

2025-2026 National Club Achievement Competition - Ad 2 Minnesota

Category of Entry: Public Service

INTRODUCTION

A child's personal space plays a meaningful role in how they see themselves and what they believe is possible. For kids living with disabilities or life-limiting conditions, daily life is often shaped by medical routines, physical limitations, and long periods of isolation. These challenges can restrict not only mobility and independence, but also a deeper sense of belonging. Too often, the spaces where these children spend most of their time are designed purely for function, feeling sterile, uncomfortable, and lacking inspiration.

This is where Joy Collaborative steps in. Joy Collaborative is a design-driven nonprofit that supports children with physical and emotional needs by transforming their environments into "Joy Rooms." These one-of-a-kind personal spaces are created specifically for each child. By bringing together teams of designers, builders, donors, and volunteers, Joy Collaborative turns everyday rooms into places that spark joy, support independence, and foster connection and hope.

For the 2025–2026 Ad 2 Minnesota Public Service Campaign, we partnered with Joy Collaborative to refine their story and build an entirely new brand platform aimed at elevating their mission. This report outlines our journey from client selection and research to strategy, creative execution, and results. It highlights how design, storytelling, and community can come together to bring more joy to children and families across Minnesota.

CLIENT OVERVIEW

Joy Collaborative is a design-centric nonprofit founded in 2019 on the belief that spaces can shape how children live, heal, and experience joy. For kids facing serious health challenges or life-limiting conditions, many everyday environments can feel clinical and isolating. Joy Collaborative offers a novel

solution to healing by bringing communities together to create “Joy Rooms,” spaces that balance emotional warmth with practical function.

Joy Collaborative’s process begins by partnering closely with families, care providers, and service organizations that support children with accessibility challenges. They take the time to listen and build trust with the children and their families, gaining a deep understanding of each kid’s daily experiences, challenges, and personal needs. Those insights then guide the creation of highly personalized environments. Volunteer teams spend months designing and building bedrooms, therapy rooms, play spaces, and shared community areas that support both care routines and moments of joy. The result is an environment that restores agency and hope in ways that can truly change lives.

Joy Collaborative Programs and Initiatives:

- **Joy Rooms:** Joy Rooms, the key initiative, focuses on creating uniquely inspired spaces designed to support both the physical and emotional well-being of children living with life-limiting conditions.
- **Joy Mobile:** The Joy Mobile takes Joy Collaborative’s mission on the road. This mobile sensory vehicle allows Joy Collaborative to bring comfort, relief, and engagement to a wide range of environments, near and far.
- **Community Partnerships:** They stay in touch with hospitals, nonprofits, schools, and other organizations to identify children and families in need and bring custom projects to life through collaborative efforts.
- **Storytelling & Advocacy:** By sharing project stories and outcomes, Joy Collaborative raises awareness of how intentional design can positively transform the lives of children and families facing stress and uncertainty.

Through these initiatives, Joy Collaborative is not simply renovating rooms. The organization is reshaping what daily life can look like for young people and their families.



CLIENT SELECTION PROCESS

To select our 2025–2026 nonprofit partner, Ad 2 Minnesota conducted a formal Request for Proposal process, inviting Minnesota-based 501(c)(3) organizations to apply for our pro bono public service campaign. The opportunity was shared through social media, industry newsletters, and direct outreach, which resulted in a strong and diverse group of applicants. After thoughtful review, Joy Collaborative stood out as the best fit for Ad 2 Minnesota.

Joy Collaborative was entering a period of pivotal growth. The organization was preparing for a landmark partnership with the Special Olympics, hosted in Minnesota, while also managing rapid expansion in both operations and donor engagement. We noted this moment as a big opportunity for Ad 2 Minnesota to support a small but impactful team as they scaled their work to the next level.

We quickly realized that Joy Collaborative’s spirit and commitment to local communities closely aligned with Ad 2 Minnesota’s. By partnering together, we could help share their story, connect them with new supporters, and expand their reach, bringing more joyful, transformative spaces to children and families across Minnesota.

OBJECTIVE

Upon first meeting with Joy Collaborative, it became clear that their small but mighty team of two was stretched across a wide range of responsibilities. Their marketing efforts slipped through the cracks and lacked a clear direction. With limited experience in this area, they needed support not only to develop campaign assets but also to establish a vision for building, engaging, and growing a strong base of supporters and donors.

Recognizing the importance of a strong brand platform, our team focused on creating a campaign that could serve as a launch pad for future marketing efforts. Our goal was to build a foundation that would support Joy Collaborative’s continued growth and provide evergreen value well beyond the involvement of the Ad 2 team.

RESEARCH & STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

To design a campaign that aligned with Joy Collaborative's goals and the scope of our work, we first conducted in-depth research into their target audiences, the broader nonprofit landscape, and Joy Collaborative's unique role within the system. Our approach focused on a few key areas:

- **Audience Insights:** We began with audience insights, exploring the values, motivations, and perspectives of potential donors. Rather than relying solely on demographics, we looked deeper to understand what inspires people to support organizations like Joy Collaborative and what builds lasting emotional connections.
- **Nonprofit Sector Analysis:** We examined audience behaviors, donation patterns, and sector norms to tailor our communication plan to donor expectations and industry best practices.
- **Competitor Analysis:** We conducted a competitor analysis to better understand how Joy Collaborative stands apart from other nonprofits in this space. In addition to direct competitors, we looked at successful nonprofits across Minnesota to identify trends, opportunities, and areas where Joy Collaborative could clearly differentiate itself.
- **Joy Collaborative's Strengths & Community Perspectives:** We investigated Joy Collaborative's strengths and the perspectives of the communities they serve. By listening closely to families, partners, and stakeholders, we ensured the campaign would authentically reflect the organization's mission and connect donors directly to the real impact of the work.

After synthesizing our research, we met with the Joy Collaborative team through multiple rounds of feedback to develop a universal brief that would guide the entire project. This brief became the bedrock for a brand platform that would unify all campaign efforts.

From this brief, our team developed “**Unlimiting Joy**,” a campaign rooted in the belief that Joy Collaborative does more than build rooms. They remove barriers that prevent people living with

life-limiting conditions from experiencing joy in their everyday lives. At its core, the campaign celebrates Joy Collaborative's mission that joy should be accessible to everyone.

TARGET AUDIENCE

To grow an engaged group of supporters, Joy Collaborative needed to expand beyond immediate project partners to a broader base of donors and advocates. Using MRI Simmons and other research, we analyzed audience traits and giving patterns to identify who would be most likely to support their work and how to reach them effectively.

This process allowed us to develop two key audience segments:

- **Primary Audience:** Adults ages 35–64 in the Twin Cities metro who are likely to give financially and care about children's welfare, health, and community impact. This group includes professionals, parents, and caregivers, often with a personal connection to serious illness. They are motivated by meaningful stories and want to see the impact of their contributions. Based on this, we created a donor persona drawn to Joy Collaborative's mix of creativity, compassion, and real impact on kids' daily lives.
- **Secondary Audience:** Corporate donors and partners, including companies in fields like design, construction, real estate, healthcare, and professional services. This group can support Joy Collaborative through donations, sponsorships, or discounted services. They look for partnerships that match their values, create real community impact, and offer ways to engage employees. They want to see Joy Collaborative as an efficient, mission-driven partner.

By focusing on these audiences, we aimed to use "Unlimiting Joy" to build a community of donors and partners who understand the importance of Joy Collaborative's work and feel inspired to help bring more joy to children and families across Minnesota.

EXECUTION

To establish this marketing launch pad, our team developed a cohesive set of communication tools designed for practical and easy use. We created refreshed brand messaging, flexible content templates, and updated digital guidelines that work together as a unified system. These resources equip the Joy Collaborative team with the confidence and structure to lead their marketing efforts independently moving forward. Here's how we brought the campaign to life:

Brand Foundation & Strategic Clarity: Before launching any external-facing campaign, we invested in strengthening Joy Collaborative's core positioning. We conducted a competitive audit and **website analysis (Exhibit 1)** to understand Joy Collaborative's positioning in the nonprofit landscape. Building on this analysis, we collaborated with the client to propose a **refined mission statement (Exhibit 2)** that more clearly articulates their unique value. This foundational work ensured that all following assets spoke with one clear, compelling voice.

Brand Guidelines Addendum: We proposed **updates to Joy Collaborative's brand guidelines (Exhibit 3)** to define consistent brand fonts, design elements, and colors and gradients. We also added an "Accessible Orange" to their brand guide, one that meets accessibility contrast standards and supports clear communication and inclusive design.

Email Templates: To support Joy Collaborative's donor and partner communication strategy, we developed a suite of customizable email templates designed for key moments in their outreach. Each template was made to reflect Joy Collaborative's brand voice while still offering room for customization.

Digital & Social Assets: To solidify a consistent presence across channels, we created **paid and organic social media assets (Exhibit 4)**, as well as **paid banner advertisements (Exhibit 5)**. These assets incorporate evergreen social trends that can continue to evolve and be supported by the client. We also developed a **content calendar guideline (Exhibit 6)** with an expanded set of brainstormed content ideas to help the team plan, coordinate, and execute consistent storytelling across platforms.

Evergreen Templates & Long-Term Partnership: To further equip Joy Collaborative with an easy-to-use marketing toolbox, we created a suite of **customizable Canva templates (Exhibit 7)** that empower the team to quickly adapt designs and produce polished assets without relying on extensive design resources. Paired with best practice advice, these templates were built to strengthen Joy Collaborative’s capacity for consistent, long-term communications.

MEDIA

We set into motion the newly designed “Unlimiting Joy” platform with media spanning paid, donated, and organic placements throughout the month of April. This multi-channel approach included digital display banners, organic and paid social posts, programmatic video game placements, targeted email outreach, broadcast PSA placements, and a Twins tickets giveaway.

Through extensive outreach and partner meetings, our team secured an estimated 2,000,000 donated impressions from seven partners. While final donation totals are still being negotiated with vendors, this is anticipated to represent approximately \$17,500 in media value. In addition to donated media, we raised \$2,500 in monetary sponsorships, which helped fund social media advertising and other campaign-related expenses, further increasing exposure and frequency.

While all digital display placements are managed services, our team remains closely involved in the execution and optimization of social media advertising. We are running both awareness and traffic campaigns on Meta, directing users to a landing page built specifically for this initiative. Our team developed target audiences based on our segmentation work, launched the ads, and will continue to actively steward the campaign to drive the best results.

This diverse mix of channels across display, social, broadcast, email, and gaming allowed us to expand incremental reach within Minnesota communities. By executing on a variety of tactics, we were able to pressure test the new brand platform and use the results to ensure the client is set up for success in the future.

RESULTS

Though the campaign is still in progress, our work has offered Joy Collaborative the following:

- A new brand platform designed for continued growth, “Unlimiting Joy”
- Redefined audience strategy and personas
- Cohesive marketing toolbox
 - Deliverables include a competitive audit, website audit, refined mission statement, updated brand guidelines, email templates, paid and organic social assets, display banners, customizable creative templates, and best practice guidance
- High-impact media placements valued at over \$17,500
 - Channels include digital display, broadcast, email, and gaming
- Social media placements valued at \$2,500
- Successful campaign launch and stewardship offering expanded audience reach
- Over 305 dedicated hours and counting, representing a \$41,175 value at an average agency rate of \$135 per hour

To date, our campaign has provided Joy Collaborative with \$61,175 worth of time, media placements, and campaign resources. By the end of the campaign, we plan to measure success through donor growth, media performance, and audience engagement. By equipping the team with the tools and confidence to expand their work and message, we are helping more children experience the transformative power of intentional design.

MULTIMEDIA EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1 - Website Analysis

JOY COLLABORATIVE WEBSITE AUDIT

Home Page

- Center Joy Collaborative logo, it is currently offset to the right.



- Have the yellow border reach the edges of the page (This issue is present across multiple pages that feature this yellow background).



About Us Page

- Adjust or replace the image so that it does not crop out people's faces. Additionally, the white text over yellow is difficult to read.



Exhibit 2: Refined Mission Statement Proposal



Exhibit 3 - Brand Guidelines Addendum

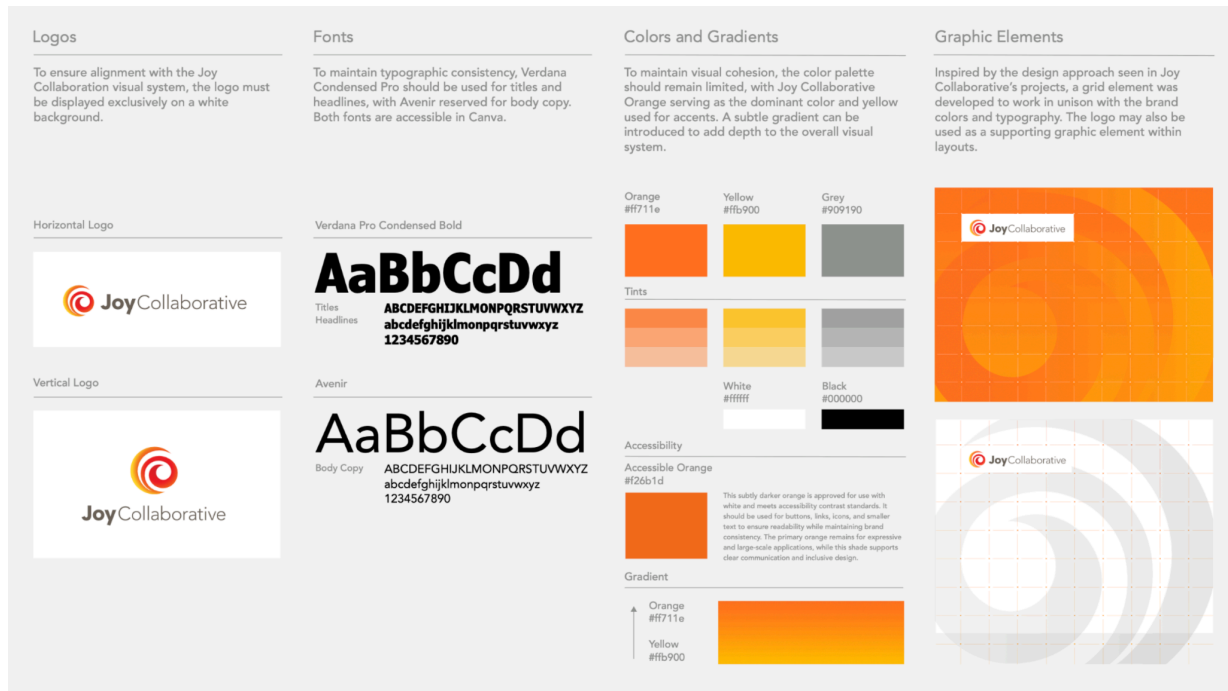
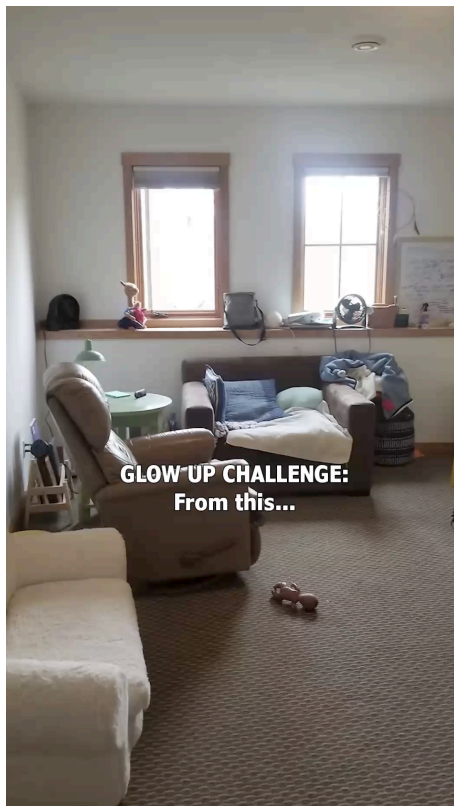


Exhibit 4 - Organic and Paid Social Media Assets



Glow Up Video



That Feeling Video



Theater Video

POV Video

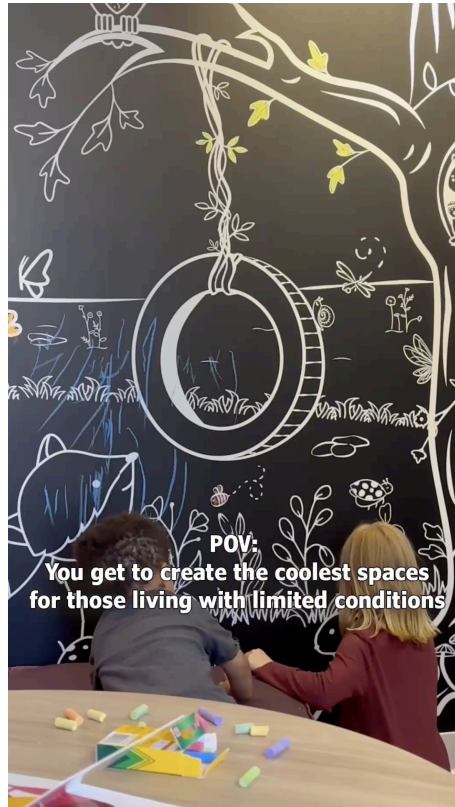
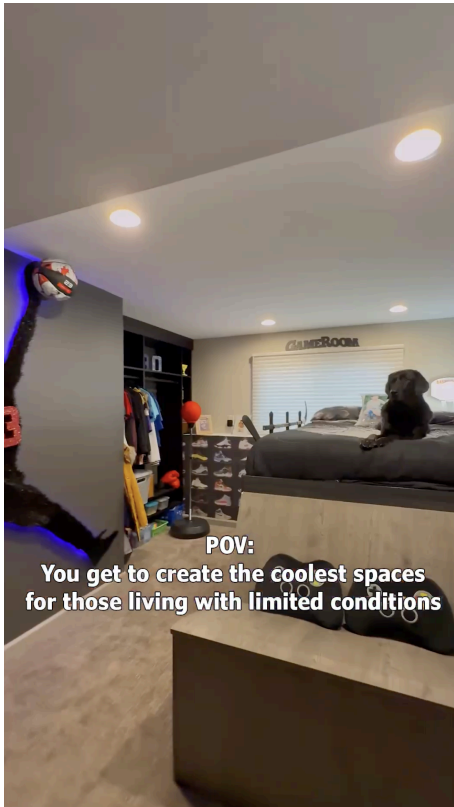
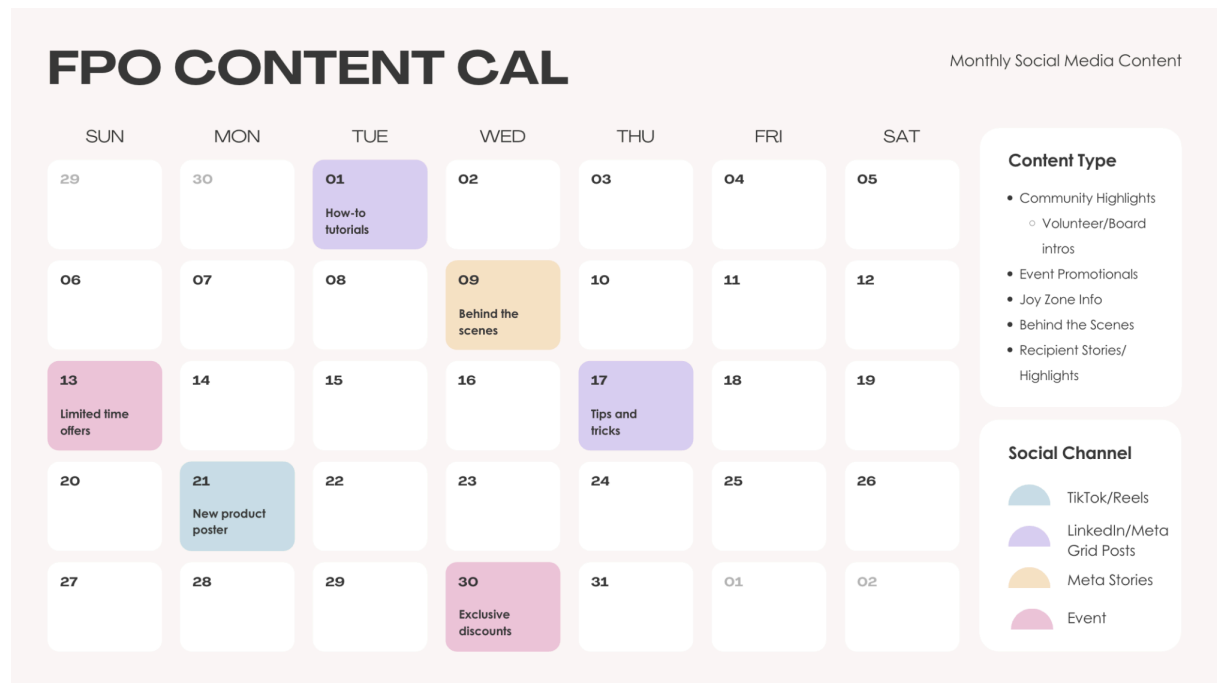


Exhibit 5 - Paid Banners



Exhibit 6 - Content Calendar Guideline



Organic Posting

FACEBOOK

Facebook is effective at capturing the attention of older audiences and sponsors, making it important to create content that feels relatable, informative, and interaction driven. Posts perform best when they invite conversation, such as posing questions, inviting opinions, or sharing relatable content that prompts people to comment, engage, and feel something.

INSTAGRAM

People turn to Instagram for quick, easily digestible information about events, your company, and available resources. It's important that your page has attention grabbing, useful information at a glance.

For many Gen Z and Millennials, Instagram is often the first touchpoint before visiting your website to learn more.

GENERAL

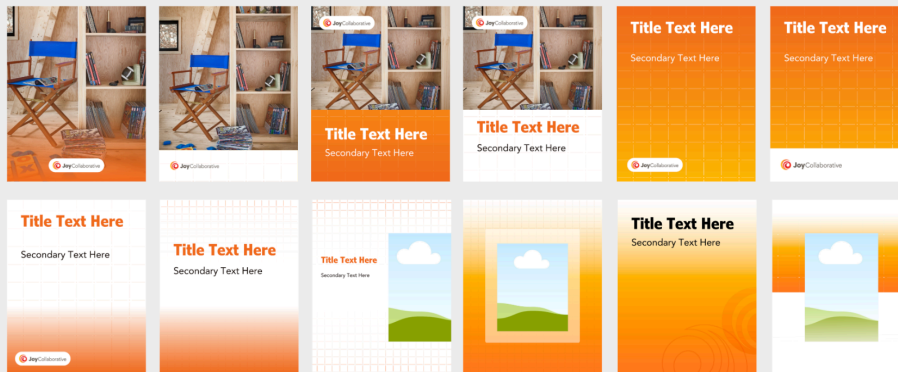
Organic social posts perform best when they quickly capture attention and provide clear value to the audience. Messaging should be simple, clear, and authentic so it feels natural and relatable for the audience. The strongest posts often spark conversation or encourage sharing, helping the content reach a wider audience and create more meaningful engagement.

Exhibit 7 - Evergreen Templates



Canva Templates

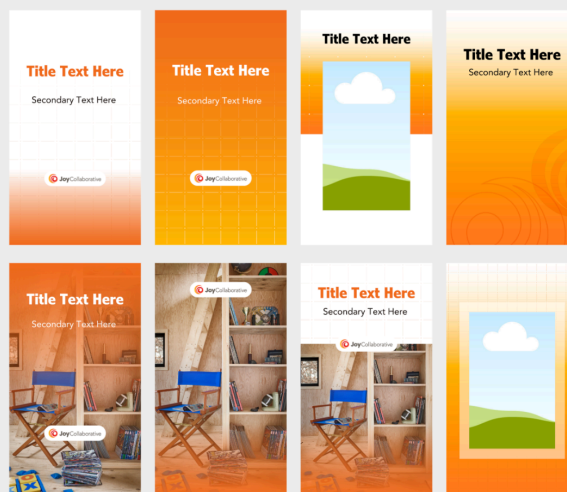
1080x1350 (4:5)



Ad 2 ↑

Canva Templates

1080x1920 (9:16)



Ad 2 ↑