INTRODUCTION: GENERAL ELECTRIC

First established in 1890 by Thomas Alva Edison, the Edison General Electric Company began with the infamous incandescent electric lamp. In time, the company merged with its competitor in 1982, The Thomson-Houston Company led by Charles A. Coffin, and - together - they became what we now know as: General Electric Company (GE).

Today, GE produces technology that spans countless industries, including energy, aviation, and healthcare. With its expertise and reach, GE decided to turn the world’s attention to sustainability. In 2005, it launched their ecomagination initiative, a campaign to publicize, promote and produce clean technology.

Through the use of various marketing strategies, including a website and a contest calling for innovative ideas, GE also used created and curated content to generate leads and sales for its ecomagination product portfolio.

THE MISSION: ecomagination

“ecomagination is GE’s commitment to address challenges such as the need for cleaner, more efficient sources of energy, reduced emissions and abundant sources of clean water.”

- Jeffrey Immelt, Chairman and CEO of General Electric Company

Being one of the largest corporations in the United States, GE’s ecomagination initiative puts it at the forefront of green technology and sustainability. This program is designed to show GE’s commitment to build innovative solutions to today's environmental challenges while driving economic growth.

When the initiative first launched in 2005, GE decided to lead by example. It pledged to reduce its green gas emissions 1% by 2012 and its greenhouse gas emissions 30% by 2008. Every year since, GE publishes its progress on their ecomagination website for their audience. In 2011, its progress report shows that its greenhouse gases have been reduced by 29%, and its water use have decreased by 13.5%.

Bolstered by its campaign, GE was able to successfully add depth and ingenuity to its clean energy records: its ecomagination portfolio. Through the use of this portfolio, GE advocates for clean technology and builds energy efficient products for their clients and consumers.
As proof of this, several products developed under the ecomagination program includes compact fluorescent lighting, smart appliances, battery technology, wind turbine manufacturing, a hybrid-powered water heater, and a GEnx aircraft engine that promises 15% lower fuel burn than its predecessor.

It is because of GE’s commitment and execution of their ecomagination initiative that it has generated many leads and sales for its brand.

THE EXECUTION: CONTENT MARKETING AND CONTENT CURATION

One of the key driving components of the ecomagination program is GE’s marketing strategy. In addition to its content being contributed by award-winning environmental journalists and sustainability consultants, the ecomagination website houses curated content. The articles, videos and images are created by GE and collected from outside sources.

With an extensive social media reach, including a Pinterest board dedicated solely to sustainable technology titled “Eco Efficient,” GE’s ecomagination content marketing campaign illustrates GE as a thought leader in its industry. Armed with knowledge and experience, GE becomes a trusted source for clean technology and, in turn, generates leads and drive sales for its ecomagination products.

The curated content focused on batteries, green innovation, locomotives and sustainability allow expert, outside perspectives to bolster GE’s expertise and, ultimately, generates leads.

THE RESULTS: LEAD GENERATION

In the years between, the initiative generated $70 billion in revenue for GE. In 2010 alone, the company garnered $18 billion from ecomagination products while launching 22 new products, and has surpassed its $85 billion in sales since 2005.

Recently, GE reported in 2011 that their ecomagination program has introduced 34 new products with $21 billion in sales, and it continues to grow today.

As Joel Makower wrote in 2005, “GE sees ecomagination as an engine for creating new sources of business value for years to come. That’s likely to make it sustainable within the company, and not just the flavor of the month.”

To continue its value as both a brand and a leader in clean technology, GE maintains constant content on their ecomagination website. With articles, videos and images perpetually supporting GE’s commitment in sustainability, it continues to generate leads and sales for their ecomagination portfolio.
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