. We all have different tastes in colors, styles, words. The question needs to be: does this line reflect favorably on the City of Easton, its people, its past, its spirit of independence that sets us apart and makes us who we are.

Please see the tagline options on the following page.



INDEPENDENT AT HEART.



A REVOLUTION IN THE MAKING.

Please send your comments on these two tag lines to dhart@easton-pa.gov

Thank you!