



CASE STUDY

Guided product rollout and strategic positioning for landscape tech

elevationb2b.com



elevationmarketing

BACKGROUND

Positioning a next-generation product within an established brand

Toro is a recognized leading provider of innovative solutions for the outdoor environment, including landscape solutions for everything from turf maintenance to irrigation and beyond.

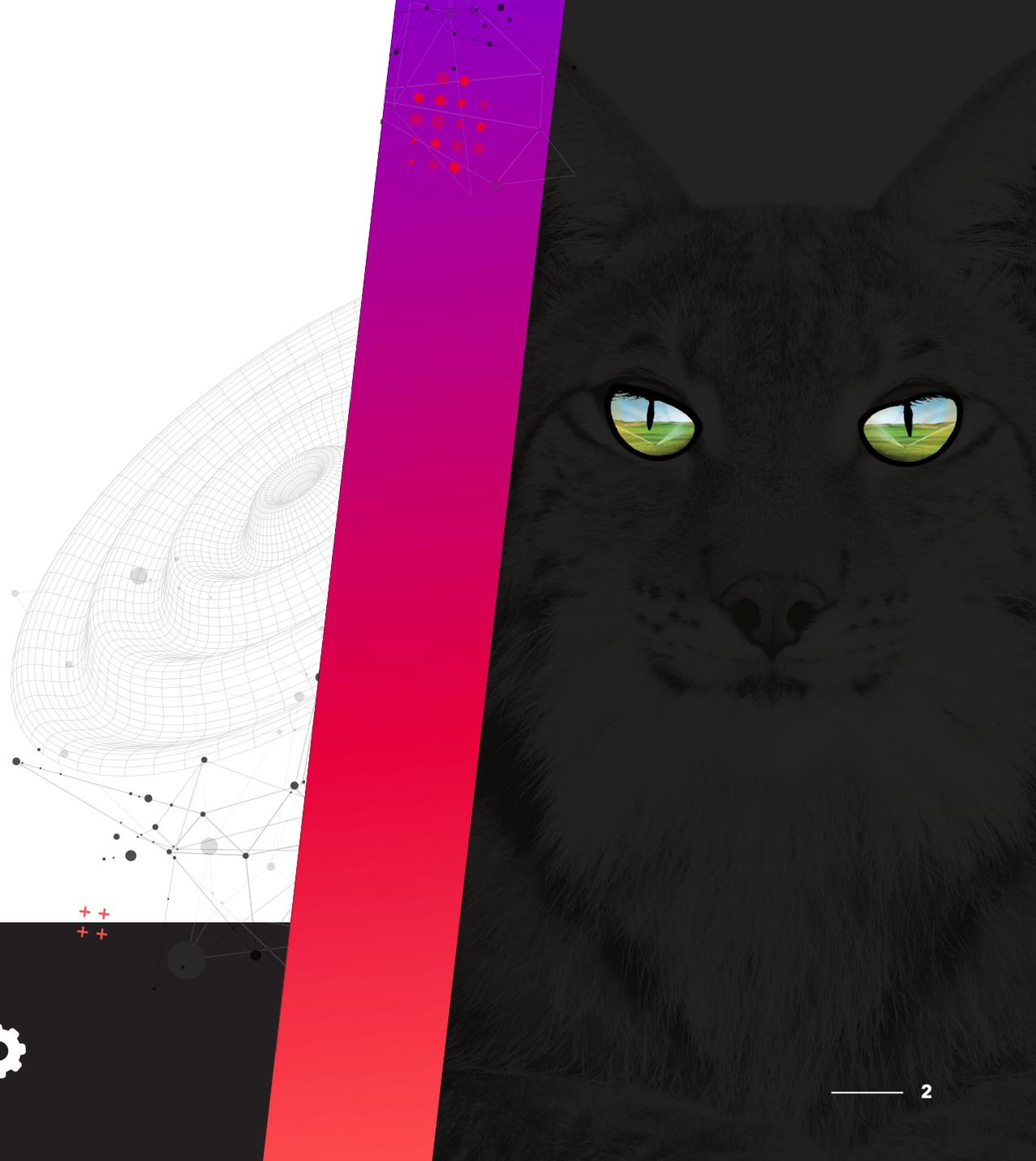
The company takes great pride in helping customers to enrich the beauty, productivity and sustainability of their land. Through continuous innovation and superior customer care, Toro has become one of the most trusted leaders in solutions for the outdoor environment.

Founded in 1914, the company has become a world leader in its industry. Through a strong network of distributors, dealers and retailers in more than 125 countries, Toro offers a wide range of products and a family of brands for golf courses, professional contractors, groundskeepers, farmers, rental companies, government and educational institutions and homeowners. In fact, Toro is proud to be prominently featured in many leading sports venues and historic sites across the globe.

The key to the company's success centers on building strong and enduring relationships with customers. Even with superior brand recognition, the Toro brand was beginning to lose market share to competitors with more aggressive messaging and new, advanced products.

In response to these changing market conditions, they planned to introduce the Lynx Control System. This product would be a leap forward for the company and an opportunity for Toro to re-establish the brand as a premier player in the market.

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CHALLENGE

Charting a course for the future without abandoning the past

Toro's strong brand history is a rare brand asset that needed to be preserved and leveraged—but that can be a challenge when introducing a new “forward-looking” technology into the brand offering.

Sometimes, new technology can serve as a “disruptor” that not only changes the trajectory of its market but also redefines the brand that markets it. Sometimes, the disruption is so great that it can actually dilute or fragment the brand in the minds of key internal and external stakeholders.

Anytime a new product is introduced, especially one that is technologically advanced, care needs to be taken to ensure that audiences see it as the natural evolution of the brand and not a dramatic departure from its history. If not, the brand can begin to mean different things to different groups. That can have an adverse effect on the brand and any other products or technologies that share that umbrella.

The Lynx Control System would be entering a market with more established, direct competitors. While Lynx lifted the Toro brand

into the technology tier of products, it would be leaning heavily on the company's established and trusted brand to gain a foothold. This product was not positioned as a “game-changer,” but more of a new and natural evolution of products already in the space.

This debut also had the added pressure of being Toro's first major product to launch in some time. So, the brand wanted to make a “big splash” with the Lynx product as a way of re-establishing brand presence and reinforcing current customer relationships, while diverting attention from competitors as a means of securing new customer contracts.

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STRATEGY

Finding the common thread

In this case, Elevation Marketing was tasked with launching a new technology for Toro's long-established brand. At Elevation, we follow a proven process that defines the parameters of the new product's ecosystem. This including factors that can impact the product's future that are beyond the brand's control.

STEP 1: INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

Through a series of interviews, we communicated with key Toro personnel associated with this new product. From C-suite executives to sales to customer service personnel, we had them define their perception of the product, including perceived strengths, weaknesses, customer needs, market opportunities and more.

STEP 2: EXTERNAL PROSPECTS AND CUSTOMERS

From there, we spoke at length with current Toro prospects and customers. We found out as much as possible about their needs and wants. From learning how they go about their daily tasks to hearing about their long-term goals, we found out what obstacles they feel stand between them and greater success.

STEP 3: COMPETITIVE SET

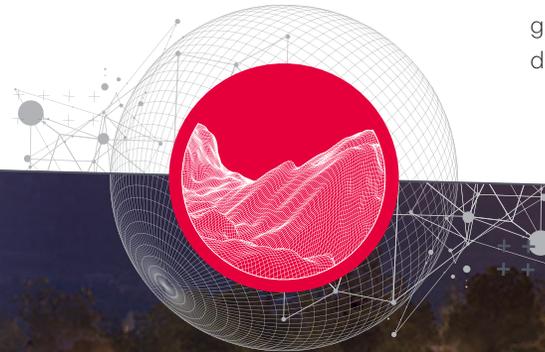
As part of our due diligence, we also looked at Toro's potential competitors for this new product. We learned about each brand's product offering, including perceived strengths and weaknesses.

STEP 4: TREND IDENTIFICATION

The channel where a product lives is a living, breathing ecosphere. Change, however slight, is constant. However, analyzing these small changes can often forecast changing channel attributes that will have a long-term impact on how the customers, market and solutions continue to evolve. Preparing for these future twists and turns in business conditions gives the product and its brand a distinct advantage in the market.

STEP 5: MARKET INFLUENCERS

Every product has outside influencers that live outside the brand. These outside forces can come in the form of individuals, like recognized experts in their chosen fields, or they can be movements, like growing discussions of industry issues. By identifying key individuals and discussions in the channel, we can prepare the product to address changing winds and tides that will impact the future of the product but are beyond the brand's control.



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SHARPEN YOUR INSTINCTS.

The new Toro® Lynx™ Control System helps you do just that.

Your golf course often demands quick thinking and swift action in order to maintain optimal playability, while best managing resources. Now there's a faster, easier way to act on your course management decisions. The incredible Lynx Control System was developed to give you intuitive control over what happens on your course by making all of your essential irrigation information readily available in one place.

See Lynx live at GIS. Product presentations are being held at the top of each hour. Grab a seat, and enter to win a 42" LCD television.

TORO. Count on it.
www.toro.com/Lynx

www.toro.com/Lynx

APPROACH

After careful analysis of the data produced in the discovery phase, we set out to find a way to properly position the product in a way that would resonate with the market and naturally dovetail with the Toro brand.

We determined that the common thread between the product, market and brand was Toro's customer relationships – in this case, with golf course irrigation system decision makers and influencers. Centering the product's identity on those relationships would play to Toro's strengths by naturally defining this new technology as the evolution of those customer relationships.

Toro's Lynx Control System was defined as a technology to empower customers to make the most of their time and instincts, while simplifying much of the irrigation process. *We were careful to position Lynx as a powerful tool for operators to maximize their individual skills and expertise – not as a replacement for that experience.* Lynx gives operators the data and insight they need to make better decisions, and the results optimize water use, promote healthy turf, and control operating costs, while freeing up time for more important tasks.

DELIVERABLES

We determined that the most effective use of the budget would be to create a three-phase campaign to maximize visibility and response.

Phase 1 of the campaign featured “teaser” messaging that defined and grabbed the attention of key members of our target audience. The creative was designed to provide clues to the product name and benefits to maximize the effect, while promoting future engagement.

Deliverable:

- Targeted direct mailers

Phase 2 of the campaign featured advertising, web and collateral elements that provided the payoff by communicating the product story of Lynx in a way that was easy for the audience to receive and understand. Messaging was intentionally direct, keeping the copy brief and on point. Features and benefits were showcased and the call to action directed the audience to visit the Lynx microsite for in-depth information.

Deliverables:

- Print advertising
- Product microsite

Phase 3 of the campaign prepared communications for inquiry fulfillment. This included the preparation of items like product case studies that provided detail of how Lynx works under real-world conditions when tested by their peers in the golf course industry.

Deliverable:

- Case studies



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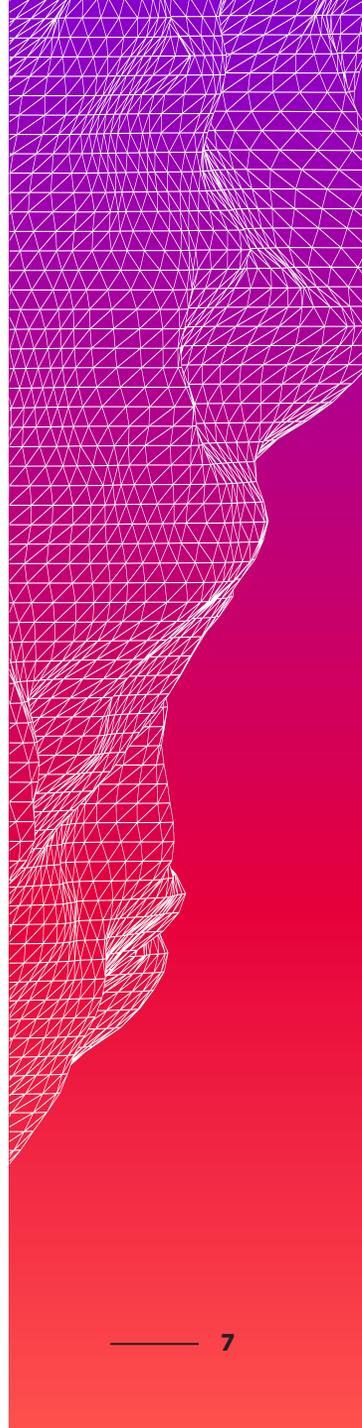
RESULTS

All three phases combine to quickly educate audiences and pre-qualify the early sales leads. The goal was to give sales personnel a running start in their initial conversations about the Lynx Control System to maximize the return on their time and effort. As a result, this strategy, along with a prepared sales force, worked to shrink the buying cycle for a new product in this category.

From the time it was introduced to the market, Toro's Lynx Control System immediately connected with audiences and successfully established a strong platform for the Lynx product line. Audiences saw Lynx as the perfect tool to empower their professional performance by emphasizing their expertise, while minimizing the effort required to maximize resources.

From a brand perspective, the audience viewed Lynx as the natural evolution of their ongoing relationship with the Toro brand. It expertly addressed the daily challenges while giving customers a platform to address future issues efficiently.

Toro was pleased with the reception to the introductory product by prospects, customers and the industry-at-large. Today, Lynx has expanded to include an entire line of irrigation control products. This sub-brand continues to be very successful thanks to its emphasis on customer skills and experience by giving them tools harness those assets more effectively.



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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