

GOLD, Business-to-Business

Campaign Title: AFPM “We Make Progress”

Year the campaign took place: 2017-2018



Brand: American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers (AFPM)

Media Company/Agency: Edelman

Research Company: Edelman Intelligence

Additional Affiliated Companies: N/A

Summary of the marketing challenge, methodology, insight discovered, creative execution and business impact.

Marketing Challenge: How can we inform key stakeholders on what AFPM is, what its members produce and how those products positively influence consumers’ daily lives?

Methodology:

- Quantitative tracking survey
- In-person focus groups
- In-depth interviews



Insight Discovered: AFPM’s target audience doesn’t understand them, and they can’t trust what they don’t understand.

Creative: To address this challenge, Edelman Intelligence provided research that informed a multimedia ad campaign to drive brand awareness, favorability and trust among AFPM’s audiences in the D.C. metro area. The ads were deployed in a multi-channel, paid media strategy — including print, digital display, terrestrial and internet radio, YouTube video, streaming TV, news aggregators and morning newsletter ads.

Business Impact: The campaign drove greater familiarity, favorability and trust in both AFPM and the fuel/petrochemical industry and positioned the brand well for future activations.

CONSUMER INSIGHT

Creating familiarity and an emotional, personally-relevant association with the industry’s products drives enhanced favorability with the industry, its members and its products.

MARKETING CHALLENGE

The American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers (AFPM) is an energy trade association in Washington, D.C. representing hundreds of member companies in the fuel and petrochemical industries. The association’s 2018 goals include enhancing its advocacy efforts; better positioning its products; and increasing member company ROI. To achieve this, AFPM needs to continuously ensure that policymakers consider the impact on the fuels and petrochemical industries in every decision they make and vote they take.



Part of being an effective advocacy organization is ensuring key audiences:

1. Know AFPM
2. Understand its mission
3. Appreciate the value their industries bring to society

The “We Make Progress” (WMP) campaign was designed to be a step forward in that ambition. AFPM is a small association compared to other energy interests in Washington and thus is not always top-of-mind for policymakers and those that influence them. Moreover, AFPM has historically been outpaced and outspent by a peer association. The implications are clear: AFPM’s audience doesn’t understand them, and they can’t trust what they don’t understand.

The 2017 campaign showed that while AFPM’s brand awareness rose considerably, trust and favorability of AFPM and its industries stayed flat. In planning for 2018, the Edelman team drove a fully integrated effort—from research to strategy and planning to creative to distribution with a newsroom in parallel—to position AFPM for success. Our research told us audiences do not understand:

1. Who AFPM represents
2. What AFPM’s members do/make
3. How AFPM’s members are contributing to the future

In other words, we needed to answer the questions: Who is WE? What do you MAKE? How do you define PROGRESS?

METHODOLOGY

In 2017, Edelman created the “We Make Progress” campaign positioning AFPM as a forward-thinking organization delivering innovative solutions to improve lives. Analysis revealed that the initial campaign increased brand awareness by 10 percent, but trust and favorability remained flat. For this

second iteration, Edelman assembled an integrated team to learn what would move our audience's perceptions of this trade association and its industries.

First, Edelman Intelligence benchmarked perceptions via a reputational research quantitative survey in Fall 2017 among n=1,000 U.S. Opinion Elites and n=500 Opinion Elites within the Washington, D.C. Beltway – those who are college graduates or higher, have higher household incomes (\geq \$75,000, or from \$35,000 - \$74,999 if under 25 years old), read 2+ news publications on a daily basis and are interested and informed regarding energy issues. This survey was designed to track awareness of, trust in, and favorability toward AFPM, its peer set and the fuels and petrochemicals industries, as well as to assess exposure to campaign creative and impact. Insights from this phase of research informed the development of the WMP campaign for 2018, which spotlights AFPM's industries' products and connects them to their explicit role in driving progress. This 15-minute online reputation survey was fielded to a total of n=1,000 Opinion Elites across the United States (margin of error = +/- 3.1%), with an over sample of n=500 Opinion Elites within the Beltway (margin of error = +/- 4.4%), from November 8-20, 2017.

Edelman Intelligence then further engaged key stakeholder audiences through three

75-minute, in-person focus groups in Washington D.C. Two focus groups were conducted among n=8 Democrat and n=7 Republican policymakers/influencers, such as Congressional staff, agency staff, lobbyists, think tank experts, etc. The third focus group was conducted among n=7 Millennial Opinion Elites (ages 23-37). These groups indicated that, for AFPM to earn trust and favorability, audiences needed to know specific ways in which AFPM's members contribute to creating progress in their lives. We surfaced key insights that drove inspiration, leading to research-informed creative focusing on the use of AFPM member products in sectors like technology, medicine, commerce and transportation.



To arrive at the unique expression of each ad, interviews were subsequently conducted with AFPM’s subject matter experts in each space, and Edelman and Edelman Intelligence worked collaboratively to obtain leadership buy-in on this bold industry campaign.

Following the launch of the 2018 WMP campaign, a tracking survey was undertaken in July 2018 among n=500 Beltway Opinion Elites – to assess the impact of the multi-channel campaign activation on perceptions of AFPM across this critical audience. This underscored the importance of regular campaign activations in moving key reputational metrics for both AFPM and the fuel and petrochemical industries.

Additional tracking research will deploy this spring to further track the impact of the campaign on perceptions of AFPM and the industry.

CREATIVE EXECUTION

Following the 2017 research that indicated flat perceptions toward AFPM, Edelman utilized the Edelman Intelligence research previously outlined to craft a more detailed 2018 WMP campaign, telling the story of exactly what AFPM members produce and precisely how they contribute to making progress in our daily lives, with ads featuring clean, bold headlines that lead to a simple, single visual that depicts not just the product end-use but the product benefit.

These ads incorporate the concept of “ingredient branding” – focusing on a specific element of a product and marketing it as a separate entity, using a single “ingredient” to promote a brand. Perhaps the most prominent example of this approach is the ubiquitous “Intel Inside” campaign that began in the 1990s, highlighting the role Intel’s microprocessors play in the performance of computing equipment. For example, one iteration of the 2018 WMP campaign focused on the fact that AFPM members are responsible for toluene, a chemical that contributes to the watertight seal on modern smartphones – thus limiting



the negative impact of consumers unintentionally exposing their phones to water.

The ads were deployed in a multi-channel, paid media strategy—including print, digital display, terrestrial and internet radio, YouTube video, streaming TV, news aggregators and morning newsletter ads. The campaign also included fully reported sponsored content articles highlighting major developments in the fuel and petrochemical industries. Finally, to educate audiences on the substance behind the featured products, Edelman created a Brand Newsroom to prepare owned content to tell each of those stories, working with the client to launch a landing page to host this information.

BUSINESS RESULTS/LESSONS LEARNED

Through the reputational tracking research conducted in July 2018, we saw the WMP campaign effectively move the needle in the right direction compared to data from November 2017, before the launch of these revamped creative materials – a difficult result to achieve in the fuel/petrochemical space.

Specifically, the fuel and petrochemical industries saw significant reputational gains among the Beltway Opinion Elite audience as measured in July 2018, suggesting an impactful 2018 WMP campaign. The fuel/petrochemical industry was the only one to see meaningful gains in favorability (from 41% to 49%) and trust (from 35% to 43%), and those two metrics are even stronger among those who specifically recall seeing the 2018 WMP campaign.

AFPM’s reputational metrics also improved significantly. Familiarity with AFPM held steady, and the organization saw significant lifts in both favorability (from 41% to 49%) and trust (from 44% to 54%) compared to the November 2017 research. Nearly three-quarters of those who recalled recent news about AFPM said the news made them feel more positive toward the organization, a 20-point jump relative to November.



Familiarity, favorability and trust in AFPM were even higher among those who recalled the WMP campaign. And at 44%, WMP campaign recall far exceeds standard paid digital advertising recall at 25%. (Source: Forbes/Bain Insights consumer survey research)

The campaign also generated media coverage comparing AFPM's efforts to other brands such as Intel and BASF, which use specific ingredients to promote their brands. Matt Smith of [Capitol Communicator](#) stated, ""The campaign is clear proof that in our world there ALWAYS is a way to say what you need to say in a clean, emotional, engaging and impactful way. And the team at Edelman did just that, even when there was very little 'there' there. In doing so, they joined the small, elite club that claims members such as Intel, BDO and BASF."

Given these solid results, AFPM has gained additional confidence in the strategic direction of the campaign and its overall concept. It has since launched another WMP campaign activation, and will soon undertake additional tracking research to further measure the impact of "We Make Progress" on Beltway Opinion Elites' perceptions of AFPM.