



### Introducing Spirit®'s Newest Partner: Couch & Philippi

Spirit® Petroleum welcomes a new partner to the brand's roster of imaging providers with the addition of Couch & Philippi, designers and manufacturers of corporate identity products. The Orange County, CA-based company will be producing snap-on aluminum covers for fuel dispenser doors and risers, all pre-imaged with the Spirit® eagle logo and brand colors. Couch & Philippi also manufactures pre-imaged valances for a complete reimaging package.

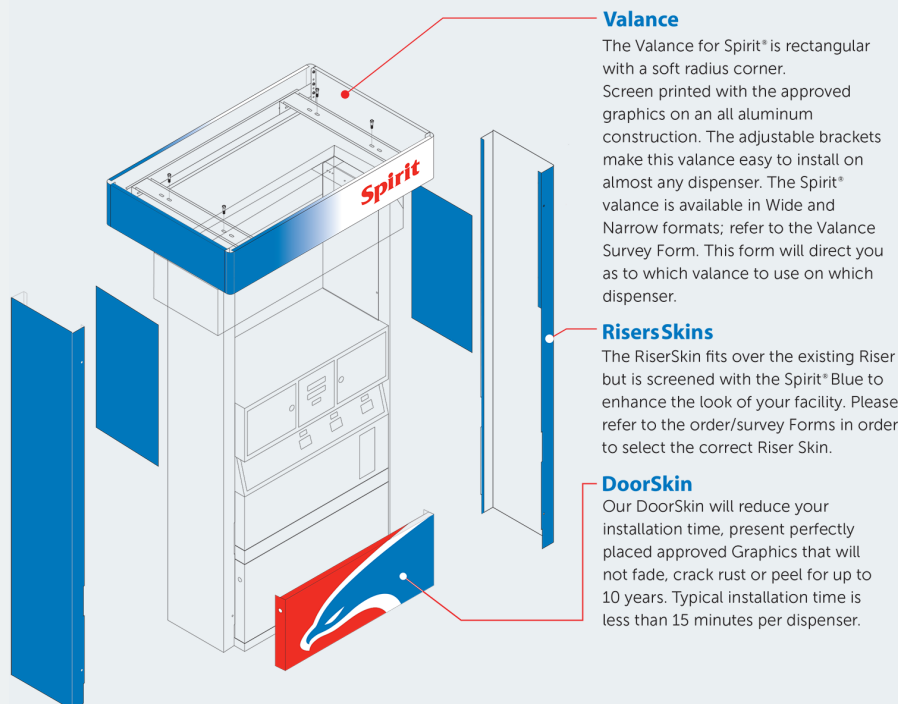
Couch & Philippi's trademarked DoorSkins®, RiserSkins® and valances were created almost 20 years ago in response to a request by ARCO for an efficient, cost-effective way to reimage some 800 stations with its new logo. Engineers at Couch & Philippi came up with the idea of producing a pre-imaged aluminum skin that would snap on over an existing dispenser door. According to Tim Riordan, Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Couch & Philippi, representatives at ARCO estimated at the time that the new product saved them approximately a quarter of a million dollars in labor costs. The idea grew from there, and the company currently lists most major refiner brands on its roster of clients. "But we're not focused exclusively on the big brands with lots of sites to reimage," says Riordan. "This product is very cost-effective even for smaller brands that are reimaging a couple of sites a month. With such an inexpensive product, it's not necessary to have a lot of volume to make the investment worthwhile." Riordan notes that the skins, which are currently available for 41

models of dispenser doors, are manufactured using special inks in a process similar to screenprinting, followed by curing at 400 degrees. The skins are guaranteed not to fade, chip, rust or crack for seven years, but he adds "we've got clients who have DoorSkins® that are still going strong at ten-plus years."

"It really is a good product because it takes the guesswork out of image installation," adds Mark St. Amand, Spirit®'s lead graphic designer. "It only takes about 15 minutes to install a

DoorSkin®, with much less effort and room for error. Really, the savings factor in terms of aggravation alone has to be worth considering."

Riordan, who is part-owner of Couch & Philippi and has a background in graphic design, is passionate about getting things absolutely right when it comes to graphic imaging for his customers. St. Amand notes "Tim and his team are just as committed as we are to maintaining the integrity of the Spirit® image for the benefit of all of our licensees."



**Valance**

The Valance for Spirit® is rectangular with a soft radius corner. Screen printed with the approved graphics on an all aluminum construction. The adjustable brackets make this valance easy to install on almost any dispenser. The Spirit® valance is available in Wide and Narrow formats; refer to the Valance Survey Form. This form will direct you as to which valance to use on which dispenser.

**RisersSkins**

The RiserSkin fits over the existing Riser but is screened with the Spirit® Blue to enhance the look of your facility. Please refer to the order/survey Forms in order to select the correct Riser Skin.

**DoorSkin**

Our DoorSkin will reduce your installation time, present perfectly placed approved Graphics that will not fade, crack rust or peel for up to 10 years. Typical installation time is less than 15 minutes per dispenser.

### State Executive Profile

#### Steve Ferren – Arkansas Oil Marketers Association, Inc.



Steve Ferren

Steve Ferren came to his current position as Executive Vice President of the Arkansas Oil Marketers Association after having worked for more than 30 years in his family's petroleum marketing business. "With no formal background in association management, I may have gotten the sympathy vote from the board when I was hired," he jokes. Based in Little Rock, AOMA currently serves approximately 250 members, of whom 145 are petroleum marketers. "Our member businesses are all sizes, from mom-and-pop enterprises—where Mom does the accounting and Pop drives the bob truck—to

large regional marketers like E-Z Mart and Kum & Go," he notes.

Ferren replaced Ann Hines, who retired in 2012 after 37 years at the AOMA, leaving some big shoes to fill. "Ann was a real trailblazer and knew just about everybody," he says. "It was extremely helpful to me to have spent a couple of legislative sessions with her, learning how to operate in the political arena." Ferren says he's discovering that a big aspect of this job is serving as members' eyes and ears at the state capitol. "We often find ourselves in defensive mode, with kind of a 'please leave us alone' attitude when it comes to new legislation," he muses. "We have well-intentioned legislators who come in with ideas and energy but maybe not all the information on certain issues, and they have a way of not stopping long enough to consider all the angles, all the ramifications of various decisions. As lobbyists for the petroleum marketing industry in our state,

we serve a very legitimate function of helping legislators see all sides of issues that affect our industry. We owe it to our members to make sure that their voices are heard, that their concerns are part of the discussion."

AOMA has a nice connection to the Spirit® brand through member Jeff Magness, who currently serves on the PMOCO Management Committee. In addition, Magness' father Benny Magness is a longtime member of the AOMA board. "I think our members see the Spirit® brand as a viable option, particularly if they are flying a major refiner flag and are dropped for some reason," says Ferren. "For those who feel more comfortable staying with a brand rather than going unbranded, Spirit® is a nice option to have out there."

## Licensee Profile

### Midtex Oil, L.P. New Braunfels, TX

When Rodney Fischer's parents Charlene and Maurice "M.D." Fischer acquired a Texaco consignment operation in 1966, their intention was to build a family company that might eventually offer opportunities to their two young sons. Today their story, the story of Midtex Oil offers a textbook example of how to grow and maintain a business at a sustainable level and make it thrive in an environment that is increasingly tough on small family businesses.

When the Fischers took over the consignment operation (with Charlene handling the books once her boys were in school), the enterprise consisted of two employees (plus drivers), one tanker and two pickup trucks servicing a handful of accounts. Years later, sons Russell and Rodney came on board managing wholesale (Russell) and retail (Rodney) operations.

Through a long series of acquisitions, sales, new ventures and restructuring, what began as M.D. Fischer, Consignee has blossomed into Midtex Oil, L.P., with 250 employees and wholesale fuel and lubricant accounts covering a wide swath of south-central and east Texas. MidTex also owns and operates twenty convenience stores in the San Antonio

area, under the names of Pit Stop Food Marts and Fischer's Neighborhood Markets. In 2003, in the wake of Chevron's acquisition of Texaco, the company converted all of its Texaco locations to Shell, and continues to license Shell and Spirit®. Russell retired in 2013; Rodney Fischer currently serves as company president, with part-time assistance from his parents. "My dad comes in a couple of times a week to keep his finger on the pulse and make sure everything is going smoothly," he quips. "And my mom still keeps some of the records and other documents organized."

The Spirit® brand came in handy for Midtex when the company gained some new sites as part of a company acquisition. At the time Midtex was working only with Shell, and Shell couldn't allow conversion of one of the new sites because of its location. "We needed a good alternative brand for that spot, and Spirit® was a great choice," Rodney reports. "We are so happy to have had that option and it has really worked well for us. We're utilizing those of the brand benefits that make sense for our business, and we've seen a nice bump in business since the conversion at that location."



## Partner Spotlight

### Federal Heath Sign Company

Spirit® Petroleum proudly counts Federal Heath Sign Company among its trusted providers of imaging products to brand licensees. The relationship between Federal Heath and Spirit® is a long and close one—in fact, design professionals at the two companies teamed to develop Spirit®'s phenomenally successful image when the brand was launched more than a decade ago.

In business for more than a century, Federal Heath now ranks among the nation's leading sign companies. Renowned for their fast response and outstanding customer service, company representatives are always available

to talk clients through the entire installation process. The team at Federal Heath is dedicated to helping marketers and site owners comply with Spirit®'s image standards while keeping brand conversion costs to a minimum.

Federal Heath makes it a priority to stay on the forefront of new trends and developments in sign technology, expanding its product line to adapt to the needs of the marketplace by partnering with LED display manufacturer Daktronics. Daktronics recently announced the addition of Cash/Credit displays to its lineup of Fuelight LED price displays, which have long been a preferred Federal Heath product offering and are increasingly standard in the marketplace. Developed with the input of Federal Heath, the new Cash/Credit unit allows

convenience store brands to advertise different fuel prices for different types of payments, and can be factory programmed to promote brand-specific payment cards. Back

*For more information about Federal Heath signage products or to place an order, contact:*

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