



Independent Bankers Association of Texas

Best of Community Banking Awards Entry 2021

Entry Category: Bank Culture

Culture and Values Driven Campaign
Sets Tone in 2020 and Beyond

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Program Narrative

Robert Justus Kleberg, son-in-law of Captain and Mrs. Richard King, and manager of the King Ranch, established Kleberg Bank in 1905 "to help those who showed the spirit of cooperation in community building." For many generations, the Bank's founding commitment and straightforward culture has withstood the adversity of depressions, wars, and countless droughts. Amidst the uncertainty of a global pandemic, Kleberg Bank led a campaign to reinforce its culture and values and inspire the Bank's team to carry forward with confidence, resilience and strength. Kleberg Bank's culture and values driven approach resulted in a team empowered to thrive as an essential business in the local community at a time when the tendency could have been to focus solely on management of the response. The approach included: flexible planning, clear and consistent communications, and empathetic and compassionate leadership. The campaign promoted the Bank's values of Integrity, Soundness, Focus, Stewardship, Empathy and Enlightened, revolved around the motto CALM – STRONG – UNITED, and even included a branded logo. While the campaign originated as part of the Bank's pandemic response, it is now so entrenched in the Bank's culture that it serves as a rally cry to harness the energy and focus needed for the team to see themselves through future challenges.

Goals and Objectives

Kleberg Bank aimed to accomplish several goals with the CALM – STRONG – UNITED campaign:

- Reinforce the Bank's culture and values with a simple, easy to embrace motto that would rally and unite the team.
- Engage the Bank's team with a campaign that inspired confidence, resilience and strength.
- Provide the Bank's team with focused, flexible and frequent communications to reduce uncertainty, keep them informed, and ensure they felt supported throughout.

- Set an empathetic, compassionate and understanding cultural tone to promote a psychologically healthy and safe work environment.

Strategy – Involvement of Team

Internal Communications

The Bank's President and CEO, in collaboration with the Director of Marketing Communications, developed internal communications to not only disseminate information about the Business Continuity team's decisions and guidance, but to also reduce uncertainty and inspire the confidence resilience and strength to carry forward. Initial communications regarding Covid-19 began the last week in February. One week prior to government issued shelter in place orders, the Bank's culture and values centric communication campaign began in earnest. In an internal email communication to address shelter in place orders and the Bank's role as an essential business serving the local community, the Bank's President and CEO, Gabe Guerra, introduced the motto that became the team's rally cry and common bond throughout: CALM – STRONG – UNITED. Subsequent communications carried the same tone, reinforced the Bank's values, and were originated and delivered from the Bank's President and CEO at every important juncture. Excerpts from some of the internal communications from the Bank's President included:

- “Now is the time where we differentiate ourselves as a great community Bank. Our attitude and team work are key in difficult and challenging situations like COVID-19. Thank you for maintaining your commitment to a spirit of cooperation in supporting the communities we serve.”
- “Our founder, Robert J. Kleberg Sr., founded our Bank more than a century ago “to help those who show the spirit of cooperation in community building.” Together, through the years, we have overcome significant adversity and yet remained steadfast to helping our customers through difficult financial challenges. Now more than ever, I couldn't be more proud of how each of you continues to live and breathe our mission every single day.”

- “In times like these, it is abundantly clear: YOU ARE OUR GREATEST ASSET – The Whole is Greater than the SUM OF ITS PARTS!”
- “I want to thank each of you for your resiliency, cooperation, and calmness during this COVID-19 disruption. While we’ve always have remained open for business at Kleberg Bank, Monday is symbolic in that we have proven that “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts” – together we have achieved great success. Our investment in our people and technology has proven valuable during this unprecedented pandemic. Your safety and the safety of our customers has always been our top priority.”
- “This health crisis is an important reminder of how interdependent we are – what we do not only impacts us, but all those around us. Your commitment to each other and our customers exemplifies a level of personal excellence that extends beyond self. Together we will emerge from this event CALM – STRONG – UNITED. Thank you for your continued cooperation and support of management’s efforts to maintain the safety of our Kleberg Bank Family.”
- “As always we appreciate your commitment to the Bank, the communities we serve and for remaining steadfast to being a CALM, STRONG and UNITED team.”

Logo and T-Shirt

A branded logo was developed at the request of the Bank’s President and CEO. The logo was imprinted on t-shirts and provided to Team Members to wear on Fridays. Team Members were excited to receive the shirts and grateful for an opportunity to dress more casually on Fridays. The first run of shirts, printed in black, were so popular that a

second shirt was printed in red and provided to Team Members. The logo is shown to the right side.



The red and black shirts are shown below:



Coastal Quarantine Commemorative Book

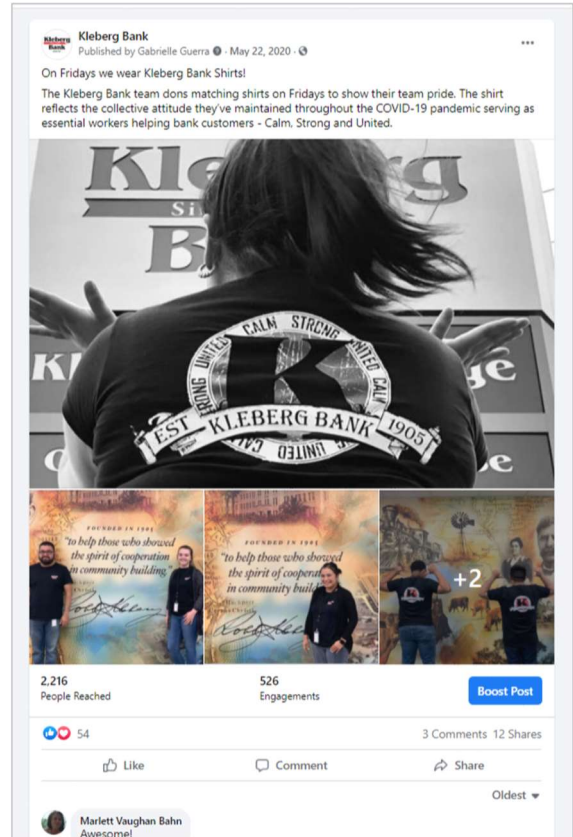
The local American Cancer Society and Cattle Baron’s Ball Committee published a commemorative book in lieu of its flagship annual fundraising event. The Bank’s CALM – STRONG – UNITED campaign was highlighted in the book on the page shown below:



Social Media

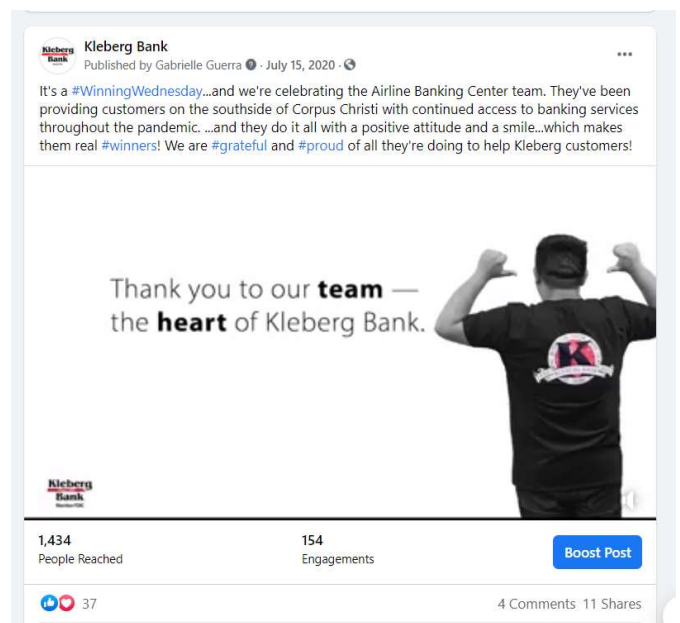
On Friday's We Wear Our Kleberg Bank Shirts

On Friday, May 22nd 2020, a post featuring Team Members wearing their shirts was shared to the Bank's Facebook and Instagram accounts. A screenshot of the post is shown on the right side of the page.



The Heart of Kleberg Bank Campaign

Videos featuring Kleberg Bank Team Members were shared on social media the week of July 13 through July 17, 2020. A different location was highlighted each day. The video outro featured the CALM – STRONG – UNITED logo and the phrase, “Thank you to our team – the heart of Kleberg Bank.” The intent of the week-long social media campaign was to extend the Bank's values based culture to an external audience in an engaging way. Customers were delighted to see the videos! An example of one of the posts and outro video image is shown on the right side of the page.



Outcome

Impact on the Community

The “On Fridays we wear our Kleberg Bank shirts” social media post reached 2,216 people and yielded 526 engagements. The “Heart of Kleberg Bank” social media campaign was even more widely embraced by the Bank’s social community and resulted in an audience of 11,485 being reached and 2,026 people engaging with the post.

A few customer comments shared on social media through the “Heart of Kleberg Bank” social media campaign include:

- “I cannot say enough about all these wonderful ladies! They do an outstanding job not only for myself and Kleberg County, but for the entire Kingsville community! Thank you for all your dedication, professionalism, courteous nature, beautiful smiles (even behind the masks), and your HARD WORK!!! You all are so very appreciated! Thank you for being the BEST team of ladies that I have the utmost respect for and the pleasure of working with on a daily basis! Great job ladies, keep it up!!!” – Priscilla C. (customer)
- “These ladies are absolutely amazing!!! They are always super helpful even when I have a thousand questions! I appreciate you all so much! Thank you for everything you all do for me and all your customers! I ❤️ My Kleberg Bank!” – Cindy F. (customer)
- “Truly appreciate all of your hard work! Ninfa is a great leader and it reflects.” – Cristina M. (customer)
- “Thank you for all you do ladies!! Your customer service is always top notch! Stay safe and keep smiling!” – Crystal W.

Brief Summary

The idea of a culture, values driven campaign built around the motto CALM – STRONG – UNITED originated at the onset of the pandemic as a part of the Bank’s response. It is now so entrenched in Kleberg Bank’s culture and has become an integral part of promoting the Bank’s core values: *Integrity, Soundness, Focus, Stewardship, Empathy and Enlighted*. The Bank has resumed normal operations, but the commitment to the common bond built during a time when things were uncertain and challenging remains very strong. The idea of putting on a CALM – STRONG – UNITED front simplifies the Bank’s core values and serves as a rally cry that we can call upon to help us move forward to overcome future obstacles. The Bank’s idea to lead with a values, culture driven campaign set the tone for 2020 and beyond, and enabled Team Members to demonstrate a caring culture throughout a challenging year. We are confident that our founder Robert Justus Kleberg, Sr. would be proud of the way our Team continues to honor and exemplify the Bank’s founding commitment established over a century ago, “to help those who show the spirit of cooperation in community building.”