

BRANDING FOR RELIGIOUS NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS:  
A CASE STUDY FOR THE HARVEST FOOD PANTRY

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of  
Texas State University-San Marcos  
In partial fulfillment  
Of the requirements

For the degree

Master of Fine Arts

by

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May 2011

BRANDING FOR RELIGIOUS NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS:  
A CASE STUDY FOR THE HARVEST FOOD PANTRY

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my amazing wife, Emily, who has consistently supported me throughout my graduate education—without her this would not be possible; my parents, Bruce and Rhonda Honea who have always believed in me; my friends and extended family who have made me what I am today; and professor William Meek who has been a constant friend and mentor to me in the MFA program.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank my thesis committee members, Jeff Davis, Tom Berno, and Michelle Hays, for the wisdom they bestowed on me, and their constant support through this process. I would also like to thank both the students and professors in the MFA program for the support and critiques that inspired and pushed me to work harder.

I would especially like to thank Jeff Davis, Grayson Lawrence, William Meek, and Claudia Roeschmann for their dedication to this program and to my education. Without their insight this program would not exist. I am also indebted to Christine Haney. Without Christine this program would not function.

This manuscript was submitted on March 30, 2011.

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **Introduction**

This research explores branding of a faith-based non-profit organization. Research focuses on development of a visual brand identity and supporting brand applications for the Harvest Food Pantry (HFP) in New Braunfels, Texas. The mission of the HFP is to supply food to underprivileged citizens in the New Braunfels community.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Historically, religious organizations utilized artisans for the production of media (i.e. Illuminated Manuscripts, Religious paintings, etc.). However, this practice declined over the last 500 years, since the evolution of movable type. The ability to mass-produce both secular and religious material contributed to religious organizations undervaluing the communication design discipline (CDD). This trend results in a failure to consider effective marketing materials, a focused target audience (TA), and a clear visual message. The HFP branding project emphasized the necessity of strategic branding efforts by religious organizations. The accompanying case study for the HFP brand provides an example of a unified

design system to help raise awareness and improve fundraising efforts for the organization.

### **How Branding Works**

A brand is the intrinsic value placed on a product, service, or organization by a consumer. As multiple consumers arrive at the same perceived value, the brand grows stronger (Neumeier, 2006). “A brand is a kind of Platonic ideal—a concept shared by society to identify a specific class of things” (Neumeier, p. 3). In other words, the brand is a concept by which consumers identify and differentiate the value of one product from another. A brand identity is the window through which consumers view the brand: “the visual and verbal articulation of a brand, including all pertinent design applications, such as logo, business card, letterhead, or packaging” (Landa, 2006, p. 5). This implies that a brand exists on an emotional level while a brand identity exists on a physical level. The act of branding is an iterative process involving the combination of these emotional and visual elements through two-way communication between corporation and consumer. According to Neumeier (2007), branding is “a company’s effort to build lasting value by delighting customers ... so that more people buy more things for more years at a higher price” (p. 19). However, if a company fails to meet consumers’ perceived notions, the cycle will have a reverse effect.

### **Branding for Faith-Based Non-Profit Organizations**

In light of this branding paradigm, there are two priorities religious organizations must consider when initiating a new brand identity. First, they must

embrace new media. Historically, the church quickly embraced new media as an avenue for religious messages. Cooke (2009) exclaimed, “I visited a church in New Jersey built in 1911 and originally designed so the lobby could be used as a movie theater. The projection booth was built above the entrance, making it easy to project the movies on the lobby wall – in 1911” (p. 24). This is evidence that religious organizations can adopt media that is relevant to contemporary culture to communicate with the TA. Conversely, many religious organizations fail to utilize new/social media platforms (i.e. Twitter<sup>TM</sup>, Facebook<sup>TM</sup>, etc.) that will put them in contact with their audience in real time. Social media provides an avenue for the necessary two-way communication between the organization and potential volunteers and financial donors. The more Twitter followers the HFP accrues, the larger the crowd will be that receives their messages. In turn, those followers may respond to the message or extend it to their personal followers, thus increasing the breadth of conversation. If the HFP needed to run an emergency food drive, they could use Twitter to announce the campaign and provide a link to the HFP blog for more information. Essentially, social media affords the opportunity for communication without printed material. This is not to say that print campaigns are no longer effective, but that online conversations are faster and less expensive, making them more cost effective. “The point is that generations communicate differently and ... we have to be open to letting our donors dictate the method of communication they prefer” (Cooke, 2009, p. 146).

Second, religious organizations must hire professionals from the CDD. Artisans were employed for religious projects throughout the history of the

Church. The work of artisans throughout Church history is parallel to that of communication designers (CD) for current faith-based organizations. In *Graphic Design and Religion*, Kantor (2007) explained that in the year 1325 a project such as creating an Illuminated Manuscript “required the efforts of parchment specialists, painters, illustrators, miniaturists, scribes, calligraphers, etc.” (p. 2). This demonstrates that there was a time when religious organizations sought professionals to give visual form to religious material. However, the practice of hiring creative professionals is now less prevalent. When considering graphics from contemporary religious organizations, “You’re more likely to think of clip-art doves, crosses and praying hands; dusty, leather-bound Bibles; PowerPoint slides with a default font; and bulletins designed by the church secretary” (Hazen, 2007, p. 100). This occurs when design projects are given to someone outside of the CDD, as they lack the skill set to effectively generate relevant visual communication materials. According to Cooke (2009), “We live in a design driven world ... to make an impact, design is the language we must learn” (p. 124). Missing the opportunity to utilize the CDD leads to the production of unfocused messages, missing the TA, and an inconsistency in branding initiative.

Holland (2006) expressed, “Everyone wants to get attention. But the most organized, consistently delivered brands are the ones that people respond to” (p. 2). Coca-Cola is an example of successful branding with a brand value in excess of \$70 billion (Interbrand, 2010). The Coca-Cola brand is recognizable worldwide due to consistent use of design elements and message. Their message offers “fun, freedom, spirit, and refreshment...while maintaining the nostalgia that reinforces

customers deep connection to the brand” (Interbrand, 2010). Though it is arguable that Coca-Cola is a large corporation with a substantial budget to spend on branding, the power of branding cannot be denied. “Everything gets branded, one way or another...it should be embraced—by all nonprofits. After all, it’s how you tell your story and it’s at the heart of all outreach efforts” (Holland, p. 2).

Therefore, it is imperative for religious non-profits to reconsider their branding efforts and increase reliance on the CDD.

### **Learning from Religion**

Brand strategists have gained a considerable amount of knowledge from religion. Cooke (2008) stated, “Over and over, secular branding experts point to religious faith as the template for real branding” (p. 71). He goes on to explain the similarities of religious organizations and large consumer corporations (i.e. Apple, Nike, Harley-Davidson). “What a generation ago was expressed through religious affiliation is now communicated through what we wear, the car we drive and the pen that sits in our pocket” (Cooke, 2008, p. 66). This is not to say that consumer brands have replaced religion, but that people easily identify one another by groups to which they belong or products they buy. “Knowing that a friend is a Levi’s person or a Nike person helps us understand who they are and what values they represent” (Cooke, 2008, p. 66). Brand strategist Marty Neumeier refers to this as tribalism. He explained that consumers “create intimate worlds they can understand ... where they can be somebody and feel as if they belong. They create tribes” (Neumeier, 2006, p. 40). Apple is one such tribe. When consumers



buy Apple products they choose to belong to that tribe. In other words, they buy into (or believe in) that corporation and the products it produces.

Lindstrom (2005) expanded on this as he stated, “At first glance, branding and religion are an odd, incongruous combination. But on further examination the relationship is closer than we dare imagine” (p. 166). This suggests that consumers’ loyalties to specific brands are so deeply engrained as to warrant religious fervor. This phenomenon is no accident. Lindstrom listed “Ten Rules of Sensory Branding,” which are “fundamental components that underpin religion and can serve as the ultimate role model for branding” (p. 175). These rules, which form the template for branding, are as follows:

1. A unique sense of belonging
2. A clear vision with a sense of purpose
3. Take power from your enemies
4. Authenticity
5. Consistency
6. Perfection
7. Sensory appeal
8. Rituals
9. Symbols
10. Mystery (Lindstrom, pp. 175 – 6)

Brand strategists employ these principles from religion to create a sense of connection. Once the connection is made, consumers feel they are a part of the brand (i.e., Neumeier’s tribes) and the bond grows stronger. For consumer

corporations this bond results in increased revenue through brand loyalty.

Lindstrom (2005) recalled the story of a man named Will who felt so attached to the Gucci brand that he had the logo tattooed on his neck. Lindstrom quoted Will as saying, “For me, Gucci was more than a brand—it was my personal companion. When I entered a Gucci store, I felt like I was in heaven. Everything about the place made me feel at home” (p. 2).

Organizations like the HFP benefit greatly from creating an environment in which volunteers and customers feel at home. Customers (food insecure families) and volunteers who feel connected to the brand have a unique sense of loyalty. According to Lindstrom these “followers are more than devoted fans, they’re positively evangelical in support of their chosen brand” (p.178). In other words, supporters will communicate brand success to friends and family members. For religious non-profit organizations this bond creates the opportunity to reach more supporters and generate increased participation. If the goal is to feed hungry people, volunteers who feel a stronger connection to the HFP will be more likely to actively support the organization. This creates a higher potential for financial donations and increased participation resulting in the ability to feed more hungry people.

### **About the HFP**

The HFP has a simple story. New Braunfels Christian Ministries and Oakwood Baptist Church (OBC) operate the food pantry. Their mission is to work with Communities in Schools (CIS) to identify the most needy families in New Braunfels and provide them food support on a weekly basis. CIS is an

organization with the goal to help children remain active in their education in order to succeed in life (Communities in Schools South Central Texas, 2011). OBC donated the first-year HFP budget; however, the church cannot afford to offer the same level of continued support. Due to low funding, the food pantry was intentionally hidden from the general public to prevent an influx of people in need. In order to raise funds and increase awareness for continued support within the general community, a branding strategy was necessary.

### **Data Collection**

Data for this research were collected from anonymous interviews with the HFP customers and volunteers, meetings with pastors from OBC, and communication design meetings with thesis committee members. These data provided guidelines for use of specific brand identity and visual elements (i.e. shape, color, typography) based on the TA.

### **Results**

Research covered multiple aspects of the HFP brand; this included a logo, website, and environmental graphic design (EGD). Each of the items mentioned (i.e. logo, website) are brand touchpoints. These are instances in which volunteers, customers, and financial supporters come in contact with the HFP brand. Wheeler (2006) stated, “Brand is the nucleus of sales and marketing activities: each touchpoint is an opportunity to strengthen a brand and to communicate its essence” (p. 6). Consideration was also made for utilizing social media platforms to organize events and donations. The HFP holds three volunteer events per week. The dates, times, and volunteers vary so that information must

be updated weekly. Social media offers multiple avenues for creating and publicizing events independent of budget constraints.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **Harvest Food Pantry**

#### **Project Overview**

As stated in chapter one, the HFP is a ministry of New Braunfels Christian Ministries and OBC. These organizations coordinate with the CIS program in the New Braunfels public school system to identify the families with the greatest need in the community. The mission of HFP is to act as an emergency food supply to those families. The HFP does not have the room or financial support to store large amounts of food and must rely on local food banks for supplies. Therefore, the organization is unable to provide food for everyone who comes in the door. As a result, the HFP was hidden from the general public. However, supporters of the HFP desire to see the organization grow in order to serve more families. This is precisely where the CDD can help. The HFP can increase awareness, funds, and volunteers, by implementing a strategic brand identity, environmental graphic design, and a web presence to present a unified organization to the public.

#### **Target Audience**

Customers, volunteers, and financial supporters comprise the three components of the TA. The primary HFP audience (e.g. customers) consists of

women and children, designated by CIS as those in greatest need of assistance. Children often accompany their parents into the waiting area. Nearly half of the primary audience is Spanish-speaking only. Therefore, graphics and information for the HFP need to be both relevant to women and children and available in English and Spanish. The secondary audience consists of volunteers, most of whom are middle-aged, married women. Finally, the tertiary audience of financial supporters is mostly comprised of members of the OBC congregation and the community at large.

## **Methods**

### **Photographic Documentation**

It is imperative for the CD to know the fundamental operations of the organization in order to truly understand its unique function. A significant part of the creative process was to visit and document the organization's physical location in order to gain an insider's knowledge. Multiple site visits and photographic documentation provided the building blocks for the identity system. These photos, shown in the brand identity book, provided insight into the daily operations within the pantry as well as the exterior environment of the location. In order to make the HFP more approachable, volunteers painted the walls and continually keep the shelves neatly stocked. However, the actual pantry is housed within a Community Resale Shop (CRS). The HFP is physically located in the storage room in the back of the CRS building. The room is cluttered with second-hand clothing and toys waiting to be placed in the store. The exterior doors to the

storage room (i.e. the HFP) are located near the dumpster and are often blocked by discarded items from businesses nearby.

### **SWOT & Audit of Existing Brand Identity**

SWOT (which stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) is a method used by business planners to provide a market analysis for a given organization. According to Friend & Zehle (2009), “A SWOT is a snapshot of a business’s position and provides an input into the generation of strategic options” (p. 88). Once the points for each section have been listed, the team can discuss how to improve the organization’s position. “Of particular value is the identification of weaknesses and threats” (Friend & Zehle, p. 88). Weaknesses can be addressed by considering how to utilize resources listed in the opportunities category. For example, at the outset of this project, the HFP faced the weakness of low funding and had no fundraising effort in place. An opportunity would be initiating a fundraising effort through OBC and providing information on how to donate online.

The existing logo for the HFP (see the illustration section, p. 33) has two weaknesses that can be remedied with a new logo. First, the logo lacks a concept or unique approach that would more clearly identify the organization as a food pantry and make a memorable impression on the TA. Children comprise a portion of the TA, which presents an opportunity for a less formal approach to the logo. Second, the existing logo is not scalable. Beneath the primary word mark, there is a line of text set in a small point-size, which is illegible when the logo is reduced in size.

## **Conceptual Strategies**

### **Word Listing**

Word listing can be a useful tool in the early stages of redesigning a brand identity system. CDs produce word lists by writing down words that come to mind when considering the problem at hand. A greater number of words on the list will produce more opportunities for a successful outcome (Texas State University-San Marcos School of Art and Design, n.d.). Word lists (see illustration section, p. 36) are useful as they are quick and easy to produce. However, a weakness of the word listing process is that it results in a written product. This can be challenging when the final outcome needs to be visual. For this reason, it is helpful to consider iconic words. For the HFP, a list of icons (illustration section, p. 37) was generated in tandem with corresponding words to better visualize the final outcome. As the final step in the word listing process, CDs convert written content into visual content.

### **Morphological Matrix**

The new logo makes use of a device known as a morphological matrix (MM). The MM is a strategy used for generating unique ideas in an organized manner. This method works in conjunction with word listing. Iconic images from the word listing process are placed within the matrix (see illustration section, p. 38). According to Pricken (2008), “the method requires you to systematically list and consider all logically conceivable possibilities, in order to obtain an overview of every aspect involved.” (p. 228). The designer then draws connections between images to create a unique solution. In this case the letter “H” is combined with



slices of bread (white and wheat). The resulting form is an informal mark that may exist with or without the typographic element.

This identity uses the icon of bread as a reference to the organization's religious affiliations as well as the necessity of bread in daily life. Bread has a presence in religious ceremonies (i.e. communion) as well as Biblical references such as "Taking the five loaves and two fish ... he gave thanks and broke the loaves" (Matthew 14:19, Today's New International Version). While Biblical references often mention loaves of bread, the new identity uses slices of bread for their visual recognition and relevance to contemporary culture.

### **Data Collection: Iterative Design & Visual Exploration**

"Iterative design is based on a cycle of prototyping, testing, and refining" (Visocky O'Grady & Visocky O'Grady, 2006, p. 54). For the HFP brand identity, prototyping equated to sketching possible concepts based on the MM. The concept sketching process forms the visual exploration. "Beginning with a series of thumbnail sketches and concluding with a realized prototype, this process is used to vet out the most viable solution" (Visocky O'Grady & Visocky O'Grady, p. 58). Upon completion, the HFP sketches were revised in a meeting with supervising faculty. The faculty suggested developing seven concept sketches into rough compositions. The CD presented these compositions to Pastors and HFP volunteers as possibilities for the new HFP brand identity. The pastors, volunteers, and CD collectively selected one mark to enter a final phase of revision. This phase required several rounds of refining the icons used, selecting color palettes, and arranging typefaces.

### **Color & Type Palettes**

CDs use color to identify the organization, create a connection with the TA, and differentiate from similar or competing organizations (Wheeler, 2006). The color palette for the HFP includes a pumppernickel-brown as well as a light-wheat-brown for the bread icons. Brown is an appropriate color for food-related environments. Eiseman (2000) stated, “brown is well connected to good tastes, appropriate to the products involving foodstuff or environments where food is served” (p. 37). Supporting colors come from neutral tones that represent the earth, sun, and sky — colors selected for their relation to the harvest. Two shades of blue represent the sky, orange represents the sun, and two shades of green represent the grass and crops. Blue and green combinations denote the nurturing qualities in consideration of the primary TA. “Blue-greens represent the best qualities of the two ‘mother’ colors — blue and green, always eliciting pleasant responses” (Eiseman, p. 43).

Typography, like color, is fundamental to the identity of an organization and should work to convey its unique story (Wheeler, 2006). The selected type palette for the HFP distances the organization from traditional serif typefaces designers often use for religious projects. Historically, religious books (i.e. the Bible, Hymnals) utilized serif typefaces to imbue a sense of importance and reverence (see illustration section, p. 47). However, the new HFP identity takes a less formal approach to create an essence of comfort while avoiding religious austerity. This is meant to be more inviting to children and non-religious customers (the primary TA). Therefore, the chosen palette includes an informal

slab serif placed next to a more rigid sans serif to create contrast for an energetic palette. “It’s the interplay between fonts that gives them energy. The more distant the moods in a typographic palette, the friskier the design will be” (Hoefler & Frere-Jones, 2011, para. 3).

## **Deliverables**

### **Website**

Organizations such as the HFP cannot successfully operate apart from outside financial support. Consequently, it is important to create awareness in the community as well as online in order to reach as many financial supporters as possible. The website also provides an opportunity for possible volunteers to locate the building. An online photo gallery offers insight (for future volunteers) on what to expect when they arrive as well as how to dress appropriately. The site also provides information to anyone in need of food in the community. Site visitors may access information on enrolling in the CIS program and determine if they qualify for enrollment. In the event that they do not meet the requirements to receive support from the HFP, the site provides links to larger food banks in the area.

### **CMS Blog**

CMS stands for Content Management System. The most commonly used CMSs are Drupal<sup>TM</sup>, Joomla<sup>TM</sup>, and Wordpress<sup>TM</sup> (Geller, 2011). These systems provide the opportunity for an organization to update information on the web without learning HTML (Hypertext Markup Language), which is used for coding websites. The majority of information on the HFP site does not change. However,

there are updates about upcoming events as well as photos from past events that need to be posted on a regular basis. For this reason, the HFP site incorporates a Wordpress blog. Wordpress is a successful tool for blogging and has a user interface that is both aesthetically pleasing and easy for beginners to use (Coyier, 2011). These features provide the HFP with a CMS that is both functional and easy to update. The blog also pulls in the HFP Twitter feed and automatically updates Twitter when a new post is created.

### **Google Analytics <sup>TM</sup> & SEO**

Google Analytics affords the opportunity to track traffic on the site. Contrary to popular belief, the existence of a website will not produce the desirable amount of online traffic. Wheeler (2006) cited Richard Kauffman stating, “The number one Internet myth is ‘Build it and they will come’” (p. 136). An important part of website performance is the addition of Google Analytics in order to track information such as who visits the site, where they are located, duration of the visit, and how often they visit. Data on the Google Analytics page show that when the HFP is mentioned in a church service at OBC or on a social media site (i.e. Twitter, Facebook) there is a spike in traffic. Supporters are able to find information about the HFP as well as how to volunteer or make donations.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is also an imperative aspect of creating a web presence. Cooke (2009) explained, “In the digital world, your name is only as good as Google says it is. Therefore ... your ability to be found is a very significant issue” (p. 226). To improve search engine rankings, CDs must consider site architecture such as page titles, meta tags, and navigation. For

example, the HFP has a page about volunteering. The best title for this page will be short and include the word “volunteer.” This formatting makes it easier for customers and search engines to differentiate one page from another. Although rankings are important, SEO is a matter of organizing the elements of a website to best serve the customer rather than focusing on overall Google rankings (Google Search Engine Optimization Starter Guide, 2010). This can be done through proper use of meta tags (i.e. phrases housed within the site’s HTML coding) by using phrases that customers will likely search. Examples for the HFP would be phrases such as, Harvest Food Pantry New Braunfels, or New Braunfels Food Bank.

### **Environmental Graphic Design (EGD)**

EGD (e.g. signs, banners, displays) is an imperative touchpoint of the physical identity system. Without implementing an EGD system, the HFP will remain hidden to the community nearby. Stylistically, the EGD system implements typography and color palettes from the brand identity system as well as background elements from the website.

#### **Signs**

There was an unused location in the existing signage structure for the businesses in that building. The first sign is made of plywood with a vinyl overlay and adheres to the size specifications set by previously existing signage in that location. As previously stated, the majority of volunteers at the pantry are women, middle aged and older. It is desirable to avoid heavy signs that must be carried to and from the curb on a daily basis. Therefore, the sign near the curb has wheels on

one side so that it can be tipped over and rolled into storage. Materials for this sign may be found at local hardware stores, thereby reducing the overall cost. Labor for the project was provided by Mission New Braunfels (MNB), a group of men from OBC who volunteer their time and energy to non-profit building projects in the New Braunfels community.

### **Facilities Exterior**

The HFP entrance, as mentioned previously, is located near the dumpster for businesses in the area. It was necessary to clean up this area to provide customers with more comfort when entering the building. The facilities exterior should relieve, rather than compound, the social stigma of receiving support from a food pantry. Space capacity prevented relocation of the dumpster, but the building was improved by creating a new facade at a reasonable cost. The MNB group mounted two panels made of 4' x 8' sheets of plywood to the building on either side of the doors. They also moved the existing CRS sign to the right of the doors and positioned a new HFP sign below it. A Bible verse adorns the panels to the left of the entrance, and a metal awning provides sheltered food pickup on rainy days. An additional site improvement includes a seven-foot privacy fence placed between the dumpster and the entrance. Volunteers place items exceeding the dumpster's limitations behind the fence to avoid crowding the doors. The fence also offers a separate touchpoint for the HFP brand identity, while a bench in front of the fence provides a seating area for those waiting to be helped.

### **Interior**

The CRS storage room houses the HFP service window where customers wait to receive food. Both organizations must continue to use this space; therefore, the stored items remain in the room. However, a new room divider creates a separate space and disguises the disorder of the storage room. The room divider is made of wood and fiberboard. The fiberboard is coated with chalkboard paint so that it may be used for dual purposes. First, HFP volunteers may write inspirational verses as well as daily food items on the board. Second, children accompanying their parents may also color on the board as they wait. However, storage was also a consideration for the divider. The HFP is not open every day, and the CRS receives deliveries through the storage room on a weekly basis. Therefore, hinges connect each panel of the divider and the bottom is mounted with wheels. These features allow it to be folded and rolled into storage when the HFP is not open, providing access to the CRS storage facility.

### **Volunteer & Donor Premiums**

Branded items such as T-shirts provide unity for HFP volunteers as well as an extension of the brand identity. Wheeler (2006) stated, “Clothing communicates ... a uniform can ... signal authority and identification ... finding a waiter in a restaurant may be as simple as finding the person with the black T-shirt and white pants” (p.146). Shirts come in multiple colors and may be used for fundraising efforts as donor/volunteer premiums. Branded coffee mugs are also useful in such endeavors. Patrons who wish to donate to the HFP will receive a mug or T-shirt (depending on donation level) to commemorate their support.

Finally, paper grocery bags, printed in one color, are useful in maintaining the HFP identity. Stickers also provide an inexpensive yet fun branded element for children visiting with their parents.

### **Fundraising**

Unsustainable funding creates an imperative for the HFP to consider improved fundraising opportunities. Over the 2010 Christmas holidays, the HFP conducted an informational session at OBC during a regularly scheduled meeting of the congregation. In that meeting, the pastor held a question-and-answer session with volunteers from the HFP to highlight needs for the coming year and discuss ways that the congregation could help physically and financially. After the discussion, envelopes printed with the new HFP identity were circulated for a financial donation opportunity. Donations from the session were accepted throughout the month of December, and reached a total of \$76,000. The new budget, which exceeds the 2010 budget by \$24,000, will allow the HFP to reach more families on a weekly basis than previously possible.

### **Conclusion**

This thesis outlines the case study of a brand identity and supporting brand applications for the Harvest Food Pantry, a faith-based non-profit organization, whose mission is to provide support to food insecure families in New Braunfels, Texas. The research shows that a reliance on the CDD is vital to the implementation of successful marketing materials with a focused TA and a clear visual message. Social media platforms must also be utilized, as they provide an effective method of engaging the organization's TA while strengthening the



potential for support from more volunteers and financial donors. Analysis methods (e.g. SWOT analysis, photographic documentation) and conceptual strategies (e.g. Word listing, Morphological Matrix) support the new HFP brand identity, while a successful fundraising effort using the new identity provides validation. The following brand illustration documents the creation process for the brand identity, EGD system, website, and social media platforms.

## ILLUSTRATION

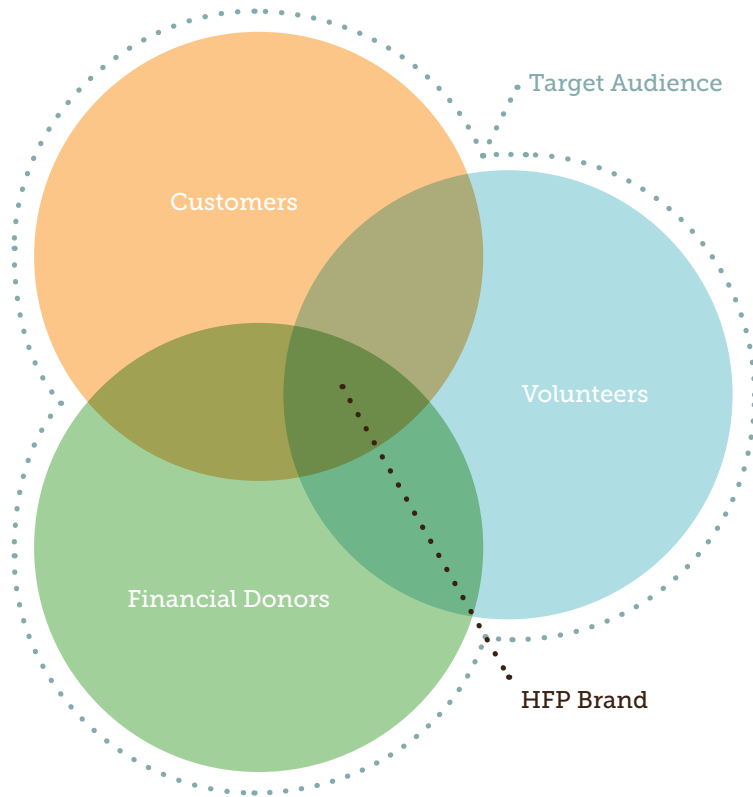
# HARVEST FOOD PANTRY

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## BRAND IDENTITY BOOK

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Harvest Food Pantry is a ministry of New Braunfels Christian Ministries and Oakwood Baptist Church (OBC). These organizations coordinate with the Communities in Schools (CIS) program in the New Braunfels public school system to identify the families with the greatest need in the community. The mission of HFP is to act as an emergency food supply to those families, but the organization lacks the room or financial stability to store large amounts of food and must rely on local food banks for supplies. As a result of these factors, the HFP was hidden from the general public to prevent an influx of food insecure families. However, supporters of the food pantry have a desire to see the organization grow in order to serve more families. The HFP can increase awareness, funds, and volunteers by implementing a strategic brand identity, environmental graphic design (EGD), and a web presence to present a unified organization to the public.



# HARVEST FOOD PANTRY

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## METHODS

## PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION

Multiple site visits and photographic documentation provided the building blocks for an identity system. These photos provide insight into the daily operations within the pantry as well as the exterior environment of the location.

In order to make the HFP more approachable, volunteers have painted the walls and continually kept the shelves neatly stocked. However, the actual pantry is housed within a Community Resale Shop (CRS) storage room. The room is cluttered with second-hand clothing and toys waiting to be placed in the store. The exterior doors to the storage room (i.e. the HFP) are located near the dumpster and are often blocked by discarded items from businesses nearby.







### SWOT (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS)

According to Friend & Zehle (2009), "A SWOT is a snapshot of a business's position and provides an input into the generation of strategic options" (p. 88).

A SWOT analysis begins by listing the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Once a listing for each section is created, members of the organization may discuss how to improve the organization's position. "Of particular value is the identification of weaknesses and threats" (Friend & Zehle, p. 88). Weaknesses can be addressed by considering how to utilize resources listed in the opportunities category. For example, at the outset of this project, the HFP faced the weakness of low funding and had no fundraising effort in place. An opportunity would be initiating a fundraising effort through OBC and providing information on how to donate online.

### Strengths

1. Connection to a large congregation at Oakwood Baptist Church.
2. Devoted leadership.
3. Locally operated.
4. Market segmentation: focused on serving New Braunfels Community.
5. Volunteers are willing to work to improve outreach.

### Weaknesses

1. Many non-profit competitors (Feeding America, local food banks).
2. Physically hidden from volunteers and donors.
3. Poor identity system.
4. No existing EGD system.
5. No website or social media presence.
6. No fundraising efforts.

### Opportunities

1. Purchase goods at reduced prices from local markets.
2. Create a new brand identity system.
3. Implement an EGD system to assist in locating the organization.
4. Publish information through a website.
5. Capitalize on Google (i.e. maps, calendar, analytics).
6. Organize fundraising efforts through Oakwood Baptist Church.

### Threats

1. Economic downtime resulting in fewer potential donors.
2. Language barrier (portion of visitors are Spanish speaking only).
3. Unsustainable funding.
4. Marketing efforts from local food banks and Feeding America.
5. Web presence from pantries with similar names (i.e. Golden Harvest).
6. Community events held by competing (for funding) food banks.

#### AUDIT OF EXISTING BRAND IDENTITY

The existing HFP identity has two weaknesses that can be remedied with a new logo. First, the logo lacks a concept or unique approach that would more clearly identify the organization as a food pantry and make a memorable impression on the TA. Children comprise a portion of the TA, which presents an opportunity for a less formal approach to the logo. Second, the logo is not scalable. Beneath the primary word mark, there is a line of text set in very small point size, which is illegible when the logo is reduced in size.



*\*Existing HFP Brand Identity and Signage applications*

# HARVEST FOOD PANTRY

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## CONCEPTUAL STRATEGIES

#### WORD AND ICON LISTS + MORPHOLOGICAL MATRIX

Word listing is the process of listing every word that comes to mind when considering the problem at hand. Word lists are useful in that they are quick and easy to produce, yet they are limited by the fact that the result is a written product. Therefore a list of icons was generated in tandem with corresponding words to better visualize the final outcome. The morphological matrix works in conjunction with the word list. Images from the icon list are placed within the matrix and forced together to create a unique solution.



## SHARING

giving  
people  
hands  
helping  
together  
Christ  
storehouse  
table  
cup  
silverware  
oil  
house  
home  
church  
orange  
blue  
community  
city  
buildings  
caring  
shelter  
food bank

## HARVEST

plenty  
cornucopia  
pumpkin  
basket  
fields  
green  
barn  
tractor  
bush hog  
groomer  
overalls  
wheelbarrow  
fall  
brown  
october  
grain  
bread  
wheat  
corn

## FOOD PANTRY

cupboard  
grocery store  
freezer  
cooler  
brown bag  
shopping cart  
checkout  
fish  
bread  
market  
deli  
wood  
home  
cups  
handle  
glasses  
seasoning  
clutter  
spices  
cans  
cheese

\* Brown denotes the most relevant associations for exploration as icons.



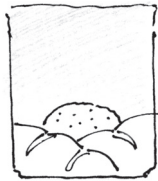
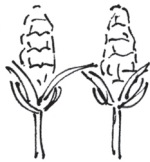
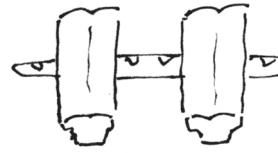
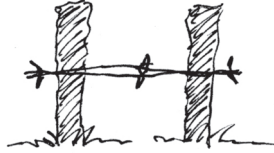
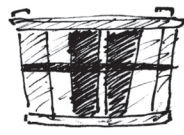




#### DATA COLLECTION: ITERATIVE DESIGN + VISUAL EXPLORATION

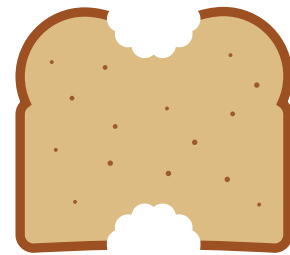
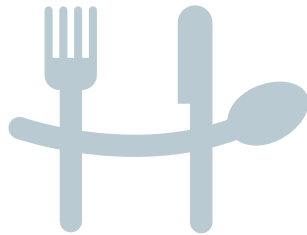
Iterative Design for the HFP consisted of sketching possible concepts based on the MM. The concept sketching process forms the visual exploration.

"Beginning with a series of thumbnail sketches and concluding with a realized prototype, this process is used to vet out the most viable solution" (Visocky O'Grady & Visocky O'Grady, 2006, p. 58). Upon completion, the sketches were presented in a communication design meeting. The faculty suggested developing seven sketches into rough compositions. The CD presented these compositions to Pastors and HFP volunteers as possibilities for the new HFP brand identity. The pastors, volunteers, and CD selected one mark to enter a final phase of revisions and finally become the new HFP brand identity.





HARVEST  
· FOOD PANTRY ·



## NEW BRAND IDENTITY

The final mark combines the letter “H” with slices of bread (white and wheat).

The resulting form is an informal mark that may exist with or without the typographic element. The identity uses the icon of Bread as a reference to the organization’s religious affiliations as well as the necessity of bread in daily life. Bread has a presence in religious ceremonies (i.e. communion) as well as Biblical references such as “Taking the five loaves and two fish ... he gave thanks and broke the loaves” (Matthew 14:19, Today’s New International Version). While Biblical references often mention loaves of bread, the new identity uses slices of bread for their visual recognition and relevance to contemporary culture.





Primary Identity



Secondary Identity



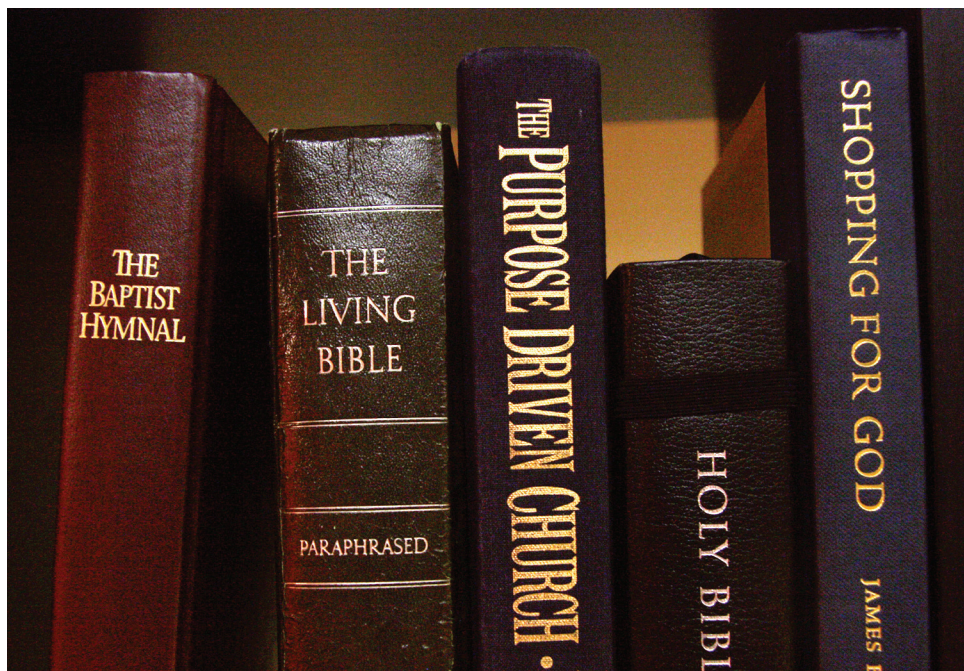
## COLOR PALETTE

The selected color palette includes a pumpernickel-brown as well as a light-wheat-brown for the bread icons. Supporting colors come from neutral tones that represent the earth, sun, and sky—colors selected for their relation to the harvest. Two shades of blue represent the sky, orange represents the sun, and shades of green represent the grass and crops. Blue and green combinations denote the nurturing qualities in consideration of the primary TA. "Blue-greens represent the best qualities of the two 'mother' colors—blue and green, always eliciting pleasant responses" (Eiseman, 2000, p. 43).

**PUMPERNICKEL***hex: 26160F**cyan: 50**magenta: 70**yellow: 80**black: 70***WHEAT***hex: DBC270**cyan: 14**magenta: 24**yellow: 56**black: 0***TURQUOISE***hex: 7FC7B5**cyan: 50**magenta: 22**yellow: 29**black: 0***OPEN SKY***hex: B3FFE5**cyan: 30**magenta: 0**yellow: 10**black: 0***MELLOW SUN***hex: FFBF7F**cyan: 0**magenta: 25**yellow: 50**black: 0***FRESH GRASS***hex: 7BD664**cyan: 51**magenta: 16**yellow: 60**black: 1***CABBAGE***hex: 7FC7B5**cyan: 38**magenta: 1**yellow: 50**black: 0*

## TYPE PALETTE

The chosen type palette places a playful slab serif next to a more rigid sans serif to create contrast for an energetic palette. Historically, religious books (i.e. the Bible, Hymnals) have utilized serif typefaces to imbue a feeling of importance and reverence. However, the new HFP identity takes a more contemporary approach to create an essence of comfort while avoiding religious austerity. "The interplay between fonts . . . gives them energy. The more distant the moods in a typographic palette, the friskier the design will be" (Hoefler & Frere-Jones, 2011, para. 3).



*\* Formal serif typography traditionally associated with religious books.*

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**  
**1234567890**

Trade Gothic Bold Condensed No. 20

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**  
**1234567890**

Museo Slab 500

***ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ***  
***abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz***  
***1234567890***

Museo Slab Italic 500

# HARVEST FOOD PANTRY

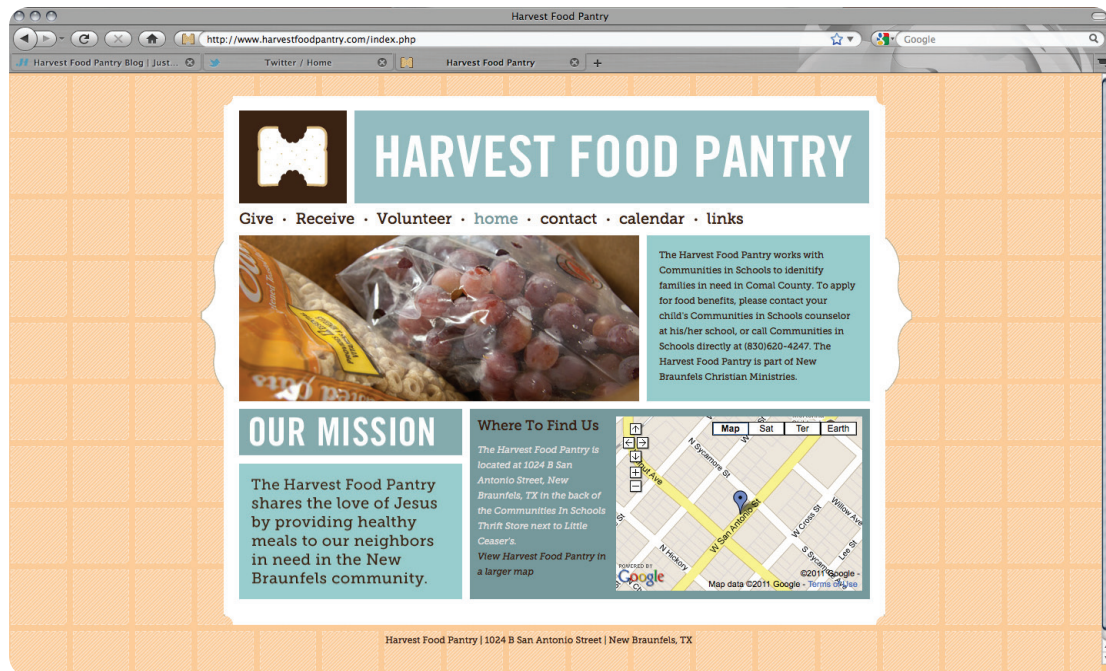


## DELIVERABLES

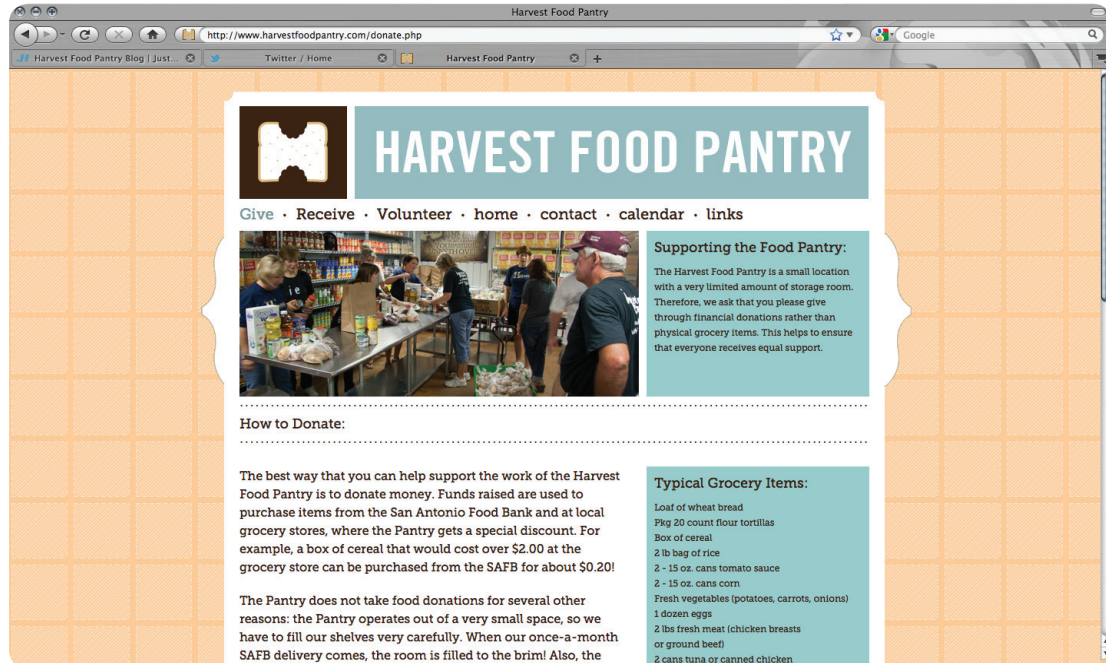
#### WEBSITE: GOOGLE ANALYTICS™ + SEO

Creating awareness in the community as well as online is important for reaching as many financial supporters as possible. A website provides an opportunity for possible donors/volunteers to locate the building while a photo gallery offers insight on what to expect when they arrive as well as how to dress appropriately. Google Analytics affords the opportunity to track traffic on the site. Data on the Google Analytics page show that when the HFP is mentioned in a service at OBC or on a social media site (i.e. Twitter, Facebook) there is a spike in traffic. This feature offers proof that supporters are looking to the website to find information about the HFP as well as how to volunteer or make donations. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is also an imperative aspect of creating a web presence. Cooke (2009) explains, "In the digital world, your name is only as good as Google says it is" (p. 226). To improve search engine rankings, CDs must consider site architecture such as page titles, meta tags, and navigation. For example, the HFP site includes a page on volunteering. An appropriate title for this page will be short and include the word "volunteer". Although rankings are important, SEO is a matter of organizing the elements of a website to best serve the customer.





*HFP homepage with integrated Google map*



*HFP subpage with information on typical grocery items and how to donate*

## CMS BLOG

CMS stands for Content Management System. A CMS provides the opportunity to update information on the web without learning HTML. The majority of information on the HFP site will not change. However, there are updates about upcoming events as well as photos from past events that need to be posted on a regular basis. For this reason the HFP website incorporates a Wordpress blog. Wordpress is great for blogging and has a user interface that is aesthetically pleasing and easy for beginners to use (Coyier, 2011). These features provide the HFP with a CMS that is both functional and easy to update. The blog also pulls in the HFP Twitter feed and automatically updates Twitter when a new post is created.





*HFP Wordpress blog with integrated Twitter feed*



*HFP Twitter page*

## ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHIC DESIGN (EGD)

EGD (e.g. signs, banners, displays) is an imperative touchpoint of the physical identity system. Without implementing an EGD system, the HFP will remain hidden to the community nearby. Stylistically, the EGD system utilized typography and color palettes from the brand identity system as well as background elements from the website.

### *SIGNS*

There is an unused location in the existing sign structure for businesses in that building. The first sign adheres to the size specifications set by previously existing signage in that location. As previously stated, the majority of volunteers at the pantry are women, middle aged and older. It is desirable to avoid heavy signs that must be carried to and from the curb on a daily basis. Therefore, the sign near the curb has wheels on one side so that it can be tipped over and rolled into storage. Materials for this sign may be found at local hardware stores, thereby reducing the overall cost. Labor for the project was provided by Mission New Braunfels (MNB), a group of men from OBC who volunteer their time and energy to non-profit building projects in the New Braunfels community.

### *FACILITIES EXTERIOR*

Space capacity prevented relocation of the dumpster adjacent to the HFP entrance, but the building was improved by creating a new facade at a reasonable cost. The MNB group mounted two panels made of 4' x 8' sheets of plywood to the building and replaced the CRS sign above the doors

with a metal awning to provide sheltered pickup and deliveries on rainy days. They moved the CRS sign to the right of the doors and positioned a new HFP sign below it. An additional site improvement includes a seven-foot privacy fence placed between the dumpster and the entrance so that items exceeding the dumpster's limitations may be placed out of sight. Finally, a bench in front of the fence provides a seating area for those waiting to be helped.

#### *INTERIOR*

The CRS storage room houses the HFP service window where customers wait to receive food. Both organizations must continue to use this space; therefore, the stored items remain in the room. However, a new room divider creates a separate space and disguises the disorder of the storage room. The divider is made of wood and fiberboard and is coated with chalkboard paint so that it may serve dual purposes. First, HFP volunteers can write inspirational verses and daily food items on the board. Second, children accompanying their parents may color on the board as they wait. However, the HFP is not open every day, and the CRS receives deliveries through the storage room on a weekly basis. Therefore, hinges connect each panel of the divider and the bottom is mounted with wheels. These features allow it to be folded and rolled into storage when the HFP is not open, providing access to the CRS storage facility.



DELIVERIES &  
FOOD PICKUP

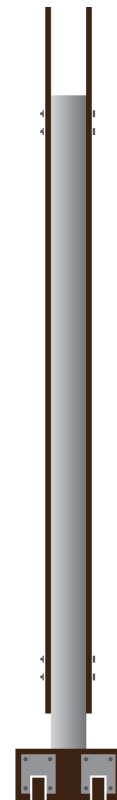
BEHIND COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS

HARVEST FOOD PANTRY





Front View



Side View

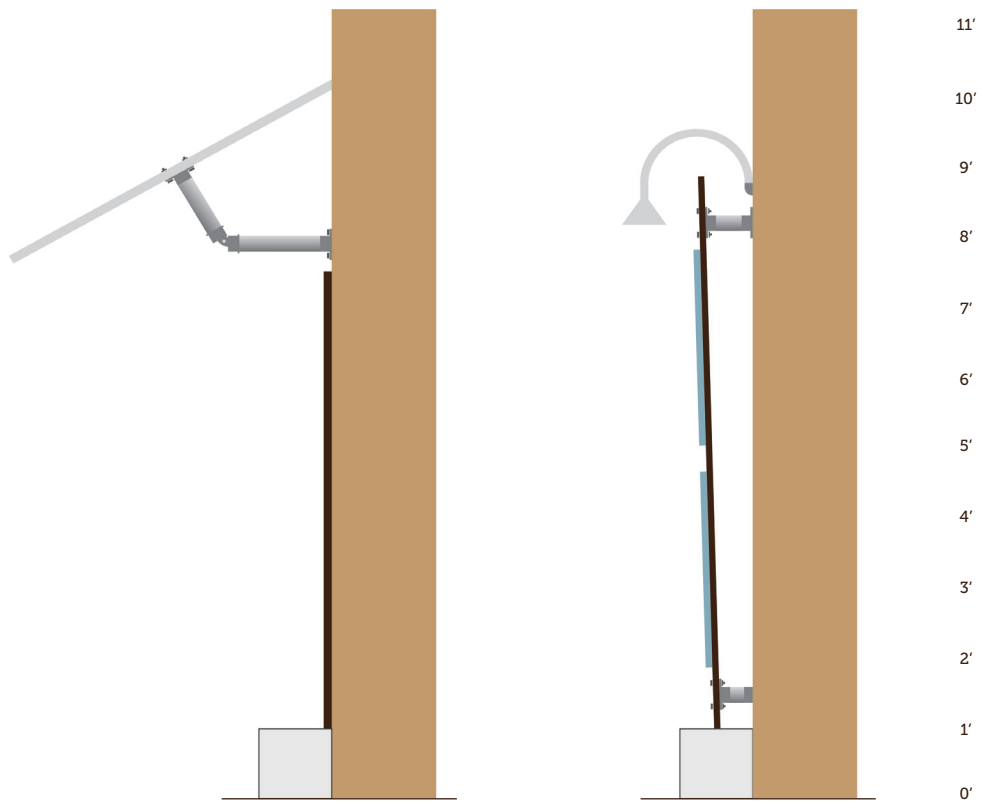




*Left Side Panel + Privacy Fence Covering the Dumpster*

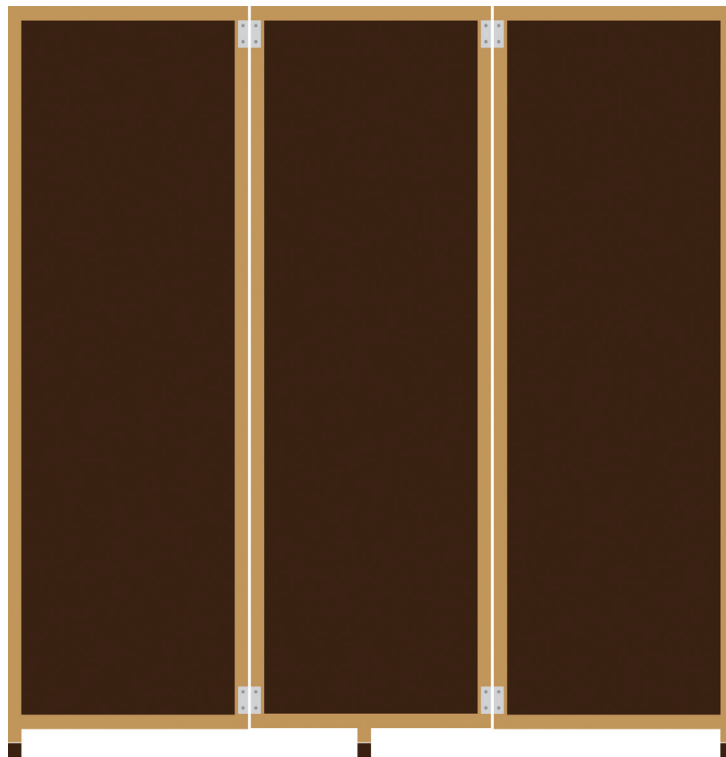


*Awning Above Doorway + Right Side Panel*









Front View



Side View

7'  
6'  
5'  
4'  
3'  
2'  
1'  
0'

# HARVEST FOOD PANTRY

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VOLUNTEER/  
DONOR  
PREMIUMS

### VOLUNTEER + DONOR PREMIUMS

Branded items such as T-shirts provide unity for HFP volunteers as well as an extension of the brand identity. Shirts come in multiple colors and may be used for fund-raising efforts as donor/volunteer premiums. Branded coffee mugs are also useful in such endeavors. Patrons who wish to donate to the HFP will receive a mug or T-shirt (depending on donation level) to commemorate their support. Finally, paper grocery bags, printed in one color, are useful in maintaining the HFP identity. Stickers also provide an inexpensive yet fun branded element for children visiting with their parents.







A MAN HATH  
**NO BETTER**  
THING UNDER  
THAN THE SUN  
AND TO **TO EAT**  
**DRINK** AND  
**BE MERRY.**







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## **VITA**

Jeremy Keith Honea was born in Shreveport, Louisiana on March 10, 1984, the son of Bruce and Rhonda Honea.

After graduating in 2007 with a BFA in Communication Design from Louisiana Tech University, Jeremy worked at Calvary Baptist Church as a communication designer and taught middle school and high school courses at Calvary Baptist Academy.

In 2008, Jeremy enrolled in the MFA program at Texas State University-San Marcos.

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