



by Vera Haskins
President of Spirit® Petroleum

Creating the “Spirit” of the Brand

A petroleum brand’s identity is more than its logo. As in any industry, brand development involves many players putting their heads together to design an image that makes sense for an intended message and audience. And at Spirit®, our primary objective from the start has been to offer options not mandates. As the original creators of the Spirit® “look” will attest, coming up with a brand that is flexible for untold scenarios poses a challenge.

Spirit® wouldn’t be what it is today without the talent and clever sensibility of Mark St. Amand, our graphic designer and go-to guy for all things visual. When asked to “go down memory lane,” Mark fondly recalls the early days of Spirit® back in 2001: “A lot of work went into the preliminary explorations of what we now know as Spirit®. The PMAA committee agreed in patriotism and American nostalgia as focal to the brand concept and the importance of easy adaptability for retrofits, so we toyed with such quirky names as ‘Nation Station’ and ‘Retro Petro’ with streamlined graphics. Once we settled on the name ‘Spirit,’ that

opened up innumerable opportunities and design elements ... red, white and blue ... the American flag ... the Eagle ... it all began to come together.”

With a name and logo approved, the next step was to secure a sign company willing to maintain flexibility for Spirit® marketers while still providing all of the bells and whistles of the major brands. Federal Heath Sign Company has continually gone above and beyond for Spirit® by meeting specific needs of our marketers. Mike St. Onge, senior sales executive, points out that, “Spirit’s® design team has always sought our input when contemplating image changes, and we are always mindful that the goal is to make conversion to the brand as economical as possible. An early challenge was to accommodate existing sign cabinets with the brand’s graphics. We worked closely with Spirit® to find a solution that provided maximum exposure for the logo. More recently, a major development is the widespread interest in LED price changers, which we quickly adapted to the Spirit® brand.”

In continuing efforts to ensure that our marketers find the highest quality screen-printed and digital graphics, Spirit® entered into a new vendor agreement with Mountain Commercial Graphics last summer. We also now work closely with Gilbarco Veeder-Root and Dresser Wayne for marketers in need of pre-imaged equipment, and our collaboration with Sherwin Williams makes it a seamless and affordable process to acquire Spirit’s® red, white and blue.

With all of these topnotch services and qualified individuals at the ready, Spirit® can swiftly respond when marketers approach us with a special request. Whether a graphic for car-washes, a canopy price sign for stations in hurricane country, a logo for SpiritMart® c-stores or a monument sign with LED price displays, no request goes unanswered. We meet the challenge without overhauling the Spirit® image or requiring licensees to update their signage and graphics. We simply expand the brand with subtle changes and additions to address *your* needs.

