

Franchise chain of home service contractors switches to Brandmuscle and **boosts adoption by over 200 percent** in just two months



Direct Energy Services is passionate about providing best-in-class programs and support to the franchisees of its three, distinct franchise brands – Benjamin Franklin Plumbing, Mister Sparky and One Hour Air Conditioning & Heating.



THE CHALLENGE

Direct Energy supplied its franchisees with access to an online marketing portal where they could create local marketing pieces, but adoption of the platform was extremely low with 40 percent of franchisees abandoning the system after the first try. Franchisees complained that the site was difficult to navigate and required redundant entry of basic location and contact information for every ad template. To complicate matters, the vendor wasn't providing the level of support Direct Energy and its franchisees had been promised and turnaround times were growing longer. Direct Energy's marketing team was ready for change.

Realizing the launch of a new tool would require regaining confidence of franchisees, Direct Energy set out on a careful journey of due diligence to explore and compare the solutions and services offered by a number of local marketing automation vendors. Direct Energy invited key franchise leaders from the field to participate in the evaluation process, enabling those franchisees to provide firsthand feedback and claim a stake in the success of the new solution.

In addition, Direct Energy wanted to introduce the new solution at its annual franchise conference in less than four months. The team needed to determine which templates would be brought over to the new solution and needed help ensuring a seamless transition from the old system; franchisees couldn't be surprised.

OUR RESPONSE

Brandmuscle worked closely with Direct Energy to outline a clear launch plan and implementation timeline to ensure a smooth transition to the new platform. Brandmuscle helped Direct Energy develop a communication strategy to ensure franchisees were receptive and eager to utilize the new solution.

Brandmuscle also accommodated a few mid-stream modifications without delaying the launch. For example, Direct Energy incorporated custom functionality that enables franchisees to take advantage of new market segmentation research, helping franchisees execute targeted, more effective direct mail programs. When Brandmuscle joined the Direct Energy team at their annual convention in 2014 to unveil the new platform, franchisees expressed their excitement in having an extremely easy-to-use, one-stop shop for creating local ads and collateral, purchasing mailing lists and building emails on demand. They were just as grateful to finally have access to 24/7 help desk support.

“Brandmuscle managed a seamless development process for us. They gave us what we wanted, but in many cases it was better than what we had initially envisioned.”

- *Adrienne Kiser*
Field Marketing Manager, Direct Energy Home Services

THE RESULTS

The Brandmuscle solution has enabled Direct Energy's franchisees to execute far more local marketing programs than ever before. Adoption continues to rise as franchisees find greater success and ROI in their efforts.

Increased Affiliate Engagement

- Local franchisees applauded an easy-to-use system backed by strategic professional support
- Within two months, franchisee usage increased by 200 percent
- Within six months, 74% of franchisees had used the system
- Increased total number of campaigns downloaded or created by 300 percent
- Franchisees downloaded 500 customizable marketing materials and 2,796 static assets in the first six months

Full-Service Support

- Communication with franchisees notifies them when news assets and templates are available
- Ease of use led to a drastic reduction in support line calls within the first six months
- Better reporting and more engaged franchisees resulted in more robust feedback from the field
- Full service support allowed corporate Direct Energy marketers to focus on strategic goals
- Introduced market segmentation data into platform based on in-depth study

CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

“Five different vendors presented to us. When it came time to demonstrate to our team, Brandmuscle showed us they could deliver exactly what we wanted: reliable service and support; intuitive, easy-to-use website navigation; and strong overall performance.

“What really put Brandmuscle out in front of the pack was the level of support they offered. Nobody else seemed to have the team that Brandmuscle did. And it was clear from the start that Brandmuscle wanted to work with us.

“They demonstrated the ability to answer our questions clearly and effectively. That won us over. They really did their homework.”

- Adrienne Kiser
Field Marketing Manager, Direct Energy Home Services