

VETERANS EXPERIENCE OFFICE COMMUNITY CATALYST AWARD



BACKGROUND

VA has put in a lot of work to provide services to Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors in need, but there is still more to do! That is why engaging with people in the community who share VA's mission is an important strategy to improve the lives of Veterans nationwide.

Instead of reinventing the wheel, why not learn from people in our community already making the lives of Veterans better every day? To do this, The Veterans Experience Office, in partnership with Ibility, hosted the Community Catalyst Award, a challenge competition that identifies existing innovative community-based solutions that serve Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. The award recognizes outstanding solutions that improve customer experience, outreach, peer support, and access to benefits and services for unmet needs.

In order to increase awareness of the VEOCC award, Ibility developed a strategic marketing and communications plan across social media, email, newsletter, and blog formats. This included the development of social media posts, graphics, newsletter content, blogs, weekly emails, videos, and webinars. Ibility also implemented a Google and LinkedIn AdBuy campaign to increase the reach of the opportunity. Ibility performed weekly outreach efforts, including emailing a list of over 300 researched contacts. This resulted in over 90 applications being submitted for Phase 1 of the award.

2D ANIMATED VIDEOS

Ibility created a 2d animated explainer video to help spread awareness of the VEOCC award to Veteran serving organizations. Video is one of the most engaging types of content and is a powerful tool to help spread awareness and information about a new tool, process, or program. Video allows viewers to engage with the story and become immersed in the details, more than other types of communication materials. Videos can come in the form of real people telling their story or in the form of fun 2D animation. The goal of 2D animation is generally to explain, educate and entertain viewers. This is so successful because the animation helps break down complex processes into simple scenes with visual guides, making information easy to digest and fun. Furthermore, adding characters allows videos to transfer emotion and lets a brand connect to their audience on a personal level, creating an even more persuasive marketing tool.



VIDEO CREATION PROCESS

Upon assignment, Ibility hosts up to two (2) discovery and immersion meetings with key stakeholders including preparation and a post-session internal creative download. The purpose of the session is to identify and agree upon audience priorities, project goals, key subjects and topics for capture, success metrics, required logistics and resources, and a timeline for the completion of deliverables.

Additionally, Ibility will supply all A/V tools necessary to create a polished video animation. Ibility will be responsible for gathering the necessary releases and permissions for any visuals, graphics, or individuals featured in the footage.

Our team for this project includes Audio Engineers, Creative Development Strategist, Graphic Artist, Motion Graphics Technician, Producer, Project Manager, and Script Writer. Each role is responsible for a piece in the video production process and work cohesively to execute the clients vision.



\$100,000 prize for each of the top 2 submissions



Over 90 applications submitted for Phase 1

METHODOLOGY



- 1 PREPARE**

Ibility confirmed understanding of the problem statement, developed a crowdsource and strategic communications plan, and identified evaluation criteria.
- 2 OUTREACH**

Ibility developed an outreach plan, researched contact information, drafted communication materials, and outlined a Google and LinkedIn AdBuy campaign.
- 3 COMMUNICATE**

Ibility advertised the project using email, newsletter, and social media to recruit participants, recruited judges, maintained weekly communication, and monitored and adjusted communication efforts based on engagement metrics.
- 4 SELECT**

Ibility performed an initial screening of submissions before assigning them to Judges for scoring using the formal rubric to confirm the top 10 submissions.
- 5 CONDUCT**

Ibility conducted the training webinars for Phase 2, coordinated with VEO and VA executive leadership, then hosted the Phase 2 opening ceremony, presentations, and closing ceremony in person.
- 6 AWARD**

Ibility created a formal rubric for Phase 2 judging and training judges on the scoring procedure, the top 2 scoring presentations are each awarded \$100,000 and the results were advertised on VA and Ibility communication channels.
- 7 TRANSITION**

Ibility developed articles and blogs to post on VA and Ibility social media and send in the VA newsletter, communicated next steps with the winning teams and submitted the competition report.

SUMMARY

The VEOCC project had multiple layers and the Ibility team worked cohesively to meet the multiple elements required in this project. Between managing the challenge, creating an effective animated video, and developing and executing a marketing plan, the Ibility team worked to create a cohesive challenge experience for the VA and participants. The final deliverables for this project feature all of the carefully crafted communication materials created to increase visibility and participation in this challenge competition. The campaign was extremely successful with over 90 applications being submitted for Phase 1. The solutions proposed including the 2 award-winning solutions will continue to improve the processes used to provide care for Veterans.

