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BRAND BRINGS UNITY FOLLOWING AN ACQUISITION

ICF had recently evolved from a government-focused consultancy to a global, publicly-traded consulting firm serving both commercial and public-sector clients. After acquiring a major marketing communications agency, it needed a new brand to unify its disparate businesses through a compelling value proposition that signaled how all the pieces fit together to benefit clients.

RESEARCH LED THE WAY.

We conducted a 360-degree research program to understand what ICF stood for in the minds of its most important constituents, including employees, clients and prospects. Through surveys and in-depth interviews, we learned that ICF is most admired for its ability to translate its clients' aspirations into reality. Whether through highly specialized consulting or award-winning digital communications, ICF contributes to outcomes that are hugely transformative for clients—and for society at large. How transformative? ICF helped launch the widely adopted and admired EnergyStar conservation program. It developed the first-ever website devoted to HIV awareness. It created an integrated marketing program for Belize that strengthened the country's tourism industry—and revitalized the country's entire economy.

UNCONVENTIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

ICF's success in these and many other endeavors rested on two principle pillars: its ability to tackle highly complex challenges, and the unconventional perspectives and backgrounds of its people. The company's expertise in program management enables it to take on tough, multidimensional projects that other firms can't handle. And its people—Ph.D.'s, MBA's, anthropologists, psychologists, sociologists and other "ologists"—bring an unmatched multidisciplinary approach to every assignment that enables them to challenge conventional wisdom and find solutions that others overlook.



BIG THINGS MADE POSSIBLE.

The new brand reflects ICF's ability to overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges. Crystallized in a powerful phrase, "We make big things possible," the brand carves out a defensible position among a crowded field of pure strategy firms and niche-focused technology and digital players. Along with supporting messaging, it communicates that ICF gets the job done, no matter how seemingly impossible.

The visual brand supports the strategy. The new logo incorporates multiple rays emanating from a single source, suggesting the amazing diversity of talents and backgrounds of the company's people. The design language uses dramatic photographs to symbolize the "big things" made possible by ICF juxtaposed with more intimate images of people collaborating with colleagues and clients.

GAINING TRACTION.

The new brand was launched internally and externally at a global event that coincided with ICF's tenth anniversary as a public company. It was rolled out in a new website, advertising campaign, and through environmental branding at the company's global offices. The response has been very positive. The company's consultants are including brand language in their new-business pitches and gaining significant traction with prospects. Employees across the company, including at its marketing subsidiary, have discovered that the brand inspires their own work...and underscores for clients the limitless possibilities of working with ICF.