

Innis Maggiore 50th

Honoring the Past. Positioning the Future.



the 2010s

This is the fifth in a six-part series highlighting Innis Maggiore's 50th anniversary. In 2024, we're "Honoring the Past. Positioning the Future." This piece highlights the 2010s, a decade of digital growth for the agency.

Fifty Years of Positioning: the 2010s

Hipster glasses, fidget spinners, statement necklaces, and a resurgence of boat shoes were all very big in the 2010s. These trends may never return. From 2010 to 2019, however, Innis Maggiore continued to build on its reputation for positioning. The agency grew while enhancing its quality and expanding its capabilities.

Lift-Off! New Product Introductions Bring Focus to the Agency's Creative Chops

Innis Maggiore started the decade positioning Mitchell Group's Sta-Kleen fabric as the first dry-erase urethane. The fabric was designed to withstand the rigors of casino, hotel, and other hospitality furniture use, so the Hospitality Design Expo in Las Vegas was the perfect venue to introduce this new product to the world.

To bring a tangible, experiential theater to the product launch, the agency conceived of The Erasable Man, who wore a suit tailored from brightly colored Sta-Kleen faux leather. He performed multiple impromptu demonstrations, allowing expo attendees to write on his jacket with a black Sharpie, which he instantly wiped off with a dry cloth.



Along with a campaign that featured a new website, "teaser" and "reveal" trade publication ads, a video, PR materials, an aggressive trade show schedule, and more, the concept received the most prestigious innovation award at the design expo. Attendees just couldn't stop talking about Sta-Kleen's Erasable Man.

Another Launch ... in the Grocery Store

Later in the decade, Innis Maggiore teamed up with SmithFoods to introduce its new brand of cottage cheese ... Artisa.



Artisa was different, and it got noticed. The cottage cheese with real fruit inside each single-serve cup launched and flew off the shelves. Along with its existing grocers, the agency assisted SmithFoods with getting the new product into Sam's Club, and before long, "living life uncottageged" was the talk of the dairy industry.

Putting the "Fun" in Funeral

Marketing in the funeral industry had gotten a little ... er, stiff. So, when Arnold Funeral Homes came to Innis Maggiore, an innovative campaign was launched to position the funeral homes as the area's only custom, pre-planned funeral experience matched to your personality. Arnold Funeral Homes was willing to break out of stuffy clichés associated with the category.

Innis Maggiore's buzz-generating social media and outdoor campaign reflected how real people have real personalities and want unique, quirky, fun, or spirited funerals. The campaign was a huge success, and additional versions of the campaign were conceived.



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Clients Old and New ... and Everywhere

Along with the new product launches, Innis Maggiore continued its successful positioning work for many long-tenured clients, such as Aultman, BellStores, GOJO, GuideStone, and MID'S. In 2019, the agency celebrated its 40-year relationship with its longest-tenured client, Custom Auto Body.

As the decade progressed, many new clients also came into the fold. The agency began working with local companies Beese Fulmer, Extreme Trailers, Midwest Industrial Supply, SARTA, and Young Trucks. New regional/national accounts included Bird Technologies, The Center for Health Affairs, the City of El Paso, FSBO, Kobre & Kim, and Summit Legal Aid.

Globally, Innis Maggiore signed on Goodyear Latin America, RFS (France), and its first client in China. The agency also inked a power-packed trio of energy-related companies — Advanced Power, Encino Energy, and Solar Sandy.

A Decade of Digital

As the second decade of the 2000s started, Innis Maggiore continued to add people with web and digital marketing expertise. The agency wasn't just keeping up with the times, it was doing exactly what it was known for ... leading the way.

Between 2010 and 2019, the agency grew to become the region's largest web and digital marketing power, which it remains to this day.

In addition to the right people, the agency also invested in mastering the right digital tools in newer platforms such as programmatic (e.g., ConnectedTV, audio ads, video ads), marketing automation (e.g., HubSpot, SharpSpring, Pardot, Marketo, Mailchimp), and digital marketing certifications (e.g., Google's suite of search engine optimization, analytics, and paid search platforms).

Not Just Capabilities ... Also, Qualifications

Simply doing something just to say you've done it is not Innis Maggiore's style. In the 2010s, the agency wanted to set the gold standard for its digital capabilities.

During the decade, Innis Maggiore earned Magento Certified Developer Plus certification and Sitecore Certified Developer status, received a Partner Award from Sitefinity, and was named one of just five Silverstripe North American Partner organizations.

Near the end of the decade, Innis Maggiore also earned SharpSpring Gold Certification status. No other regional agency could make the same claims.

Some 'Super' Exposure

An annual tradition was also set in motion with its commentary on pro football's biggest spectacle and the ads that accompanied it. The agency educated viewers on what it takes to make a successful Super Bowl spot that's memorable but, more importantly, differentiating.

By the end of the decade, a national audience of clients, community partners, and industry experts was interested in learning what Innis Maggiore's picks for the most effective Super Bowl spots were going to be.

Commitment to the Community

As established in the very early years of the agency's founders, Innis Maggiore kept its tradition of giving back to its community. In the 2010s, the Innis Maggiore Endowed Scholarship for Communications continued to support the future of the local advertising and PR community. To this day, the scholarship remains the largest of its kind at Kent State University at Stark.

In 2016, the Innis Maggiore Community Endowment Fund was created through the Stark Community Foundation. Much like the Endowed Scholarship for Communications, the Community Endowment Fund was designed to contribute to local organizations seeking to make a difference in the lives of the Stark County community.

The agency's formalized internship program turned 20 years old and expanded to a spring, summer, and fall program.

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A Mark-eting Transition

In 2017, Mark Vandegrift, now president of Innis Maggiore, was named chief operating officer. Mark joined the agency in 1998 with the acquisition of Monter Creative Design. In the first decade of the new millennium, a leadership transition had already begun.

In 2018, Mark wrote *Keyword: Positioning — How Search Proves the Principles of Positioning*. This breakthrough piece of literature was the first of its kind to uncover the secret of brand positioning and its relationship to how humans use search engines.

What's Next

In the next installment of *Innis Maggiore 50: Honoring the Past. Positioning the Future.*, we look at the 2020s, a decade that's still in progress. We're proud of what we've already accomplished and excited about what the next 50 years will bring.



innis maggiore
A D A G E N C Y

If you need help positioning your company or brand, contact the experts at Innis Maggiore.