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## Social Conscience as a Business Strategy

# ICLU's New Identity: Revitalizing A Classic

The Indiana Civil Liberties Union's mission is as old as the republic itself. The ICLU exists to defend the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

The ageless nature of the ICLU's work actually seemed to prevent the organization from reaching out to new members and supporters. In 1999, when the Sosa Group began working with the ICLU, its membership had remained stagnant for a generation, its fundraising had hit a ceiling and the organization seemed to have lost its vitality. **In order to help the ICLU move forward, we had to help restore a classic.**

We started with the ICLU's logo, a torch dressed in drab green and black. It lacked energy and did not communicate any enthusiasm. The torch didn't have any fire.

We reworked the existing

design and infused it with gold and blue – the state colors of Indiana. The result was a deliberately retro look that appeared contemporary and classic at the same time. **It was perfect for an organization approaching its 50th birthday, and allowed the ICLU both to celebrate its history and look to the future.**

We used this new identity to re-energize the ICLU's communications with its members and the public. We started by creating a new quarterly publication, *Carrying the Torch*. Following its successes, we helped design other special ICLU publications – an essay by Kurt Vonnegut, a special stand-alone magazine on the war on the Bill of Rights, etc. – and retooled the ICLU's fundraising materials.

**The results have been gratifying.** Within two years of the revamping, membership had grown by more than 30 percent the organization's revenues had more than doubled. The turnaround was so dramatic that Indianapolis Monthly magazine published a story about the ICLU's resurgence. The first paragraph of the story read:

"The past year has been good to the Indiana Civil Liberties Union. Controversial before it was even recognized as an organization and on the brink of folding in the late '70s after supporting the right of Nazis to march in Skokie, Illinois, the 47-year-old ICLU is hot right now. How hot? Local sports teams only wish they had as much sizzle."

Today, just after the ICLU's 50th birthday, the organization is bigger, better and stronger than ever.

**The Sosa Group helped make that happen.**

