

# Preparing two major systems for successful integration

Two market-leading health systems – a powerhouse academic medical center and an esteemed community hospital – decided to unite to provide the 360-degree care required to survive today’s healthcare environment. The systems had distinct cultures, stories, reimbursement and compensation strategies and philosophies of care. They needed to find common ground, then communicate their shared vision to employees, the media and local stakeholders.

## THE SOLUTION

The intensive project required deep understanding of academic medical centers – plus the ability to develop integration plans in tandem with M&A work.

We aligned the systems’ Communications, Legal, HR, Operations teams and consultants working on merger communications to build the merger’s shared message platform and campaign, then curated the communications.

To deploy, we trained and armed C-Suite members and facility CEOs with vision messaging for internal and external audiences, strategies for government hearings and a robust media plan.

After celebrating deal close, integration work took center stage. Leveraging cultural assessments of the legacy organizations, we built a new structure and strategic plan for the massive communications team. We also created:

- » A comprehensive communications integration platform to establish a single system voice, differentiate the client and reaffirm position as industry leader
- » A roadmap to build the new, shared culture through engagement and empowerment
- » Metrics to show effectiveness of communications and engagement

## THE RESULTS

The systems merged and integrated successfully – a complete M&A win. Two years later, we helped them with another strategic partnership that launched the state’s largest academic health system.

System leaders kept employees engaged throughout the formidable change and earned positive media coverage reflecting the positive external positioning.

The communications infrastructure for the new system aligned and retained all original communications and marketing personnel.

## TACTICS



Leadership Toolkit



Consultant Communications Curation



Messaging and Media Strategy



Quick-Pivot Integration



Culture Alignment Campaign

## THE TAKEAWAY:

Powerful health systems were joining, but had vast, strong, complicated structures to align. By simultaneously preparing for M&A and integration, we helped an academic medical center and community hospital form a cohesive \$6 billion system.

100  
Leaders trained

75+  
Communications team members aligned

9  
Months integration support folded into M&A work