



# E-NEWSLETTER REDEVELOPMENT

Canadian Property Tax Association (CPTA)  
Design Concepts





### **VISION**

To define the future of  
"communications for a cause"

### **MISSION**

To ignite client success  
through changemaking  
writing and communications

### **VALUES**

Setting the **PACE**:  
Personality, Adaptability,  
Courage, Excellence

## **ABOUT PFS COMMUNICATIONS**

PFS Communications is a professional freelance firm offering expert writing and communications services that bring ideas to life with purpose, passion, creativity and impact. PFS specializes in fundraising communications and donor engagement for clients across the healthcare, education and non-profit sectors. Learn more about PFS Communications and discover past projects and clients at [www.pfscommunications.com](http://www.pfscommunications.com).



**Phil Sach**

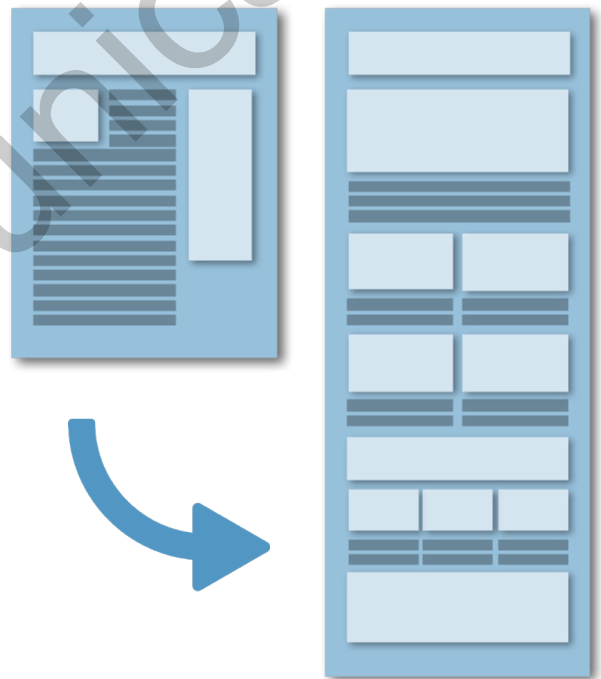
Founder & Chief Communicator

# OUR PROJECT

## E-NEWSLETTER REDEVELOPMENT

Driven by recommendations included in a communications and content audit recently completed for the Canadian Property Tax Association by PFS Communications in August 2023, this project aims to redevelop and redesign the client's member e-newsletter to maximize engagement and cultivate active conversation and participation.

A new layout using the CPTA's preferred email marketing platform (MailChimp) will create a superior user experience by driving creativity, interactivity, accessibility and personalization. It will provide new possibilities for engagement, meet the technological expectations of incoming generations of professionals, and demonstrate the CPTA's commitment to being forward thinking and innovative.



# OUR FIRST STEP

To determine the CPTA's preferred way forward, PFS has developed three potential e-newsletter design concepts for consideration and discussion. These concepts offer parallel yet distinct possible directions to enhance the organization's primary communications vehicle, align it with best practices and modern standards, and pave the way for elevated engagement and continued communications growth.

In the development of these proposed concepts, PFS has prioritized the following evolutions to ensure we are maximizing the effectiveness of the new e-newsletter:



## NEW LAYOUT

By creatively reorganizing the content and capitalizing on MailChimp's superior capabilities, a newly designed layout that is simple to use and generate will better showcase content, provide strategic insights for future growth and improve accessibility.



## NEW NAME

Though a relatively minor change, an updated brand name for the e-newsletter will create a "marketable moment," bringing renewed attention to the publication and delineating the progression from old to new as it is relaunched to the membership.



## NEW FORMAT

To improve readability, cultivate an improved user experience and grow readership and engagement for the e-newsletter, these concepts operate under the assumption that content will be hosted via the CPTA's website instead of within the email itself.

# OUR PRIORITIES

To ensure the e-newsletter redevelopment remains a true evolution of the CPTA's previous publication—one that maintains key elements that the organization is strategically committed to communicating and that members trust and have come to rely upon—the following **priority content elements** have been prioritized in each concept (as much as reasonably appropriate within the specific layout concept):

- Leadership Message
- Featured Stories
- Internal CPTA Promotions
- Regional Updates & Stories
- Member Spotlights
- Upcoming Events
- Featured Job Postings
- Industry News

As the ongoing management of this new e-newsletter will be managed internally to the CPTA, each layout must balance innovation and creativity with simplicity and functionality to ensure it remains accessible to team members of all varying skill levels. In addition, less complex layouts will help the CPTA maintain web accessibility standards, which are imperative for mass communications of this kind.

Consistency is key across all of the proposed design concepts—from colours to fonts to overall look-and-feel, each has been created to elevate the existing CPTA brand and fit succinctly alongside the organization's other communications channels. Each concept will feature a branded header and footer, as well as the capability of having additional content added as needed (though this does not appear in the sample designs themselves).

# CONCEPT #1A

## THE ASSESSMENT

The most creative and comprehensive of the concepts, *The Assessment* provides a crisp, dynamic layout with adequate space to highlight all necessary content while keeping overall copy concise and compelling readers to visit the website.

**Branded email header** showcasing CPTA logo and new name, which can be customized depending on the time of year

Top content spot designated as **feature story** to highlight key content that is time-sensitive to each issue and to the current CPTA and industry landscape; should be reserved for original content whenever possible

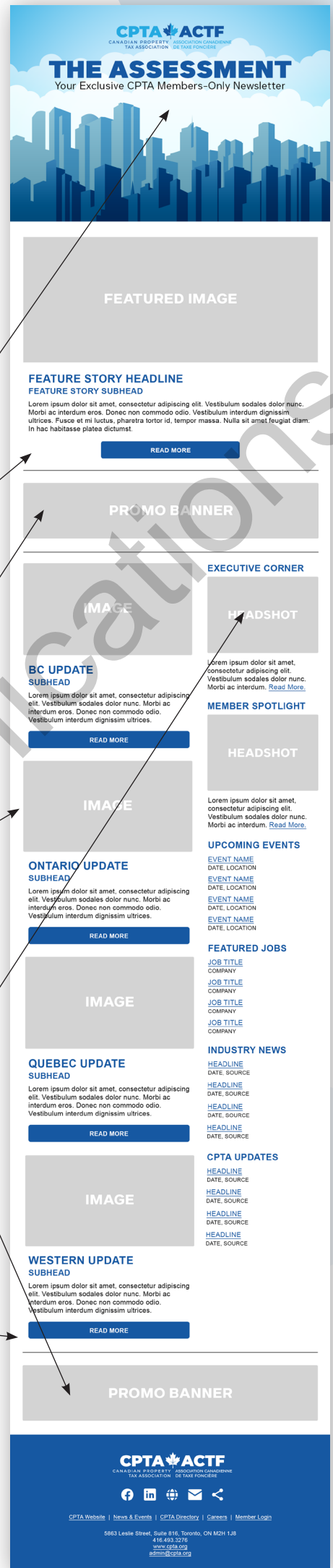
**Promotional banners** for strategic internal CPTA priorities (i.e., events, referrals, professional development, etc.)

Equal space has been reserved for regular **CPTA regional chapter updates**

**Standard issue content** is positioned in a slightly narrower, right-hand column sidebar, including events, jobs, relevant industry news, minor CPTA updates, an ongoing leadership team column and a specific CPTA member spotlight

Additional content can easily be added to the primary column on an issue-by-issue basis should it be required

**Formal email footer** with contact information, social channels, sharing directives and a "Quick Links" navigation menu for key pages on the CPTA website



# CONCEPT #1B

## THE ASSESSMENT (ALTERNATE)

While aligned with the concept on Page 6, this alternate layout of *The Assessment* uses a slightly condensed, columned format that integrates a slight elevation in eye-catching visuals and graphics while keeping scrolling to a minimum. Revised elements include:

Uses **full bleed photography** to create a more compelling and modern user experience

Individual sections are distinguished by **colour blocks** and promotional banners

**Leadership team column and CPTA member spotlight** have been separated from the standard issue content (see below) and elevated to their own section

Primary content (i.e., regional chapter updates, full original articles, etc.) have been arranged into two columns to minimize vertical space

**All other standard issue content** is positioned in a dual column section towards the end of the e-newsletter, including events, jobs, relevant industry news and minor CPTA updates



# CONCEPT #2

## CPTA PULSE CHECK

The *CPTA Pulse Check* trades in custom visuals tied to individual content elements for a consistently branded, copy-focused layout allowing users to comfortably browse within their inbox before navigating to the website for further information or details.

Branded email header showcasing CPTA logo and new name

Space for a short **leadership team message** has been embedded into the top of the e-newsletter

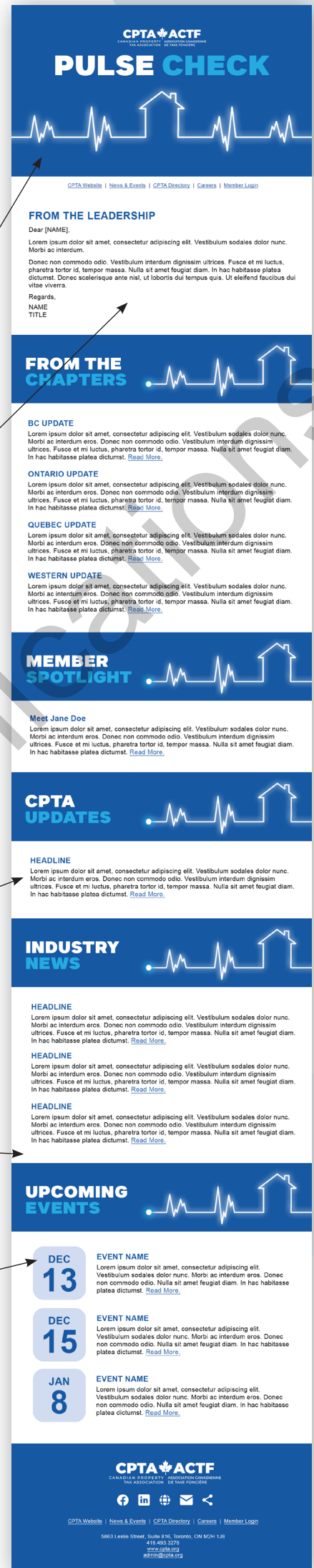
Sections are distinguished by **graphic headers** matching the overall brand

Content **"teasers"** beneath each headline are longer than the standard, encouraging readers to learn more about each piece of content via the website by providing compelling summary information

Additional content can easily be added to each section on an issue-by-issue basis as required

Though contained at the bottom of the e-newsletter, the **event section** is more prominent, with elevated visuals and a greater level of detail for each entry

**Formal email footer** with contact information, social channels, sharing directives and a "Quick Links" navigation menu for key pages on the CPTA website





# CONCEPT #3

## CPTA Member Update

A streamlined and traditional e-newsletter layout, the *CPTA Member Update* uses a straightforward name and brand to keep content front-and-centre while maximizing accessibility on both the desktop and mobile fronts.

**Simple email header** showcasing CPTA logo and new name followed by a "Quick Links" navigation menu for key pages on the CPTA website

Space for a short **leadership team message** has been embedded into the top of the e-newsletter

Top content spot designated as **feature story** to highlight key content that is time-sensitive to each issue and to the current CPTA and industry landscape; should be reserved for original content whenever possible

All primary content (i.e., regional chapter updates, full original articles, member spotlights, etc.) is uncategorized in a single column, allowing for maximum flexibility in volume and placement, particularly if content for a specific issue is limited

**Promotional banners** for strategic internal CPTA priorities (i.e., events, referrals, professional development, etc.)

**Limited standard issue content** is positioned in a dual column section towards the end of the e-newsletter, including other updates and upcoming events

**Formal email footer** with contact information, social channels and sharing directives



# OUR NEXT STEPS

## ITEMS TO CONSIDER

As the CPTA engages in a thorough review of these potential design concepts in order to determine a preferred option, here are a few considerations to keep in mind that will help direct the process and may provide additional insight that could prove helpful to your decision-making:

- While each design concept has been purposefully conceived and created, the individual elements contained within them are modular—consider which elements you prefer most as these can be mixed and matched with each other (or with other elements that may not be featured here but that you may want to include) to create a completely new and unique concept.
- Determine if there are any content elements you feel are potentially missing, or if any of the included content elements have not been positioned in a way that most valuable for the CPTA’s membership and content strategy.
- Keep in mind that these design concepts are in a *draft* format and have only been *visually* created at this stage—while they have been designed with MailChimp’s actual capabilities in mind, there may still be slight adjustments or changes required once the e-newsletter template itself is built. At the same time, there may also be innovative new features that could potentially be capitalized upon during the formal build stage.
- Though the intention is to decide upon a preferred direction at this stage, the design concept will always remain flexible—as new issues are deployed and readership metrics or constructive feedback is received, there are always improvements that can be made to evolve the publication over time.

Ultimately, this stage of the project is intended to determine the best way forward for the e-newsletter redevelopment, with a clear direction on how it will be designed, laid out and built. Though PFS is confident in the concepts provided, any and all feedback is welcome and encouraged to ensure we are moving in the right direction and achieving your vision.

We

# THANK YOU

**PFS Communications** is honoured to support this project with the Canadian Property Tax Association. We looked forward to bringing your vision for this new e-newsletter to life for you and your members!

