

The Journey to Acappella Road (Part I)

In January of this year, Western Hospitality Singers changed its name to Acappella Road. Though still officially known as “Calgary Foothills,” we thought we’d share some of our adventures of this journey with you over the next couple of Timbre Editions.

Long, long ago...Wait!! Wrong story!! WHS has only been 30 years in the making, but with today’s changing societal pace, perhaps 30 years is long enough in this case.

For the past few years, Acappella Road has been rethinking its brand identity. As a chorus, whose average age was creeping up with inverse proportion to our sagging knees, membership, growth, performance, and youth outreach were garnering more of our attention. Unfortunately, inertia also had hold of our feet.

That is, until 2019. That November, we reached out to some profs at Mount Royal University in Calgary for help. Perhaps there were some marketing classes that could give us some rebranding and/or marketing advice?

Well!! Providence struck!! One of the professors invited us to present to two of his classes. The first was a third-year marketing class that focused on communication, getting your message to the world. The second was more in depth. It was a fourth-year class that provided participating groups with a complete identity rebranding. Both classes gave us a trove of helpful suggestions that could help us achieve our goals. The best part was that, at the end of it all, we were given copies of every group’s presentations to keep as reference.

The ‘other’ best part was that this information gave us the push we needed to overcome our inertia and become intentional in our rebranding efforts. This eventually led to our new name, Acappella Road. Of course, some of the other findings echoed what we hear from our own BHS marketing department. But hearing them from the perspective of engaged youth helped make add special vibrancy.

In short, their recommendations gave our chorus what we needed to start us on our rebranding journey. The ideas were astute, fresh, and stimulating. If you have a college or university in your area and are looking for rebranding advice, we highly recommend getting involved in a partnership project such as this!!

For a more complete story of our journey, we created a 10-minute video about our rebranding efforts for this year’s Midwinter available on the Harmony College website: <https://www.harmonycollege.org/classes.html>. Of course, if you have specific questions, feel free to contact Greg Verhappen directly at gverhappen@shaw.ca.

Stay tuned!! Next issue...Acappella Road: What’s in a Name?

