



HUDSON®

CASE STUDY

**Elevation Marketing innovates
product pipeline for maker of
industrial sprayers delivering
\$75M in incremental revenue**

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elevationmarketing



BACKGROUND

The premier manufacturer of commercial and industrial sprayers in the world

H.D. Hudson Manufacturing Company first introduced a line of agricultural supplies in 1905. The business has been family owned and operated ever since, evolving from a manufacturer of hay tools, lawn mowers and specialty hardware to the premier manufacturer of commercial and industrial sprayers in the world. Always an innovator, Hudson owns hundreds of patents and has a long list of major “firsts” in compression sprayers and dusters, including the first fully riveted, soldered tank and the first rotatable spray control valve.

The Hudson brand is firmly rooted in four pillars that have served as its “true north” for more than a century:

- See excellence in every detail
- Build and perpetuate the business profitably
- Establish and maintain Hudson brand dominance
- Quality dominant in every price range

The company built its reputation on meeting the needs of its customers, often before customers could even articulate what it was they wanted. Today, Hudson has a broad range of products for lawn and garden, industrial, agriculture, pest control, turf care, public health and retail use.





"Since we had been concentrating on other growth areas, our product pipeline was low."

-Bill Hudson, Chairman, H.D. Hudson Manufacturing Company

CHALLENGE

Innovate new products to fill its top-of-funnel portfolio across all its product families

Hudson had always prioritized product development, but found itself balancing innovation with market expansion, new channel strategies and international growth. Bill Hudson, company chairman, recognized that the company needed a fresh perspective.

"We had always handled new product development internally. Our process really revolved around making incremental improvements—re-engineering sprayers and dusters to make them better, or adding functionality and enhancements," Bill Hudson said. "Since we had been concentrating on other growth areas, our product pipeline was low."

Hudson engaged Elevation Marketing to innovate new products to fill its top-of-funnel portfolio across all its product families.



STRATEGY

Use observational research to drive innovation and rethink every facet of the products, including the selling process

Elevation used its proprietary LEAF[®] innovation process to assess and address Hudson's challenges. The LEAF process rests on a "look, listen, learn" philosophy that begins with a multi-stage discovery phase. As the engagement commenced, Elevation immersed itself in the sprayer and duster category, reviewing trade journals, perusing professional association sites, delving into competitive intelligence and Hudson's existing research studies, conducting interviews with subject matter experts and gathering market trend data. Elevation synthesized the research to use as foundational information.

Primary research was also conducted in the field. Elevation watched professionals from each of Hudson's target channels (lawn and garden, agriculture, pest control, etc.)

use products on the job, shooting video footage to bolster personal observation. Usability, interaction with pesticides and herbicides, pump-to-spray ratios, and cleaning and storing were all noted, among other factors. Elevation also watched professionals shopping for products at the point of purchase to better understand their decision-making process. **The goal: identify challenges, opportunities and unarticulated needs.**

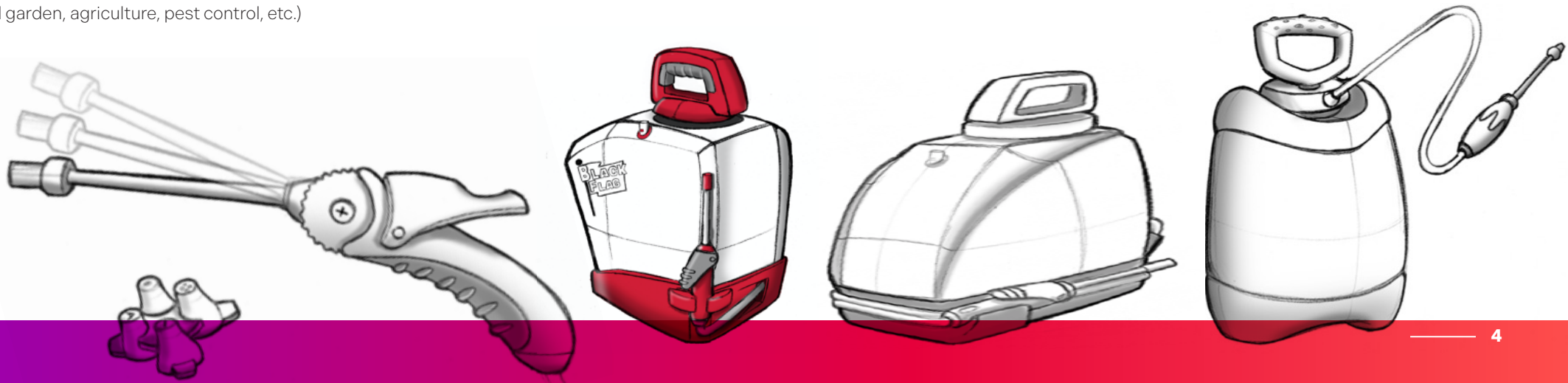
Information gleaned from the discovery phase was then synthesized, organized and used to inform and inspire a cross-functional team of Hudson employees and channel subject matter experts during Elevation's unique Envision workshop. Using custom-designed Envision exercises and worksheets, the team explored areas ripe for innovation. They developed, sketched and fast-prototyped hundreds of concepts. Alternative product forms, materials and components were considered for each channel. Detailed product studies were conducted for the base, sprayer mechanism, pump, wand and accessories. Products names were developed to elevate the perception around each of the new designs.

The Envision workshop produced unique and ownable shapes that were considered breakthroughs in sprayers and dusters. New sprayers for lawn and garden, pest control and paint were designed, including stain and deck sprayers for professional painting contractors. Different ways to organize and present the category were developed to present to retailers and dealers. **Eye-catching packaging was created** and incorporated into merchandising and point-of-purchase communications.

"Our approach to innovation had been to challenge the research and development team to continually improve the products and make incremental changes. We had never used observational research to drive innovation and rethink every facet of the products, including the selling process. The entire product innovation process was captivating," Bill Hudson said.

**The Elevation innovation process, LEAF, includes four phases: 1. Look, listen, learn 2. Envision 3. Activate 4. Forward*

DEVELOPED,
SKETCHED AND
FAST-PROTOTYPED
HUNDREDS OF
CONCEPTS

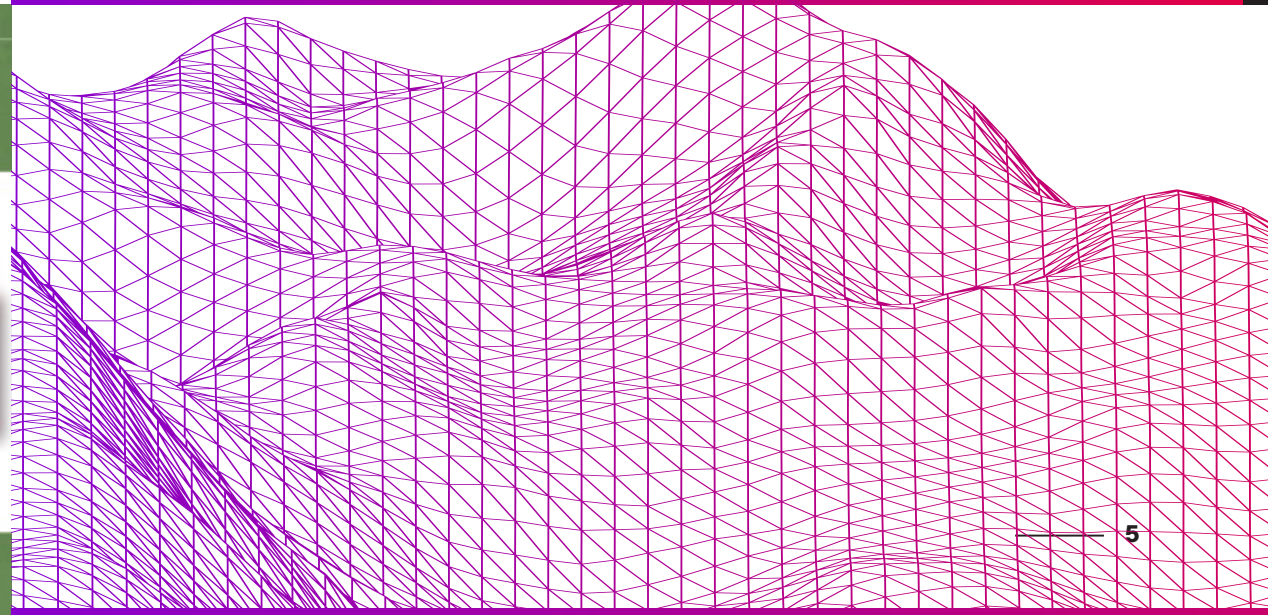


DELIVERABLES

- Trend data and reports
- In-context interviews, video and photos
- Subject matter expert recruiting and interviews
- Insights and research documents
- Facilitated Envision workshops
- Strategic and creative exercises and stimuli
- 30+ viable new product concepts
- Merchandising and point-of-sale concepts
- Stakeholder validation
- Concept development and refinement

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The Envision workshop
produced
**unique and
ownable shapes
that were considered
breakthroughs**





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#1
POSITION IN
THE MARKET


\$75
MILLION
IN INCREMENTAL
BUSINESS

RESULTS

True Value's top category vendor

New products were introduced into each of Hudson's channels. Partners such as The Scotts Company, Diversey brands and Bayer Crop Science eagerly embraced the novel designs. True Value accepted the innovative retail sprayer product line and merchandising store set. Within three years, Hudson introduced four major product lines and became True Value's top category vendor. Altogether, these innovations resulted in \$75 million in incremental business and assured Hudson's No. 1 position in the market.

"We wanted professional and creative assistance to evaluate the market and conceptualize innovative breakthrough product ideas that we could eventually launch. Elevation Marketing proved to be the bedrock of our success, with great market insights, innovative product concepts, and a strong retail presentation with breakthrough packaging. We not only had a clear picture of the field ahead, we also had a funnel full of several revolutionary product concepts, each of which was unique, differentiated and actionable. The results were nothing short of miraculous."

– Bill Hudson, Chairman, H.D. Hudson Manufacturing Company



ABOUT ELEVATION

Full-Funnel Marketing Solutions for Today's B2B Buyers.

Elevation Marketing creates meaningful customer engagements and sustainable results through data-driven, digital-first solutions that inspire change, motivate action and deliver predictable outcomes. Whether it's brand, demand, ABM, channel or sales enablement, we are experts in connecting brands to people and performance through end-to-end B2B marketing programs. By looking at your brand through the lens of your business, we help you break through the

obstacles that stand between you and greater sales, increased market share and increased revenue for maximum return on your investment.

**Ready to discuss
your project?**

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Business Journal
Top 20
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