

“CountryMark’s brand was launched seamlessly, and Adayana helped recession-proof our brand. Adayana did a fantastic job of understanding our company and recognized the value of our people as we worked to ensure that every member of our team represented our brand position to our customers and partners.”

- Belinda Puetz
Brand Manager,
CountryMark



CountryMark®

Adayana Success Story

CountryMark builds branding success on strong legacy and market understanding

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Situation

CountryMark has been a supplier of quality fuels to fuel buyers in Indiana since the business formed in the 1940's. While CountryMark remains an energy-only business today, they formerly operated as a full-service supplier of inputs for farmers. In allowing branded dealers to openly display their logo, the CountryMark logo was frequently linked to several local retail identities.

CountryMark's challenge was twofold: most customers did not correctly associate CountryMark with energy products, and some of their branded dealers, their immediate customers, did not realize who owned the trademarked logo, and consequently were not using the mark correctly. The logo was a recognized trademark in Indiana, demonstrating recognition ratings as high as John Deere and Marathon, but customers were unable to accurately identify what the logo stood for. In addition to being linked with individual retailers, the CountryMark logo was also still found on products no longer under the CountryMark name. CountryMark wanted to increase recognition of its branded fuels in hopes that customers would ask for it by name and identify CountryMark with energy products, specifically high-quality liquid fuels.

Solution

Adayana and CountryMark began by thoroughly researching how customers, prospects, and branded dealers perceived the CountryMark brand and logo. They then formed a strategy to capture its brand equity while preserving the integrity of the CountryMark brand and logo. Initial research indicated that customers easily recognized the CountryMark logo, but could not associate it with the correct company or products. Most respondents identified the logo with grain, seed, and crop protection rather than fuel. The research also recognized that respondents found CountryMark fuels to be of high quality and were willing to pay a premium for the products and associated services.

Supported by market research results and its Board of Directors, CountryMark put a program in place to strengthen the CountryMark brand, emphasizing the focus on fuel products. The process included an Executive Branding Session to create its brand identity and brand promise, logo modernization, testing of the logos and brand statements with customers, and a brand marketing strategy for both internal and external audiences.

Adayana helped introduce the brand through its Inside-Out Branding™ process, beginning with a formal launch to employees and then reaching out to branded dealers and other key customers. A core group of influencers inside CountryMark were chosen as Brand Champions, who received training prior to the rest of the organization, so they could help spread the message and momentum of the new brand launch. Training sessions helped CountryMark

employees understand the components of the new brand and how they each contributed to the building and consistency of that brand. A CountryMark song and video were also created to build excitement within the organization.

The external launch followed, with all new graphics for more than 90 fuel stations, new graphics for more than 250 fuel delivery trucks, and a targeted advertising campaign that included TV commercials, radio spots, and direct mail. Significant resources were dedicated to reaching commercial and agriculture clients through a media launch strategically targeted to CountryMark stakeholders.

Success

One year after the brand launch, Adayana conducted a survey with CountryMark stakeholders to measure effectiveness of the branding initiative. The research showed that CountryMark's media campaign has been successful, and that their target market associates the new logo with the positive attributes of the old "Co-op" logo. Most importantly, survey results showed that people most frequently identified CountryMark as a fuel company. This was a significant change from customer perceptions prior to the brand launch, when most respondents identified CountryMark not by its products or services, but by its business structure as a cooperative. CountryMark streamlined its retail and wholesale fuels into the same brand, which has strengthened sales and overall performance. The company has found that even when diesel sales are down, CountryMark fuel sales remain strong.