

# Dante Valve

## CASE STUDY

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**Elevation Marketing** executes comprehensive marketing campaign for long-time industrial pressure relief valve manufacturer, generating awareness in new markets to improve stagnating revenues.



## BACKGROUND

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Dante Valve Company is an international, family-owned manufacturer and distributor of valves, fittings, flanges and related products for military, industrial and commercial applications. Dante's corporate headquarters is located in Bellflower, CA, with an additional location in Norfolk, VA. It employs 49 people.

The US Navy is Dante's largest customer, purchasing the company's Danco line of valves and valve parts for multiple ship variations. With more than 50 years in the industry, Dante's reputation for quality, service and on-time delivery is stellar in all of the sectors it serves.

While Dante enjoys a stellar reputation among all of its customers, the majority of its business (85%), the company admitted, comes from the US Navy. Even though its reputation was positive among private sector industrial customers, the company struggled to increase its foothold in this business category, particularly with those customers utilizing the industry-leading Kunkle Valve, which Dante also sold through its distributor partnerships.

With business heavily reliant on the military sector, Dante was looking for an outside agency to help guide it through the needed steps to further leverage its strong reputation with more industrial commercial customers. Dante leadership knew a strong B2B agency like Elevation was the right fit.



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## CHALLENGE

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Historically, Dante Valve has utilized word-of-mouth and face-to-face communications with customers and prospects, rather than engaging in direct marketing initiatives.

Its strong reputation drove business for decades, but that approach had run its course, particularly as it related to Kunkle valves. This product was known as a go-to for certain industrial applications and customers understood its value. However, they just didn't associate Dante Valve with the product. Overall, for the company, revenues were plateauing.

As the company positioned itself to grow its private sector industrial clientele, it became a priority to extend past the personal relationships and begin marketing directly to target audiences in order to raise awareness of product offerings, especially Kunkle valves. At the same time, Dante did not want to grow revenues at the expense of adding to the fixed cost of employees. It was looking to utilize a variable cost approach by engaging with an outside agency.

Dante hired Elevation Marketing to expand its reputation of engineering excellence beyond its traditional customer base and trading area. It also had a secondary desire to get more traffic to its website and possibly start selling through it. Up until now, all sales had been done by phone and the company website was not mobile friendly. Dante was willing to engage in a complete market research effort, strategy sessions, creative engagements and the full build-out of a marketing plan; something it had never even considered in the past, even after decades of business.



## STRATEGY

The fundamental marketing priorities for Dante Valve centered on producing consistent brand messaging and engaging customers and prospects in the commercial segment, while also enhancing its reputation and credibility.

To achieve these priorities, Elevation Marketing endeavored to develop a comprehensive marketing campaign. But that would require considerable organized research efforts before elements like a website refresh, marketing material production and social media strategies could be employed. Here's the four-phase research approach Elevation took:

**DISCOVERY:** Elevation Marketing deployed a market research initiative to learn more about Dante's position in the pressure relief valve industry. The Dante name was indeed known, but unfortunately the perception was largely that it was a Navy supplier, not much else. Subject matter experts were interviewed regarding the state of the market, and the application of Dante products within target industries. Dante had all the pieces in place to do a lot more in private sector industrial markets. This information would later inform message development.

**RESEARCH AND EVALUATION:** Qualitative interview questionnaires were developed to drive research involving internal stakeholders, sales reps, distributors, customers and industry contacts. These efforts gave Elevation both inside and outside views of Dante Valve and further informed what it was learning about the company's dominance in Navy business, but its relative obscurity outside of it.

### COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE ASSESSMENT:

Marketing issues aside, Elevation's in-depth stakeholder interviews and industry research reflected distinct competitive advantages for Dante Valve. They included: engineering expertise, excellent shipping and delivery rates, online product accessibility, high manufacturing quality, dedicated customer service, competitive pricing and sustainability, among others. Even though it only assembled and distributed Kunkle valves, a product with which they were looking to penetrate more commercial markets, the strong Kunkle reputation still fell in line with the reputation of high-quality valves which Dante itself manufactured.

**LINKING FINDINGS TO STRATEGY:** Once information was gathered and synthesized, the goal was to identify a messaging position that was coherent with Dante Valve's current and future business practices—distinct from the competition, yet relevant and valued by its target customers and prospects. That started with a brand guide that displayed the new Dante Valve logo, its options and restricted uses. The guide also touched on photography and imagery best practices to complement the logo and brand feel. Then, an extensive marketing plan was created and delivered to Dante Valve.



## STRATEGY

Elevation created a marketing strategy that utilized Dante's strengths and uniqueness in the industry. The goal was two-fold in that messaging and marketing efforts would expand Dante's reputation in uncharted industrial business segments, while also eliminating any negative perceptions in the military category. The strategy dictated the following tactics:

### MARKETING COLLATERAL

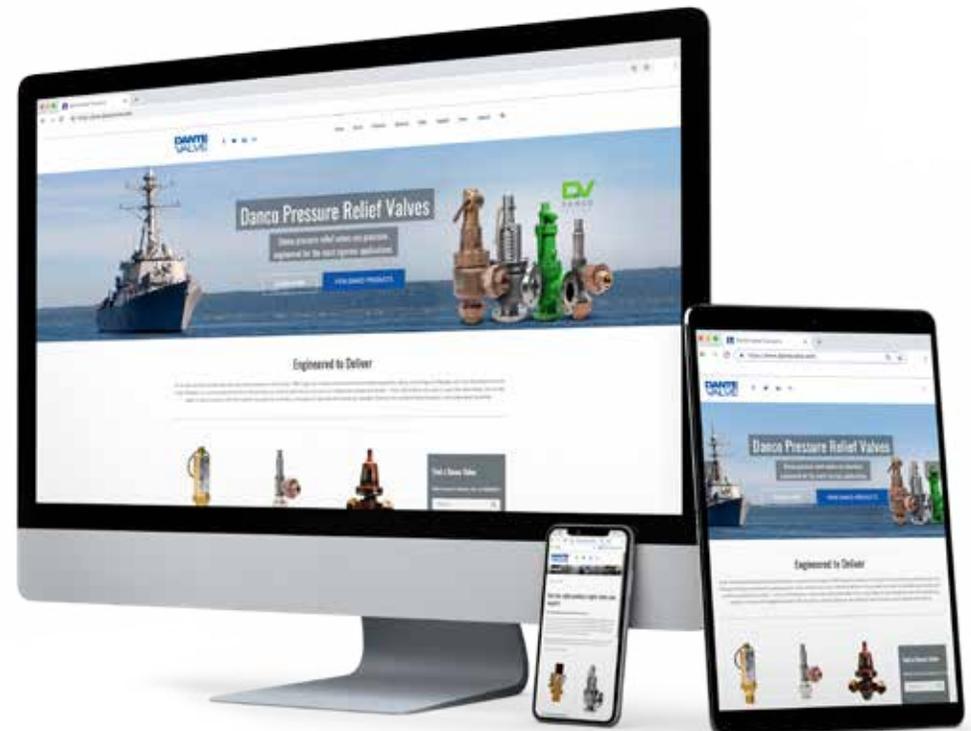
Elevation designed and wrote collateral marketing tools for a consistent, professional representation of the Dante Valve brand. This phase involved build-out and design of marketing materials, such as: a four-page corporate brochure, product sheet template, a Kunkle brand overview sell sheet, a brand guideline sheet and other assets.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Elevation's research efforts also highlighted the need for a greater social media presence. Elevation set up and optimized four social media accounts for commercial and military markets—Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Google+—and also developed a biweekly social media calendar. In addition, a strategy for bimonthly e-newsletters was established with a schedule and editorial guidelines that would allow Dante to engage with its audience while demonstrating thought-leadership and expertise.

### WEBSITE REFRESH

Elevation recoded the Dante Valve website for improved functionality and user navigation experience. Infrequently used features were removed. WordPress and other plugins were updated, along with the home page theme. Search functionality was enhanced to accept product ID numbers. Dynamic sell sheets were also created, and website visitors could also download a print-friendly version of the product information page.





## DELIVERABLES

- Research report identifying relevant and impactful marketing strategies to drive new opportunities
- Customized, integrated marketing plan
- Corporate brochure
- Kunkle brand overview sell sheet
- Product template
- Brand guideline sheet
- Messaging guide
- Social media account set up and optimization for commercial and military segments
- Six e-newsletters written and designed, including an ongoing effort to target both commercial and military segments
- Website refresh for optimal user experience and design improvements
- Trade show and industry conference list for attendance as visitors, or to promote the brand as a vendor
- New Dante Valve logo “Engineered to Deliver”



## BUSINESS WINS

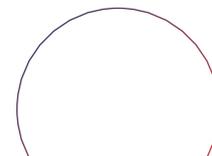
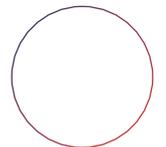
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Dante Valve gains momentum through brand strategy, compelling content, and social media engagement

Elevation Marketing helped Dante Valve expand its presence in the commercial sector and generate broader awareness of its engineering capabilities, customer service, competitive pricing and dependable delivery.

Dante is now seen as the premier company in the commercial valve industry. The market awareness generated by Elevation Marketing's research, planning and execution, along with Dante Valve's unique competitive advantages, opened up additional business opportunities to help customers optimize processes, protect people and assets and save time and money. A win-win for both Dante and its customers.

Dante Valve continues to rely on Elevation Marketing for its social media editorial calendar, website updating, as well as for bimonthly newsletter content and design.



## ABOUT ELEVATION

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# More Business Wins

Elevation Marketing is a full-service B2B marketing agency, providing exceptional client experiences that result in more business wins.

We go beyond tactics to inspire experiences that build brand believers. From a holistic perspective, we focus on all aspects of operations and strategy to ensure alignment between marketing and sales.

We have a strong command of inbound marketing, and know how to effectively manage, deliver, and retain buyers. We offer full-cycle web development services for the enterprise. We build bridges of communication, streamlining the dissemination of information to targeted entities.

Whether its partner portals, online stores, web apps or microsites, our custom digital solutions help you govern persona data through its entire lifecycle for superior lead generation and nurturing.

If you have a B2B product or service that solves real-world problems, then you've done your job. We'll do ours by connecting you to the B2B decision makers that will benefit from what you have to offer.



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