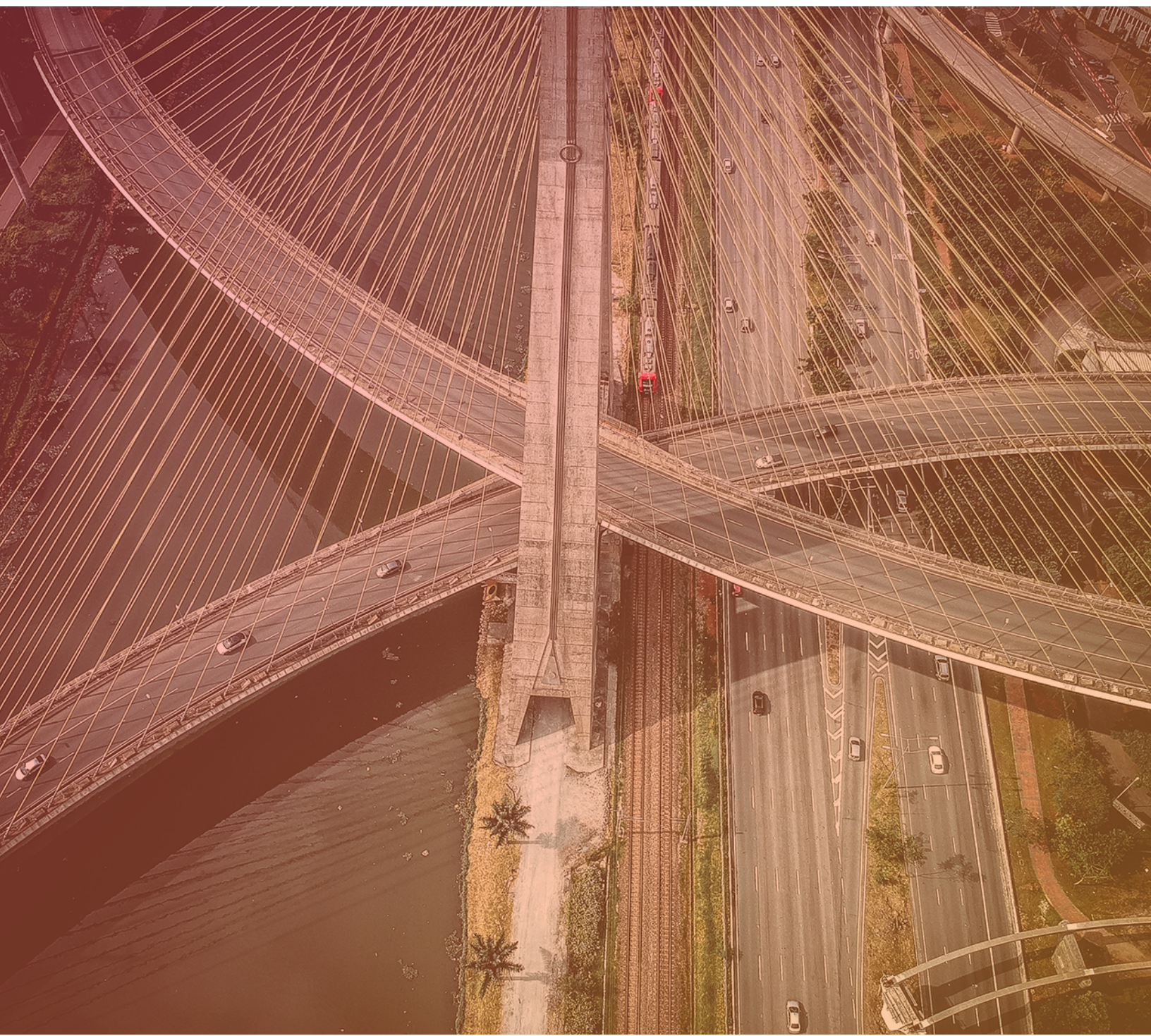


# Finding an Organization's Authentic Self

And providing direction and focus in the process.

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# Meet The Chamber

*“The outcomes are already impacting our work—how we talk about what we do, what we chose to do is all being guided by the Brand House framework.”*

**Grace Moreno**

Executive Director,  
Massachusetts LGBT Chamber  
of Commerce

## The Start

In 2018, what had been just an idea became a reality. Led by its now Board Chair James Lopata, the Massachusetts LGBT Chamber of Commerce was born. The Chamber picked up where earlier organizations had left off but with a more focussed goal: connect LGBT-owned businesses with larger Massachusetts corporations who wanted to diversify their vendor pools.

With the hire of Grace Moreno—named to Boston Magazine’s Top 50 Most Influential People—as executive director, the Chamber was born. Moreno began recruiting both corporate partners and member businesses to begin delivering on the Chamber’s mission. Within the first nine months, considerable progress was made, namely, in the form of the partnerships that the Chamber formed with some of the Commonwealth’s most influential companies. Companies like Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare, TJX, Eastern Bank, Google, PTC, and Pfizer were among the many corporations to become founding sponsors.

Finding member businesses was not a challenge either. Within the first year, more than four dozen LGBT-owned businesses—including Spencer Brenneman—joined the Chamber.

## Something Missing

Despite an impressive start, Moreno and the Chamber’s Board knew that in order to affect the kind of change they had in mind, in order to inspire more businesses and partners to join their cause, they needed to improve their messaging strategy. They needed to focus on the Chamber’s brand.

That’s where Douglas Spencer, President & Chief Brand Strategist of Spencer Brenneman comes in. After speaking with Moreno about the Chamber’s goals, he volunteered to help them pro bono through the process of updating their brand.

“Inclusion of all types, not just in the context of the LGBT community, is very important to me. We have a responsibility to one another to level playing fields whenever possible,” Spencer says. “Plus, as a small

business owner, I was grateful for the organization's work and wanted to help any way I could."

#### **Time to Define and Refine**

In the Define phase, Spencer Brenneman conducted online surveys distributed to the Chamber's mailing list of approximately 170 members and corporate partners. Interviews with individuals representing the Chambers core constituencies helped round out the phase.

According to Moreno, the research was very encouraging.

"Some of the more striking takeaways from the research was the fact that corporate sponsors did not find it difficult to support us and that they wanted to do more than simply write checks," she says.

After the Define phase was over, Spencer worked with a subset of the Board to distill the research and draft language that aligned the Chamber's mission with the needs of its constituents.

Karen Young is the Board's clerk as well as a leadership, inclusion, and business strategy consultant.

"The [Refine] process itself was very inclusive. Many times, consultants tend to push their own agendas. Douglas worked to ensure everyone's voice was heard and the end product represents that," she says.

That end product took the form of the Chamber's brand promise, its core focus, and its personality attributes.

Primarily used internally, the brand promise speaks to a brand's soul and why it exists at the most fundamental level.

For the Chamber, that boiled down to:

#### **Inclusive relationships driving economic impact.**

The work also articulated how the Chamber would fulfill the brand's promise in ways that no one else can. That looks like:

- **Connection.** Foster meaningful relationships amongst and between member businesses and corporate partners.
- **Growth.** Help members and partners at all levels of sophistication grow, compete, and succeed.
- **Represent.** Champion innovative practices for ensuring LGBT inclusion in our marketplace.

*"Many times, consultants tend to push their own agendas. Douglas worked to ensure everyone's voice was heard and the end product represents that."*

*Karen Young, Board of Directors, Massachusetts LGBT Chamber of Commerce*

Finally, the Define stage identified how to describe the brand's unique personality and guide the ways it connects emotionally to the world:

- **Strategic.** We are thoughtful and intentional in the ways we deliver results and impact people's lives, careers, and businesses.
- **Innovative.** We continually look for and champion the best and next practices that fuel everything we do.
- **Bold.** Our pride in our community inspires us to boldly champion the economic impact our member businesses and corporate partners have.
- **Committed.** We celebrate inclusion and are committed to supporting anyone who wants to join us in our mission!

Moreno says she, her team, and the Board are energized by the process and the resulting outcomes.

"The outcomes are already impacting our work—how we talk about what we do, what we chose to do, how we chose what not to do is all being guided by the Brand House framework," she says.

## Massachusetts LGBT Chamber of Commerce Elevator Pitch

We live in a wonderful state! Massachusetts is a leader in both economic growth and social justice, proving that the two are not mutually exclusive. It is home to both hundreds of talented, industry-leading LGBT-owned businesses as well as multi-million dollar corporations who are committed to doing the right thing when it comes to diversity and inclusion.

Here's the challenge: There is no channel, no conduit for the two groups to meet. LGBT-owned businesses don't know how to connect with those corporations who want to diversify their procurement practices. And, those same corporations have no mechanisms for finding and vetting those potential vendors who can meet their business needs.

That's where we come in. We foster meaningful relationships, support our members and partners' goals for growth, and proudly champion that intersection of economic growth and social justice.

It's exciting. I'd love to tell you more.

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## Shine!-time is Showtime!

### *Visual Identity*

Because this cause was near and dear to his heart, Spencer himself served as the copywriter for the Shine! phase creating the Chamber's elevator pitch (see sidebar on previous page) and the About Us content for their [website](#).

Spencer Brenneman partnered with two other Chamber members, Nerissa J. Fry of lightness and Olivier Jamin Changeart of [OJC Artisan of Sound](#), who created the visual and sonic identities for the Brand, respectively.

"The new logo [see below] reinforces the brand's attribute of innovation through a bold and unexpected color palette," Fry says. "The large circle conveys the Chamber's commitment to inclusion, and there are also allusions to the M of Massachusetts and our community's pride flag."

### *Sonic Identity*

A brand as innovative and bold as The Chamber's needs to go beyond what's expected for an identity. All the more reason to engage the talents of Olivier Jamin Changeart to create the brand's sonic identity.

"We incorporated the Chamber's personality attributes formalized by Spencer Brenneman into a coherent musical language to create dynamic branding along with the new visual," says Jamin Changeart. "The new sonic identity becomes a navigational tool—a communication in and of itself and makes the Chamber's voice tangible across all media."

[Hear the sonic brand](#) Jamin Changeart created.



**MASSACHUSETTS LGBT**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

### **The Finish**

Now that the brand development work is over, Moreno says that her understanding of branding has changed.

"Branding is not what we are taught it is—it is not a logo, or a website, or business cards," she says. "Branding is about living who we are and how we want to be seen. Branding is about what we do and how we want to do it."



**Spencer Brenneman, LLC**

50 Milk Street, 16th Flr.  
Boston, MA 02110  
USA  
+1-774-260-5560

