

Spectrum Health System

Spectrum Health's employees, physicians, and volunteers share a common mission: to improve the health of the communities we serve. Our history began with the desire to ease human suffering.

Spectrum Health is one of Michigan's largest and most comprehensive health systems, with 18,000 employees, 1,500 physicians, and 2,600 active volunteers. The Spectrum Health system includes a major medical center, nine regional community hospitals including a dedicated children's hospital, a multi-specialty medical group, and a nationally recognized health plan.



We knew that health care would be going through tremendous changes. We wanted to make sure that our public expression was clear and succinct. We needed to inspire confidence in what we were doing.

Richard C. Breon
President and CEO
Spectrum Health System

Goals

Create a single master brand.

Design a unified visual identity system.

Develop a uniform organizational nomenclature system.

Prepare the brand for growth and expansion.

Build an online nomenclature and brand standards resource.

Throughout this period of rapid growth and expansion, Spectrum Health has consistently used brand as an organizational catalyst and management strategy.

Bart Crosby
Principal
Crosby Associates



One of the results of a well-executed program is internal pride—people within the organization understanding who they are working for, understanding the values of the organization, and understanding that “brand” is all of the things that each of them do everyday—that we are all contributing to the brand.

Nancy A. Tait
Vice President,
System Communications
and Marketing
Spectrum Health System

Spectrum Health System: Crosby Associates

Process and strategy: Spectrum Health was formed in 1997 by the merger of two competing Grand Rapids hospitals, followed by the acquisition of seven additional hospitals and over 190 service sites. Historically, names of entities were retained or altered slightly as they joined Spectrum Health. Medical professionals and people in the community continued to refer to entities by their old, familiar names. Like many rapidly growing organizations, Spectrum quickly outgrew its original visual identity and nomenclature structure. Management recognized the need for a sophisticated and consistent system of identity and nomenclature to define and describe the organization, and to serve it through future decades of expansion. In 2008, Crosby Associates began working with the organization to develop a new visual identity and an integrated branding program. The process began with establishing a hierarchy of branded entities from administrative and organizational units, to departments and divisions, to centers and institutes. Standards were also established for naming new acquisitions and alliances.

Creative solution: Crosby designed a dynamic symbol for the master brand that connotes energy and forward movement, and represents Spectrum Health's many components, services, and locations. Along with a positioning strategy, the firm developed a comprehensive system for

sub-brands, typography, color, and formatting. Standards were developed for every structure and item that represented the health system, including signage, vehicles, stationery, print and electronic signage, gifts and gear, food service, uniforms, and Microsoft Word-based templates for all system documents. Standards were then incorporated into a password-protected website that can be accessed by all internal communications teams and external vendors. All of these standards are now integrated into the system's official policies and procedures manual. After completing the standards, Crosby continued to provide ongoing brand consultation and supervision of the work of outside design firms and vendors.

Results: Spectrum Health's brand has contributed to its ability to attract top quality physicians and other health care professionals, and to be a leading choice for health care services providers in search of a merger partner. The visual identity and nomenclature standards facilitate a smooth integration of acquired organizations. In 2011 and 2010, Spectrum Health was named one of the nation's top ten health systems by Thomson Reuters. Spectrum Health continues to be the region's largest health care provider and West Michigan's largest employer.

