

## SUCCESS STORY



# Morton Arboretum Taps Fuse to Help Share the Virtues of Trees



(The tags) held up in the weather—or from someone wanting to take them down as a souvenir.

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HEAD OF DESIGN  
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MORTON ARBORETUM

Did you know that trees reduce crime, increase home prices and reduce stress? The Morton Arboretum, a nonprofit outdoor museum in Illinois, adorned nearly 2,000 trees in and around downtown Chicago with tags that shared the virtues of trees. Another 200 tags were displayed at the Arboretum and many more were distributed to adult education classes, grade schools, secondary schools and community organizations through a Community Trees program.

Renown for its research in tree science, education and conservation, the Morton Arboretum created the tags for an annual awareness campaign celebrating Arbor Day, a holiday founded by the organization's namesake, J. Sterling Morton, in 1872.

## MISSION

The challenge from the Arboretum's leadership was as tall as old-growth trees—the tags had to be 100% recyclable, fade resistant, and difficult to tear or vandalize. The tags also had to withstand the Chicago elements for up to three weeks. And, as Midwesterners know, that meant the possibility of a late-April rain or even snow shower.

## SOLUTION

The price tag-shaped, 11-by-17-inch signs extolled the virtues of trees with six unique messages including, "Trees clean the air we breathe" and "Trees make our cities safer." While typical lamination would have protected the tags from rain and snow, it would have meant they had to go straight to a landfill after



use. Instead, Fuse spent six months researching options, communicating with paper houses and manufacturers, and gathering samples.

Honoring the Morton Arboretum's objectives, YUPO® synthetic paper was selected. Ecofriendly and tough, this 100% recyclable, 100% tree-free, waterproof paper holds color beautifully. Fuse used special inks in vibrant green, blue, yellow and orange, which popped against the silky white background. Designers chose a clear coating to seal the tag surface and further ensure lasting color. A conventional six-color offset press was used to print the tags, which were individually die cut. A half-inch hole was then punched at the top.

Being true to the core mission is particularly important in nonprofit marketing and promotion. For the Morton Arboretum this meant being selective in paper choices, signage substrates and printing methods.

At the close of the campaign, Fuse picked up the tags for recycling.

## RESULTS

Chicago might be the Windy City, but the Morton Arboretum's tree tags stayed put, and the colors remained vibrant. "A guerilla team of staff put the tags on and we are each assigned a different neighborhood," offered the Arboretum's Eileen Barrett. "We went back two or three weeks later and 99% were still up. They held up in the weather—or from someone wanting to take them down as a souvenir."

The Morton Arboretum also works with Fuse on direct mail production, catalogs, invitations for private events, sales promotion items and postcards, among other things. "I've worked with Fuse (for years) and they've always delivered great products," added Barrett. "We have a fabulous working relationship."

## FUSE

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