

Flipping the Switch in Toombsboro, Georgia

Overview

P.T. Power has developed cutting edge technology that allows old automobile tires to be used for the creation of clean, cheap electricity. The company sought to locate its first plasma gasification, electrical generation plant in Toombsboro, Georgia and hired Cookerly Public Relations to educate the local populace and counter opposition.

Objective

Cookerly Public relations was charged with developing and executing a communications program that would help P.T. Power shore up local government support and to win approval from the State of Georgia to build and operate a high-technology electrical generation facility in Toombsboro.

Strategy & Tactics

To correct misinformation that had been spread in the community about the project, the agency developed media information packages and distributed to all newspapers and broadcast outlets in the area. In addition, the agency developed a series of full-page advertorials for local newspapers designed to walk local citizens through the entire process, from regulatory approval to plant operation, and to clearly allow anyone reading the articles to separate truth from fiction.



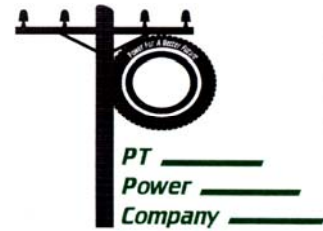
The first advertorial attacked lies, distortions and misinformation head-on, refuting each issue point by point. Subsequent ads (a total of six were placed) discussed the project and the benefits it offered from the standpoint of the environment, job market, local economy and industrial development.

In addition, the agency developed a presentation for company spokespersons to deliver at a public hearing staged by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division. The PR team worked with the spokespersons to refine messages and deliver an effective presentation to state regulators. The agency also developed an informational package about P.T.

Power and the project for distribution to more than 50 local residents in attendance at the public meeting.

Results

Media coverage softened dramatically; public opinion changed and P.T. Power won approval from the Toombsboro city government and the Georgia Environmental Protection Division. In the end, far more residents were in favor of the project than were opposed.



Highlights

Cookerly Public Relations helped turn local opposition to its plasma gasification plant around, winning local and state approval to build and operate a high-tech electrical generation facility in 2007.

Cookerly effectively educated the public about P.T. Power, plasma gasification and the benefits that the plant would bring. The education initiative effectively neutralized all opposition.