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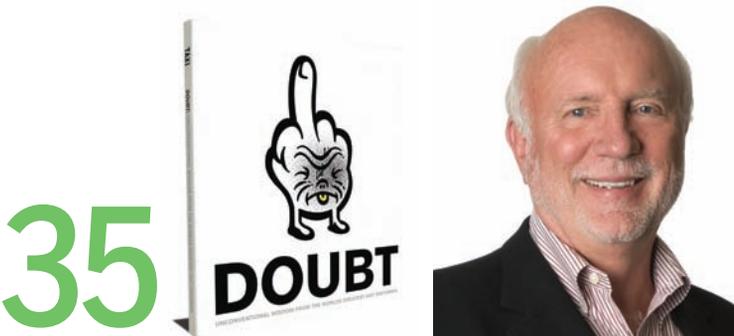
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ON THE COVER Who's that baby? Why it's none other than Hugh Dow, who starts off *strategy's* Best of the Decade feature on p. 35. On the eve of his retirement, what better way to send off a media legend than a Person of the Decade nod to his trailblazing work? He's joined on the cover by our other "Decade" picks: Tim Hortons, our Canadian Brand of the Decade; Dove, the top global brand; and – you guessed it – Taxi, our top agency choice. At the end of this decade of massive industry changes, we felt the cover's retro vibe and an old baby pic would be comforting...



Cheers to a big decade

End of a decade. It's sort of a natural time to pause and reflect and put things in perspective, but for some reason it's hard to process this last one. So much changed...so much.

Some things stayed the same. When I was first invited to help develop a new editorial approach for *strategy* back in 2000, the single biggest threat to the industry was consolidation of North American marketing, with large corporations swallowing Canadian operations south of the border. That's why *strategy* chose to focus on covering "bold vision and brand new ideas," showcasing Canadian marketers' successes.

As the decade draws to a close, Canadian-led marketing organizations still need to stand up to brand-by-brand scrutiny as a smart investment. To make it more interesting, managing retail relationships and meeting increasing support expectations have made things much more challenging for manufacturers. And while speed to market has always been a factor, "faster" now has to come bundled with "bigger," "better" and "cheaper."

So our Marketers of the Year certainly had to deliver on the mandate of "bold vision" to make the cut in 2010. This year's winners rallied huge organizations behind major change – from Belinda Young's light-speed FreshCo launch for Sobey's and Patrick Dickinson's orchestration of The Bay's haute makeover, to Denise Vaillancourt's redirecting of STM's rank and file towards greener thinking.

On the CPG front, P&G's Zeeshan Shams's Pampers work is the poster case for the value of on-the-ground marketing vision, with a killer customer-unique retail strategy, regional-specific consumer programs, and made-in-Canada claims that were picked up as best in class.

Meanwhile, the overall winner, TD's Dominic Mercuri, continued to break new ground to reach consumers, such as comfy green chair interstitials starring creatives from prime-time hits.

Congrats to all the 2010 Marketers of the Year!

And since it's the end of a decade, we also looked back to see what/who stood out the most over the last 10 years. After the list was compiled, debated and whittled down to a final four, we were left with a person, an agency and two brands – one global and one homegrown.

Our person of the decade, Hugh Dow, chairman of Mediabrands Canada, is not only an architect of the agency-parented stand-alone media shop in Canada, he was a driving force for improving Canada's metrics. Dow always quickly jumped in to take advantage of new opportunities, from the first convergence deals at the start of the decade, to the global remit he took on towards the end of his career, which wraps at the end of the decade.

A decade of being at the top of creative award tallies, expansion at home and abroad, and a lot of long-running campaigns for a lot of long-standing clients landed Taxi at the top of our Agency of the Decade list. And the recent acquisition by WPP proves that it made Sir Martin's list too.

Our homegrown brand of the decade is Tim Hortons. The savvy marketing strategy behind this now-ubiquitous QSR is to stay homespun and cozy for the double-double crowd – with a lot of community-facing programs like Timbits Sports and Camp Day, while welcoming new fans via JWT's heartwarming-story-vertising. A fierce schedule of innovation on the menu front has seen the former donut destination become an urban contender on the coffee-to-lunch front.

Our final brand of the decade embraced a global platform and stole headlines around the world for Canada's contributions. Canada not only brought "Evolution" to Dove's Real Beauty campaign (earning two Grand Prix at Cannes and causing widespread "viral" lust), the team at Unilever, Ogilvy and former media agency PHD concocted a play, a book and, with longtime partner Capital C, was invited into bedrooms across the country with the Sleepover for Self-Esteem.

Nice going, eh.

Once again I've run out of space due to the other constant: too many brilliant things going on to mention them all.

Happy new decade, mm
Mary Maddever, exec editor, *strategy*, *Media in Canada* and *stimulant*

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From shouting to a good conversation

Looking back on the past decade is a dizzying exercise. I'm not one for hyperbole, but this might have been the single greatest period of innovation ever for marketers. It's gotten to the point where there is a palpable fear of missing the next new media vehicle or science-driven discovery. Have you figured out your brand's mobile platform? Do you have a detailed understanding of the patterns of neurons that fire when someone sees what they like in-store? It's a full-time job just keeping up with the possibilities, let alone understanding the implications.

As the number of tools and media at our disposal exploded, something amazing happened. Marketing communications became democratized. Doing it well was once the domain of the multi-million dollar budget. Now, almost anyone with a database, basic software and editing tools, some tech savvy and a sound marketing platform can

penetrate or develop a market. So, while there's never been a more exciting time to be a marketer, with all of the new clutter it's never been more difficult to break through to the consumer. Where does this leave brands with considerable resources at their disposal?

On the occasion of *strategy's* 20th anniversary in December 2009, we asked several creative agencies to submit cover designs conveying the evolution of marketing over that period. In the end, the one that caught our eye was an invertible illustration conveying the concept of the marketer moving from shouting to listening.

The truth is, listening is okay but what's really changed is the potential for dialogue or, put another way, an ongoing conversation with your consumers. Sure, social media has wrested absolute control from brands, but marketers need to develop the skills to steer that conversation. Like any conversation that's worth having, it needs to be meaningful to both parties. This requires an understanding of the interests of your consumers and, specifically, how they intersect with your brand's values and core offering. It's not easy to develop a good platform, but it stands to reason that investing in an ongoing dialogue creates a deeper and meaningful connection. Once developed, this connection can't readily be displaced or disintermediated by growing forces of consolidation in the channel or new and nimble entrants in your market with no equity. The tools are there to do it well, marketers just need to develop the skill and the will.

So, as you sit back over the holidays, ask yourself what you might talk about with your consumers, and more importantly, who they are talking to already.

Russell Goldstein

Executive publisher, *strategy*, *Media in Canada*, *stimulant*

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THE GIFT OF GOATS



Festivity and the spirit of giving are common themes when ad agencies commence their (sometimes wacky) holiday outreach efforts. Here's what two are up to.

Cundari never butts heads over holiday generosity. This year

they're forgoing client gift-giving to donate the money they would've spent to a good cause, but with a twist: they're giving a herd of goats to families in third-world countries. The agency shot a video featuring its chairman and CEO, Aldo Cundari, documenting his quest to find the perfect goat, resulting in an unlikely friendship. It can be watched on the Cundari Group's YouTube channel. (Better do a herd headcount. We suspect it's shy one goat. —Ed.)

DDB Vancouver also gave back with their fifth annual Share DDB art crawl and silent auction. Every member of the agency's staff contributed to the silent auction, which featured items ranging from staff photography to belly-dancing lessons. Held in November, the event was a rousing success, breaking records, not only with the \$20,000 it raised for Vancouver-based charities the James Lee Foundation and Lookout Emergency Aid Society, but also with the number of guests attending, ensuring that it was anything but a quiet affair. **JP**

FOODFUN TOYS WITH HEALTHY EATING

BY MELINDA MATTOS



Montreal-based FoodFun wants kids to play with their food. Created by Adam Starr, president and founder of Gearwerx Experiential Marketing, and run out of the Gearwerx office, the new company is developing games it hopes will encourage a positive relationship with healthy foods.

"There is an apathetic attitude in our society right now relative to a healthy lifestyle," Starr says, reinforced by the fact that North American childhood obesity rates have almost tripled in the past 25 years.

A father of three, Starr was inspired in part by the experiential marketing work he's done for the Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada, including assisting in the launch of its Spark program for healthy kids.

So far, three games have been released: FoodMoves, a card game that encourages kids to run and jump as they identify different foods; FoodFarm, a riff on pin the tail on the donkey; and a series of flashcards called FoodFlash.

With prices ranging from \$8 to \$19, the games are available online at Foodfun.org, and the company is in talks with several grocery chains about distribution. Starr sees grocery stores as an ideal retail channel for reaching the target demo — moms, teachers and other caregivers — while they're actively thinking about food. His goal is to have the products in grocery stores by September 2011, which is childhood obesity awareness month.

For now, FoodFun is reaching out to consumers via PR and social media, both handled internally. Bon appétit!

THE VERDICT: PEPSICO'S CFL REFRESH PAYS OFF

Although PepsiCo knew combining its Refresh community grants program with CFL players during the playoffs was a good play, it didn't realize it would score as well as it did.



With the voting closed on the contest and the winner announced during Grey Cup week (Nov. 22 to 28) in Edmonton, Nathania Dashner, marketing manager, PepsiCo Canada, says that the campaign has over-delivered.

The eight players (one per team) involved in the Pepsi Refresh Project-CFL Challenge garnered 360,000 votes in eight weeks in support of local projects in their communities. "We would've been really, really happy with 200,000 [votes]," Dashner says.

The secret to their success was the ability of PepsiCo and the CFL to repeatedly engage the audience as players were eliminated and a new round of voting was required. It also made the promotion difficult, Dashner says. "We had the intro, final four, final two, and now we'll have the celebratory commercial, so logistically it was a very intense program," she says.

The CFL has delivered record-setting numbers for TSN this fall, and that, combined with the shift to a more interactive promotional strategy at the organization, has meant a much more successful season for everyone.

"Everything they're doing has become two-way," Dashner says of the CFL's new media strategy. "[They're asking] 'How do we make the fan a part of the game? How do we make the fan a part of the community? How do we open that line of dialogue so it's not just us constantly throwing things at them?'"

Seems the new playbook is delivering on that. **CM**

COCA-COLA LIVES POSITIVELY

BY CRAIG MACBRIDE & EMILY WEXLER

20% of the world's freshwater is in Canada. Shouldn't 100% of it be conserved?



Coca-Cola Canada wants the country to know it cares about more than just making beverages.

The CPG company is highlighting its CSR efforts in a new campaign, pointing out the changes it's making to be more sustainable, as well as its community involvement and partnerships with non-profits like ParticipACTION and WWF-Canada.

The "Live Positively" campaign focuses on seven core areas, such as active living, which includes a

program with ParticipACTION to motivate youth across the country. Other areas include water stewardship and climate protection, referring to the company's reduction of its carbon footprint by 11% since 2007.

Sandra Banks, VP, public affairs and communications, Coca-Cola Canada, says the push has been several years in the making. "We've changed our business to address the issues that matter, be they environmental, or the well-being of consumers," she says. "We've been looking at a variety of ways to change how we operate, and we're now starting to tell those stories because we have results to show."

Targeting influential adults, print ads debuted in *La Presse* and the *Globe and Mail*, and are appearing in daily newspapers across the country. They drive to Livepositively.com, where visitors can learn more about Coca-Cola's CSR efforts and discover ways to get involved, such as volunteer opportunities.

Leo Burnett's Toronto office did the creative and Universal McCann in Toronto handled the media buy.

RBC SHOOTS TO SCORE

RBC is leveraging the wave of pride Canadians felt coming out of the Vancouver Olympics to launch a new grassroots hockey initiative.

Play Hockey will be one of the pillars of the bank's marketing strategy, and focuses on growing the sport in North American communities through a \$1 million-a-year grant program and the involvement of a team of celebrity hockey ambassadors. Going forward, it aims to rekindle the energy its sponsorship created at the Vancouver Olympics.



"The Olympics had an amazing impact on our brand equity scores, so we needed to keep momentum going, and push things back to the community – like the torch relay had done so well for us,"

says Jim Little, chief brand and communications officer, RBC.

As of Dec. 26, Canadians can submit applications to receive funding for programs helping the development of hockey in various communities. RBC unveiled the program at events in Toronto, Montreal and Edmonton by announcing three initial grants of \$25,000 for projects in those cities.

RBC Play Hockey is being promoted locally through branches, as well as TV, online and print that will kick off mid-December and carry on into the new year, preceding RBC's winter RSP investment messaging.

BBDO Toronto and Cloudraker Montreal are handling the creative, with M2 Universal taking care of media and Stellick Marketing Communications in Toronto managing media relations and strategy. **JP**

"Shitty wedding gifts just seemed like a really interesting thing to do"

Brilliant!

BY JONATHAN PAUL

WEDDING REPUBLIC TEASES WITH GHASTLY GIFTS

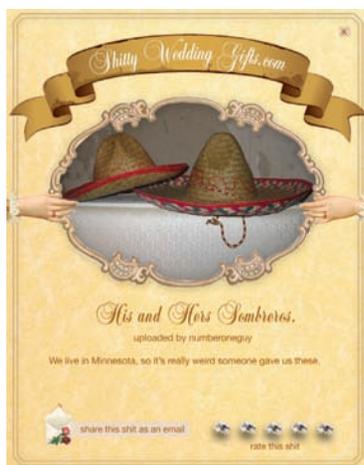
Saatchi & Saatchi in Toronto came up with a killer way to create buzz for Wedding Republic, a startup aiming to transform wedding registries online: a teaser campaign that celebrates shitty wedding gifts.

Shittyweddinggifts.com pays tribute to terrible presents given to unsuspecting couples on their special day. Set amid an overly romantic wedding invitation-style backdrop, the site opens on two love birds that swoop in to perch on a scrolling bar of atrocious matrimonial alms, periodically shitting upon it. Those victimized by shitty gifts can, under the veil of an alias, share their tale of wedding woe and have it rated: one to five shits.

"Curating an online bazaar of shitty wedding gifts just seemed like a really interesting thing to do because of the universality of it," says Brian Sheppard, co-executive CD, Saatchi & Saatchi. "These stories are the sort of thing people would want to share."

Wedding Republic will offer a new gift-giving model: a cash registry. It enables couples to choose their own gifts and have guests kick in by buying shares of a puzzle-like visualization of the dream presents.

The site is being promoted through blogger relations and viral videos on YouTube, and will remain unbranded until it receives enough traction, at which point it will direct visitors to Weddingrepublic.com, which is currently live in a beta version. Its hard launch, with branding care of Saatchi, will be at the end of December.



CHARITABLE GIVING GETS CATALOGUED

Canada's charities are creating a physical holiday presence to make more gift lists

BY MELINDA MATTOS, WITH FILES FROM JONATHAN PAUL

Tempted to buy Snuggles for the whole family, just to make gift-giving easier? A handful of charities have a better idea: they've created holiday catalogues (both online and off) full of life-saving supplies for people in need, so Canadians can purchase meaningful gifts on behalf of their loved ones.

This November, Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF) launched MSFwarehouse.ca, which allows Canadians to shop for relief items ranging from a rapid HIV test (\$30) to a fully-stocked first aid kit (\$1,060).

The goal is to remove some of the mystery behind MSF's international aid work, explains Rebecca Davies, director of fundraising, MSF. "If you give to a hospital or an arts charity in Canada, you can go see the impact of your donation," she says. "But few Canadians can see the impact [of MSF's work] in Somalia or Haiti."

War Child launched a similar effort at Warchildgifts.com, with a catalogue featuring seed, tool kits and bread ovens to help families in war-ravaged countries rebuild their lives.

A campaign by Toronto-based John St., including TV, online and radio, depicts humorous situations where people are saved from bodily harm by terrible gifts – such as a woman who falls from a rickety ladder but is saved from smashing her head on the ground by a tacky Christmas pillow. The tagline, "Horrible gifts don't save lives," drives the true message home. War Child's promotional effort also includes a stunt in Toronto shopping areas featuring a group of carolers who conjure memories of Christmases past by sporting a variety of bad gifts

"When we started contrasting all the good that War Child gifts do against the uselessness of so many Christmas gifts, we figured we were on to something," says Simon Bruyn, copywriter, John St.



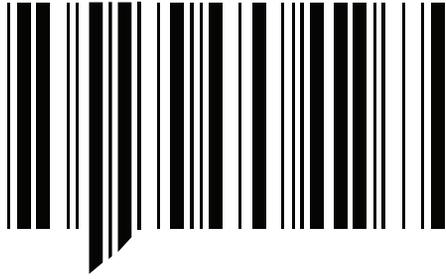
The website was launched with a two-week teaser campaign that saw mystery crates placed atop Astral bus shelters in Toronto, with ads featuring the URL Whatsupwiththecrate.com. On the site, visitors found a blog authored by the crate, which was searching for its true calling in life (and engaging with potential supporters on Facebook and Twitter). By mid-November, the crate had figured out its purpose – it was going to work for MSF, transporting supplies around the world – and the OOH crates had been repainted with destination names and the MSF Warehouse URL. Print ads appeared in *Metro's* Toronto edition and *T.O. Night* before and after the reveal.

The campaign was developed internally by MSF, with creative and media by Stephen Thomas in Toronto. As a not-for-profit, MSF aims to create a big impact with a small budget. "Our doctors in the field have to be innovative, without the resources they have at home. It's the same philosophy in our fundraising department," Davies says.

For a charity that works closer to home, Sunnybrook Foundation has launched a glossy "Gifts of Giving" catalogue that shows the costs of new hospital equipment – everything from a fetal monitor to a chemotherapy treatment suite – and allows donors to buy a share in the items. It's complemented by an online version at Sunnybrook.ca/giving.

Sunnybrook is distributing the catalogue in the *Globe and Mail* and on hospital premises. It's also targeting its existing donor bases through direct mail and e-blasts. The catalogue was developed by Lift Agency in Aurora, ON., with brand marketing and media by Dentsu in Toronto.

"Donors can actually see the tangibility," says Jennifer Schnare, director, direct marketing, Sunnybrook Foundation. "There's something empowering in that. Instead of buying your grandma a scarf, you can give her a share."



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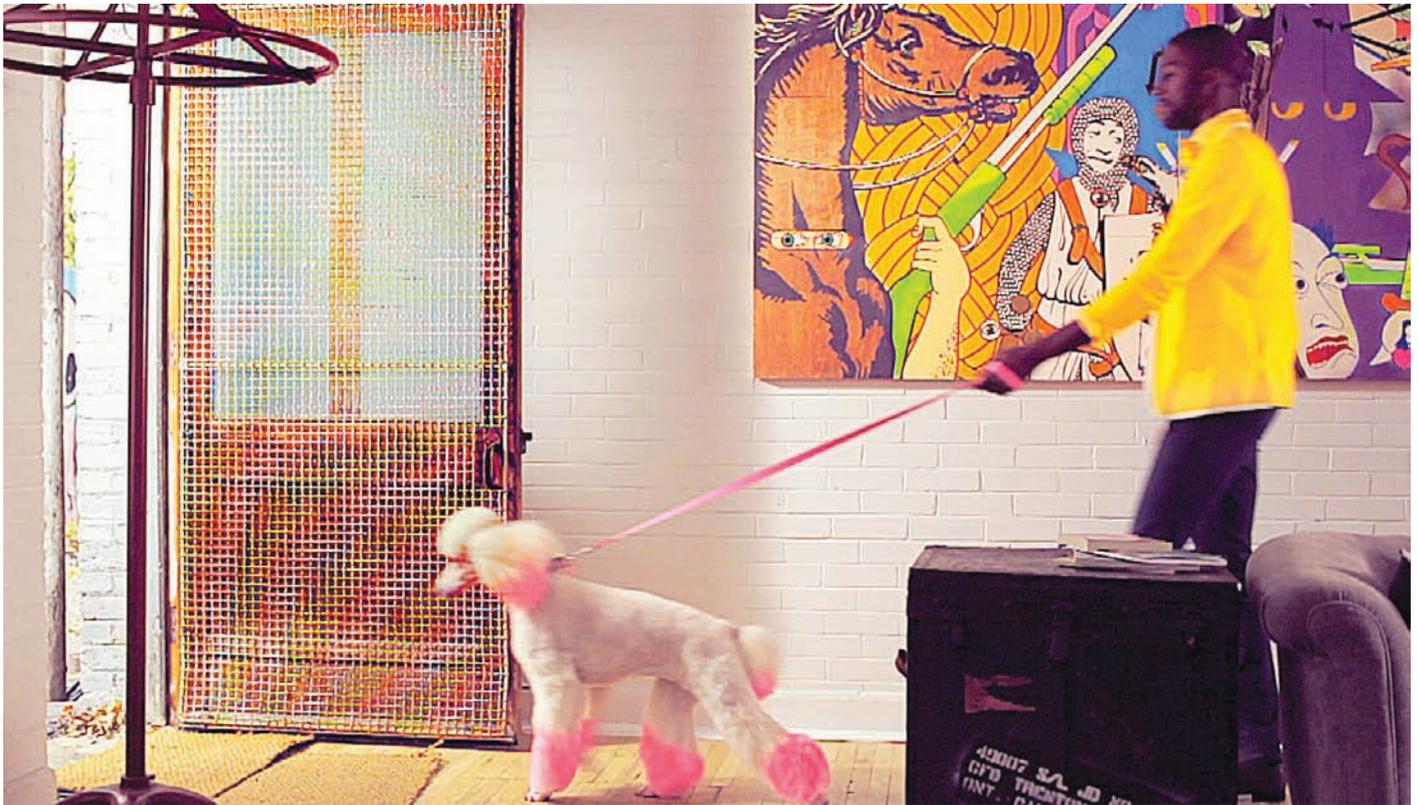
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OUTSTANDING NEW CAMPAIGNS

BY JONATHAN PAUL



TOSHIBA CHANNELS YOUR REALITY TV-STARRING DREAMS

Toshiba is helping those with dreams of celebrity become TV channels unto themselves.

Developed with CP+B Canada, MYChannel (Toshiba.ca/mychannel) is an online video creation tool promoting the benefits of the brand's range of REGZA TVs for the holiday season. It allows people to produce a personalized "channel" to share via Facebook and email.

The TVs allow viewers to wirelessly stream content from their PCs, and Toshiba also engineered an app called Toshiba Media Controller for its notebooks that enables video, music and picture sharing with any compatible home entertainment system.

"On the MYChannel microsite, people can experience the benefits of these products by creating their own channel using videos and photos from their computer, Facebook and Flickr that they can then share with friends and family, or download to watch on their TV," says Aaron Starkman, executive CD, CP+B Canada.

CP+B developed two 15-second TV spots to promote MYChannel, each providing a quick glimpse into the life and personality of an individual. One of the spots focuses on a gent named Louis and his extensive collection of bowties, as well as his passion for hockey and ping-pong.

"It's all these little 'bits' of our interests adding up that make us the interesting characters that we all are," says Starkman.

The agency also developed online banners and pre-roll ads that drive to the site and promote a contest whereby the best MYChannel videos will be projected for a week in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver.

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 CD: **Michael Murray**
 AD: **Spencer Black**
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 digital producer: **Jennifer Costello**
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VIDÉOTRON OPENS TECH TEMPLE

Vidéotron recently opened its new flagship store on Sainte-Catherine Street in Montreal, and with design duties handled by Sid Lee, it looks nothing short of a technological Taj Mahal.

The design goal, says Martin Leblanc, Sid Lee architect and partner, was to take the language used in campaigns for the Quebecor-owned telecom company and express it via architecture, bringing the brand to life in the store. Thus, Vidéotron's corporate colours (yellow and black) are prominently featured in the store's design, with the brand's full range of products and services displayed in a highly graphic environment created by the use of interactive technology.

"The store is about two things: people and technology," says Leblanc. "We wanted a place for the customer and service people at Vidéotron to meet, so it was important for us to create this canvas and also expose them to technology."

A major feature of the store is an LED-animated multimedia staircase, the first of its kind in North America, which leads up to two soundproof booths equipped with 85-inch HD screens. The store counters feature interactive, multi-touch flat-screen tops, custom-created by Sid Lee and Montreal-based Nurun, which handled graphics and programming, and Montreal-based Solotech, which provided the technology and managed the installation.

The store launch was promoted with a PR event and posters featuring QR codes placed along Sainte-Catherine Street.

advertiser: **Vidéotron**

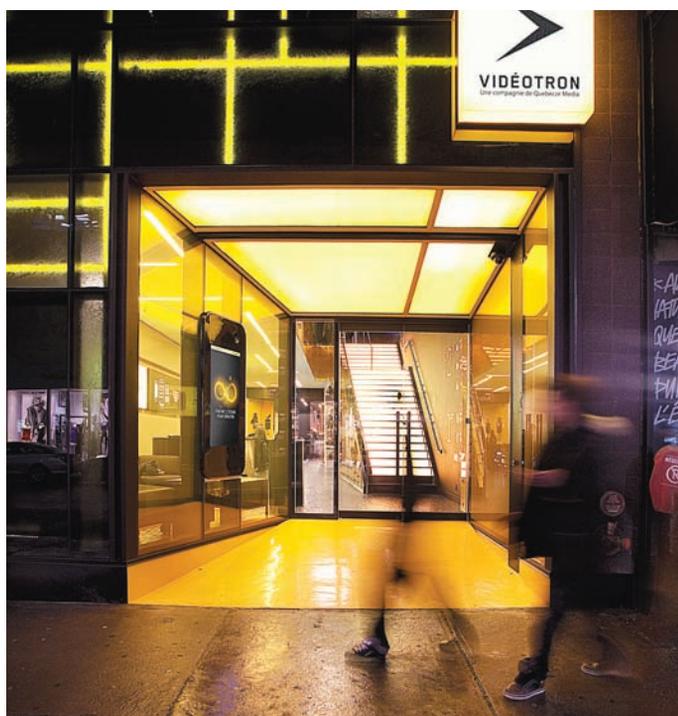
architectural project team: **consortium of Sid Lee Architecture and RCAA**

consultants: **Gsmprjct, Dessau and Planifitech**

multimedia installation: **Solotech**

general contractor: **Albert Jean Construction**

graphic production: **Nurun, De Shed, Boogie Studio and Moment Factory**



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Congratulations on winning Marketer of the Year, Dom. Despite your renowned modesty, we just couldn't let this pass without a small celebration.



marketers | 2010 of the year



BY MELINDA MATTOS

Winning Marketer of the Year takes chutzpah – you need to be willing to try new things and perhaps even fail a few times (though not too many) while blazing a trail for your brand.

To establish our shortlist, we asked industry observers who they thought really stood out this year, tossed in some of our own nominations, consulted experts and then wrestled the list down to a top five. Then we asked Canadian marketers to cast their votes, as they weighed in on the state of the marketing nation in our annual industry survey (see p. 30).

In the end, TD Financial Group's Dominic Mercuri took home the crown for his groundbreaking integration deals, youth-focused digital and commercials starring a pair of grumpy old men.

Read on to learn what Canada's top marketers were up to in 2010, including The Bay's Patrick Dickinson, P&G's Zeeshan Shams, Sobeys' Belinda Youngs and Société de transport de Montréal's Denise Vaillancourt.





Banking made comfy

Overall winner Dominic Mercuri has kept TD Canada Trust at the head of the pack with integration deals, digital investment and a pair of lovable curmudgeons

BY MELINDA MATTOS

TD Canada Trust's brand identity is built on the notion of making banking more comfortable, with its trademark big green chair driving the point home. But when you're on a winning streak – ranked highest in customer satisfaction among the big five banks for five years running by J.D. Power and Associates, and six years by Synovate – it's hardly the time to get too comfortable.

"If you look at the customer experience being delivered by some of our competitors, it's much better today than it was five years ago, so we've had to keep investing and pushing forward," says Dominic Mercuri, CMO and EVP, TD Bank Financial Group.

TD's campaigns highlight the way customer needs are served by the bank – with a pair of grumpy old men acting as spokesmen for longer branch hours and personal assessments – while customer experience is monitored and measured at every communication point.

If Mercuri is fixated on quantifiable results, it's for good reason.

"I started my career in a direct-marketing function, where everything is measured and quantified," he says, referring back to his first marketing role at Allstate Insurance. "I believe in using customer insights to develop my strategy and, once I have a strategy, relentless execution against it."

Mercuri joined Canada Trust as assistant VP of direct marketing in 1992, after stints with CIBC and Royal Bank. He became part of the TD Bank Financial Group in 2001, when Canada Trust merged with TD, and took the reins as CMO in 2004. He currently oversees a team of 400 marketers spread across Canada, the U.S. and Europe.

Having worked with Mercuri for a decade, John Boniface, COO, Draftfcb (TD's AOR), has a good sense of what's kept him in a corner office for so long.

"Dom is a thoughtful marketer," Boniface says. "He thinks things through with the big picture and the longer term in mind, and does not hesitate to solicit recommendations from those around him whose opinion he trusts. He'll weight these heavily but, in the end, [he'll] make the decision – he will always have a point of view."

He's also inquisitive, Boniface says. "He likes to learn and he asks good questions – often these days a lost art. It's his way of getting a 360-degree view of an issue or opportunity and challenging those who work with him."

This approach no doubt came in handy as TD Canada Trust was seeking new ways to connect

with consumers and stand its ground against media fragmentation.

As more and more viewers opt out of seeing commercials – via PVR, on-demand or watching television online – TD has invested heavily in integration.

With help from new media agency Starcom, and in partnership with CTvglobemedia, this spring TD launched "Up Close & Comfortable," a series of behind-the-scenes chats with writers and directors from major network shows like *Lost*, *American Idol*, *Dancing with the Stars* and *Grey's Anatomy*.



TSN's Chris Amberley gets comfortable in one of TD's behind-the-scenes interstitials

Seated in the trademark green chair, the series creatives talked about comfort within the context of their programs, underscoring the brand's positioning and providing viewers with the inside scoop on their favourite shows.

Before this, in fall 2009, MediaCom helped TD partner with CBC to have bank branches worked into the plot lines of *Being Erica*, *Heartland* and *Little Mosque on the Prairie*.

"I have to admit, I've been a fan of product integration – you can see it's worked well for the packaged goods industry for many years," Mercuri says. "It gives us an opportunity to [reach people] in an environment where they're more receptive to the brand, because it's integrated right into the show."

TD has also remained a heavy hitter with conventional TV spots. This year, seven new "Grumpy Old Men" executions from Draftfcb continued to poke fun at the older, more traditional view of banking, with the campaign becoming the most successful in TD's history.

The spot "Fatherly Advice" – which features a woman running into her curmudgeonly dad and his pal at the bank – drove a 70% increase in personal assessments over the previous year. Meanwhile, "Milk" – an ad that sees the pair mocking "mobile mortgage specialists," reminiscing about the days when milk was the



sponsors for these events, Mercuri says, and TD has seen a 75% increase in employees signing up for same-sex benefits since beginning these commitments.

This year has also seen TD investing substantially in digital, with 18% of its marketing budget now spent in this arena.

do the same – the university receiving votes from the highest proportion of its enrolled students would win. Twist Image acted as the key digital partner on this campaign.

The results were promising. In 2009, post-event stats showed that 98% of concert attendees knew TD was the sponsor and 79% felt more positive towards the brand, with the program ultimately resulting in a 54% year-over-year increase in incremental student account acquisitions.

TD also launched a Twitter account and YouTube page this year, and it's among the world's leading online financial services firms, with more than six million online customers.

"I think that's one of the keys in our organization," says Mercuri. "We're not afraid to try things – and then we measure the heck out of them to know if we should try it again. The key for us is really about testing, learning and building."

With Mercuri at the helm, the TD brand has climbed to number two in Interbrand's "2010 Canadian Brands" and number 71 in BrandZ's "Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands." And the green chair – introduced in 2001, to usher in the rebranding of TD Canada Trust – has remained a highly recognizable visual asset, integrated into print, TV, digital and, of course, the branches themselves.

When asked how the brand's identity has changed over the years, Mercuri says the shift has



Above: TD's "Fatherly Advice" spot – part of the "Grumpy Old Men" campaign – drove a 70% increase in personal assessments over the previous year.

Above centre: The green chair, introduced in 2001, acts as a unifying element throughout TD's print, TV and digital materials.

only thing delivered to your door – contributed to reaching 139% of campaign objective.

"These ads represent that we deliver against what's important, in an interesting, humorous way that fits the TD brand," Mercuri says.

TD's desire to make banking more comfortable for all customers has also been underscored by its efforts to welcome the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community into its branches. The FI's sponsorship of LGBT events in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver has put TD at the top of the unaided recall list of corporate

"That's up quite a bit from where it was three years ago," Mercuri says. "We've been very active in making [digital] an important part of virtually every campaign we run."

A recent frosh week program provides a strong example of how TD has been including digital in its plans. Launched in 2009 and repeated in 2010, "Pump It Up" offered university students the chance to win a free concert for their school featuring big-name artists such as The Stills and K-OS. To win, students needed to go online, vote for their school and mobilize their classmates to

been less dramatic than you'd think.

"If you look at the heritage Canada Trust brand or the heritage TD Bank brand, you can find materials that were produced 50 years ago and they were all very customer-service oriented," he says. "The messages were quite consistent with what we talk about today, which is delivering a comfortable customer service experience. While we represent it a little differently now, the brand has actually stayed fairly true over the years."



The Bay's stylish makeover

With Patrick Dickinson leading the marketing charge, the 130-year-old retailer is putting fashion first

BY JONATHAN PAUL

Fashion-forward thinking and a fashion-first attitude have propelled The Bay to where it is now. They are two key elements behind a mantra that's guided the company's VP marketing Patrick Dickinson and his team in executing a turnaround strategy that's been in the works for two years, aiming to revitalize the brand in the minds of Canadians as a go-to fashion destination.

The new thinking has seen the retailer become a more dynamic organization over the past year says Dickinson, who's been with The Bay for four years and started his marketing career as a media estimator at J. Walter Thompson. Given the speed of the strategic about-face, managing his 45-strong marketing team required a lot of passion-inspiring, consensus-building and, most importantly, responsiveness.

Creative, media, PR and the brand's digital efforts are all currently handled in-house.

"There is no challenge that can be thrown at marketing that we're not able to respond to," says Dickinson. "There's an expectation that everyone is able to do seemingly extraordinary things and we do. The team pulls rabbits out of the hat every hour of the day."

Implemented with the arrival of president and CEO Bonnie Brooks two years ago, the new style-centric strategy has helped The Bay achieve sales growth targets despite reduced budgets and a tumultuous economic environment.

An omnipresent radio campaign featuring the Above: Olympic athlete Alexandre Bilodeau, Patrick Dickinson and TSN broadcaster Brian Williams.

voice of Brooks has touted some of The Bay's new exclusive brands, with the voices of featured designers and celebrities such as Jessica Simpson, Jamie Oliver and Jeanne Beker (who has her own line at The Bay) recently added.

A new TV spot developed in-house featuring behind-the-scenes images from a photo shoot The Bay did for its Insider's Look Book also reflects the new haute positioning – and highlights just how much the department store has grown since opening its first location in 1881.

"We've made an effort to become a more

fashionable destination, present a more edited assortment to customers...and to portray The Bay [as] a rejuvenated brand," says Dickinson.

It's a positioning that he had coincidentally begun to realize two years prior to Brooks' arrival with the development of *La Collection*, a fashion-centric reality series based in Quebec, which launched in the fall of 2009. Created in conjunction with TVA, the show features top Quebec-based designers working in a location resembling The Bay's downtown Montreal store, creating lines or new items that ultimately show

The NEW VINTAGE

ERAS CHANGE, but each generation adds something to history's closet. The '50s, the '60s, and the '70s all show up this FALL for a POSTMODERN FASHION reunion.

Juicy Couture

Adam

up for sale in all The Bays in Quebec. The finale of *La Collection's* first season collected over one million viewers in the province. It's second season kicked off this fall.

The Bay moved ahead with the program following its top-level shakeup, says Dickinson, because it supported the brand's newly minted positioning as a destination that connects to a fashion-involved crowd.

During the first year of the turnaround strategy Dickinson and his team found themselves in the thick of a research project that tapped the brainpower of over 7,000 consumers across the country to re-segment the Canadian marketplace – by brand, by store, by smaller market, by purchase behaviours and attitudes. A major understanding gleaned from the research was that stores need to reflect local tastes, and in the case of major Canadian metropolitan markets like Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal, people clamour for exclusive, high-end brands.

"I think a department store issue in the last 20 years was that providing commodity assortments in a bigger format is not enough to attract today's consumers," says Dickinson. "They have to believe you are offering something they aren't going to get somewhere else and the way that's done in

today's world is through brands and exclusivity."

Thus, in the second year of the turnaround strategy came the revival of The Room and the debut of White Spaces, which have since breathed new life into the country's oldest retailer, executed to not only develop an in-store roster of a new tier of high-end designer brands,

but also reclaim credibility and respect it had lost to niche stores and boutiques with an increasingly fashion-savvy customer base.

The Room, formerly called the St. Regis Room, was started 72 years ago at Simpson's, before The Bay bought out the chain. In its heyday, it was a destination that catered to the fashion whims



The Bay shines a spotlight on designer duds with its White Space (above) and Insider's Look Book (opposite page).



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of affluent shoppers, introducing labels like Yves Saint Laurent and Oscar de la Renta to Canada.

The fall 2009 relaunch at The Bay's flagship Queen Street location in Toronto is, in many ways, an attempt to reclaim the glory of days past. Designed by internationally renowned Toronto-based duo Yabu Pushelberg, it resembles a pristine gallery space, with a VIP platinum suite and concierge. That's all to complement its high-end fashion brands for women – including Balmain, Aquilano.Rimondi, John Galiano and Canadian labels such as Jeremy Laing, Wayne Clark and Andy Thê-Anh – existing at price points that, in some cases, are high enough to almost breach the stratosphere.

"We have over 70 designer labels in that space that are sourced, many of them, very exclusively from Europe because Toronto is a very sophisticated world-class city and there are definitely consumers of that type of product who, if it wasn't available here, would be flying to Paris and New York to buy it," says Dickinson.

Landing The Bay a Retail Council of Canada award for large chain store design at the Excellence in Retail Awards in June, The Room was launched with an event befitting the exclusive space. It featured guests such as Canadian model Daria Werbowy, designers including Erdem, Jeremy Laing and

Kimberley Newport-Mimran (Pink Tartan), plus socialites and a smattering of other influencers within the fashion and pop-culture worlds. Given their combined clout with fashion-minded followers (in person and on Twitter), Dickinson and his team predominantly relied on the power of influence to spread word of The Room.

"The best promotion is one friend telling another," he says. "The credibility that a person who is known for their fashion has within their small community is what they can provide, and giving their blessing to a shopping destination is huge."

They also turned to these influencers to promote the opening of the White Space at an invite-only event at the Toronto Queen Street location in March, which was co-hosted by *Fashion* magazine. Attended by about 300 Toronto trendsetters, the event featured laptop stations set up around the chic, contemporary space so partygoers could tweet about the event and the space, which still features designer brands, but at more affordable prices.

The Bay has since opened up White Spaces in Montreal, Calgary, Vancouver and Toronto's Yorkville store, offering designer fashions, like The Room, but at more affordable prices.

But a department store does not thrive on niche alone and to re-engage the masses last

year it leveraged the biggest event of 2010, the Olympics. To tout The Bay's status as the official apparel sponsor of the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver, Dickinson and his team worked with John St. to develop the "We were made for this" positioning.

"We wanted to use it as a platform to remind Canada about our role in the country, as a really foundational element, and do it in the context of patriotism, pride and people's desire to participate in the Winter Games themselves," says Dickinson.

Implementing a media mix that included TV, outdoor and print, and making all related apparel available across the entire HBC store pantheon – including the now infamous red mittens that even Oprah Winfrey had to have – the program exceeded sales targets by 60%. The mittens alone brought in \$12 million and are still going strong, having been redesigned and reissued for the holidays.

But, the best part of the past year for Dickinson has been conversations he's had with The Bay customers, who've been sending in over 200 letters every week.

"My favourite thing is when people come to me and say, 'Boy, you guys are just doing something special and I'm thinking of The Bay in a whole different way,'" says Dickinson.

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P&G's baby boom

With the launch of Pampers' biggest product innovation in 25 years, Zeeshan Shams has boosted the diaper brand to number one

BY MELINDA MATTOS



It's been a good year for Procter & Gamble's Zeeshan Shams. Under his watch, Pampers has overtaken Huggies to become Canada's top choice for both diapers and wipes (as measured by Nielsen). His baby-care team (a multifunction team of 20, including six marketers) came out on top at this fall's P&G Canadian Marketing Awards, taking home the Best Canadian Brand Building award, as well as Best Marketing of a Product Initiative. And, of course, he was nominated for *strategy's* Marketer of the Year.

"It's a constant drumbeat of success," Shams says about the growth of Pampers during his time as category brand manager, baby and toddler care (this October he took a new assignment as associate marketing director on health care).

Shams has spent his entire career at P&G, joining the Pakistan office upon graduation from his MBA in 1998. He launched the baby care division there two years later, before transferring to Canada in 2003, and joined the baby care division here in 2007.

Lynn Mayer, VP, communication planning group director, Carat Canada, has worked with Shams for the last three years on Pampers, and describes him as a highly disciplined marketer. "He's direct, focused and energetic," she says. "He's challenging in the most positive sense of the word and, for him, excellent execution is an attitude."

Shams had an opportunity to demonstrate that attitude this year, as Pampers launched its biggest innovation in 25 years. Next-gen diapers featuring Dry Max – a liner technology that allows diapers to be two times dryer and 20% thinner – didn't hit shelves until March, but the marketing work began much earlier. In a program dubbed the "Canadian Roadshow," the Pampers team pounded the pavement, meeting with senior management at key retailers to develop customized programs for the upcoming product kickoff.

"We explained the technology, the benefits and how we could work together to connect with shoppers," Shams says.

With Walmart, for instance, in addition to discussing end caps and product displays, the P&G team worked to develop high-impact teaser campaigns. Weeks before the launch, Shams says, "There were messages in-store and on-shelf announcing the benefits, there were messages on the flyers and on the Walmart website."

The teams also talked logistics, ensuring that within 48 to 72 hours of launch, the majority of stores would be stocked. This strong teamwork earned Pampers a Walmart Global President's Award.

With other retailers, like Sobeys, they leveraged customer-loyalty databases to send targeted offers to appropriate consumers.

Shams says the Dry Max launch was a holistic one, focused on both the measurable benefits of the product ("two times dryer, 20% thinner" would become a mantra) and the resulting emotional benefit that "playtime never ends" when your baby's in a dryer, comfier diaper. It relied on the co-operation of all agency partners, including Saatchi & Saatchi in New York for creative, plus Toronto-based agencies Optimum for PR, News Marketing for in-store and shelf-media, and Carat Canada for media.

In addition to the traditional media mix, the Dry Max launch was accompanied by Pampers' biggest digital campaign to date, which included a video-upload contest, online sampling, YouTube videos and social media.

"The [goal] was to surround moms online with information about this new technology, so they were aware of and excited about Pampers' new Dry Max diapers," Shams says.

This strong digi push builds on the sturdy foundation of Pampers Village – the brand's Canadian online community, developed by global IT services company Atos Origin and maintained by Pampers' global AOR for digital, StrawberryFrog – which attracts 20,000 unique visitors per



Pampers keeps moms returning to its online community with webisodes like *Welcome to Parenting*.

month. As well as product information, the site houses parenting advice, user forums, webisodes, online shopping and the brand's Gifts To Grow loyalty program.

"We know that the internet is mom's key source of information, and that's why we put special emphasis on connecting with her online," Shams says.

The brand's interest in digital is bolstered by a 2009 Forrester survey that found that, on average, Canadian new moms spend nine hours a week using the internet – more than the combined time they spend listening to radio and reading newspapers and magazines.

The digital sphere is not without its challenges, however. Shortly after the launch of Dry Max, a U.S.-based Facebook group appeared, with its members claiming that the new technology was giving babies severe rashes. Over 11,000 people joined, and soon afterwards, numerous complaints had been filed to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and Health Canada.

Although most of the hoopla took place stateside, and an investigation by U.S. and Canadian officials found no link between the new diapers and increased rashes, it provided a reminder that the viral nature of the web isn't always pleasant.

"The U.S. and Canada are pretty close, and anything that happens online travels fast," Shams says. "But we've gone through the right evaluative processes with agencies in Canada and the U.S. and the product is top-notch – that was the conclusion, there's nothing wrong. So we've moved forward."

Damage control is just part of the job sometimes. In a way, this incident underscores what Shams (a father of three) already knew: parents want what's best for their babies, and they'll go out of their way to seek professional reassurance that their choices are the right ones.

In fact, this logic is the driving force behind Pampers' "Dermatologist recommended" and "#1 Choice of Hospitals" claims, which originated within the Canadian marketing department – communicated via digital, print, DTC and in store – and were ultimately picked up in the U.S., appearing on packaging in both markets.

"Our consumer research suggests that pediatricians and dermatologists are key sources of information for moms," Shams says. "We have a dedicated sales team that works to make our Pampers newborn diapers available to birthing hospitals across Canada."

Pampers has also been reaching out to Quebec moms with *Mes P'tits Bonheurs*, *Notre Aventure*, a series of "showmercials" blending advertising and programming, led by Montreal-based BCP. Launched in 2007



A marketing blitz trumpeted the arrival of diapers with new Dry Max technology in March.

and continuing into 2009, the three-minute spots brought together a celebrity host, local consumers and pediatricians to talk about diapers, skincare and other baby-care issues.

"They maintain an element of entertainment, which we believe is very important for the Quebec marketplace," Shams says.

Since Quebec makes up close to 25% of Pampers' Canadian consumer base, it's important to understand the needs of moms in that region, and to develop unique platforms to reach them, Shams says. He says the showmercials – supported by print, digital and customized retailer programs – resulted in incremental sales improvement in the province.

As Pampers is more than just a diaper brand, another task on Shams' recent to-do list has been providing moms with "full diapering solutions" by driving the sales of wipes. Shams explains: "In all of our marketing, when we think diapers, we think wipes – whether print, digital or scale marketing tools."

This is another area where he has been working closely with retailers. "One of the primary tools of communication big retailers have is their merchandising flyers," he says, and simply including wipes alongside diapers in the flyer makes a big difference. "We've been advocating it very proactively with our retail partners. It's working for the category and for everybody."

And the numbers bear that out: between June 2009 and June 2010, Pampers grew its diapers/trainers share by 3.8 points, while wipes grew by 2.8 points.

Now that Shams has moved on to health care at P&G, expect the retail shake-up to creep into new aisles.

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A fresh start for Sobeys

With a new discount banner, a private label revamp and enhanced loyalty programs, Belinda Youngs is shaking things up in the grocery aisles

BY MELINDA MATTOS



"Good people making good food easy." That's Sobeys' new brand positioning – developed to underscore the brand's recharged focus on wellness and consumer-employee engagement – but one could argue that it's also an apt descriptor for the supermarket co's CMO, Belinda Youngs, and the work she's been doing this year.

At the forefront of her recent accomplishments was this spring's launch of FreshCo, a new discount banner promising Ontario shoppers an escape from the dingy, bargain-basement environment of many value supermarkets. It was a project that zipped from concept to launch in just nine months.

"We wanted to generate an offer in the discount market that was less about compromise and more about what you get for the money," says Youngs, who leads a team of 65. "So we focused on more fresh, more ethnic, more local products."

Designed by AOR Rethink in Vancouver, with help from Toronto-based retail co Durnan Jackman Saffer, the new stores (launched in former Price Chopper locations) feature a minimalist aesthetic and a partially guided flow that's reminiscent of Ikea.

As Youngs says, "We wanted to create something that was the antithesis of what already existed."

But don't let FreshCo's modern design fool you: it's still a discount supermarket, and the tagline, "Fresher. Cheaper," was established to make that clear.

"Very few companies use the word 'cheaper' but it's a word your general consumer will use," Youngs says. "It denotes savvy shopping."

Launching a supermarket brand from the ground up is something Sobeys hasn't done in a century. The company was founded in Stellarton, N.S., in 1907, eventually expanding its reach outside the Atlantic provinces in the 1980s. While it's grown

Launched this spring, FreshCo brings a modern, minimalist aesthetic to discount grocery shopping.

substantially since then to become the second largest food retailer in Canada – operating a dozen different banners that include IGA, Thrifty Foods and Foodland – most of that growth happened through acquisition. Ontario has always been a weak spot for the retailer, and the province's Price Chopper banner has seen particularly poor performance in recent years, so a fresh start made sense.

Chris Staples, partner and national CD, Rethink, who's worked with Youngs for four years, says, "Belinda is a true visionary. She's not afraid to rethink every aspect of a brand from scratch, and from a 360-degree perspective."

He adds, "She's very skilled as a champion for the [Sobeys] brand, but is also very attuned to regional variations. She has good taste, and a great sense of what will actually work in a store environment."

The launch of the first eight stores was promoted via radio, public transit ads, community and national newspapers, and through direct mail, with media by Carat Canada, PR by Fleishman-Hillard and digital by Arc (all in Toronto). In the first three weeks, the

locations achieved 90% awareness and trial.

Since then, Sobeys has launched 20 more FreshCos, with sales building in line with the company's expectations. While you can expect to see more Price Choppers become FreshCo locations in the future, Youngs says the decision to switch will be made on a case by case basis.

The discount segment isn't the only thing Youngs has been refreshing. Three years ago – around the time Youngs transitioned from EVP of private label to CMO – Sobeys quietly introduced an in-house consumer test panel facility. There, trained consumers taste-test every private-label product that's being developed or reformulated. If a product fails a panel, it goes back for further tweaking.

With between 80 and 100 testers on-call, Sobeys is able to match the panel members to the type of product being developed, so wellness products are tested by people who eat healthy, while kids' products are evaluated by both children and moms. The panel can also be used to compare products with their national-brand



equivalent or a competitive private label.

The facility is the first of its kind in Canada, and Youngs says that U.K.-based Tesco and Woolworths Australia are the only other companies globally to have this capacity in-house. Since its launch, about 70% of Sobeys' private-label products have been tested.

But Youngs wants to be clear about the panel's purpose. "It's not a marketing campaign, it's not a consumer communication campaign – it's about how we create a competitive advantage around the quality and taste of our products," she says.

So far, she's pleased with the results she's been seeing in Sobeys' proprietary private-label tracking report. "We've closed the gap on taste with our primary competition," she says. "Likelihood to recommend and repeat are up."

These results come on the heels of a complete revitalization of Sobeys' 4,500-product private-label portfolio, a process that began in February 2008 and wraps up in May 2011. The process includes next-generation packaging for all private lines, designed by Fish Out of Water in Toronto, and the rebranding of the discount line from Compliments Value to Signal (with the tagline "Your signal to our lowest prices"). The revitalization also included an increased emphasis on the premium and wellness lines. This change was reflected in recent POS data, with the premium line seeing a 245% year-over-year increase, while the wellness line increased 80%.

Private labels are key not only from a profit perspective, but also from a differentiation and loyalty point of view, Youngs says.

"You have to create products where consumers will cross the road to buy them," she says.

In terms of CRM, Sobeys has also been investing heavily in leveraging the data from its loyalty



Sobeys was the first Canadian company to develop an in-house consumer test facility for its private label.

programs – Club Sobeys in Ontario and the West, Club Thrifty Foods in B.C. and Air Miles in Quebec, with the back end run by Toronto-based Exchange Solutions – developing an offer-targeting capability that means consumers receive coupons they'll actually want to use.

Using anonymized data from the loyalty program database, Sobeys has developed six segmentation models that group consumers by how often they shop, how price conscious they are, their life stage, lifestyle and so on.

When potential coupon offers are entered into the system, Sobeys' offer-matching engine uses additional logic (for instance, whether you've bought the product or a similar one before) to determine the best recipients. The system ensures that you won't receive a diaper coupon if you don't have a baby, and

won't tempt you to buy name-brand if you're already buying the private label equivalent.

The Club Sobeys quarterly statement is sent to over two million members, containing 1.4 million unique combinations of offers. This results in redemptions that Youngs says are well above the industry average.

Youngs began her career in the U.K., working in merchandising and procurement at Sainsburys Supermarkets, and Staples says her experiences there "proved invaluable, bringing some fresh perspectives to the Canadian grocery scene."

Whether you chalk it up to her international background, her fierce consumer focus or her willingness to start from scratch when necessary, there's no denying that Youngs has freshened things up at Sobeys.

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STM drives green image

With an eco-friendly rebranding, Denise Vaillancourt has helped Société de transport de Montréal rank greener than Greenpeace in Quebec

BY MELINDA MATTOS

Denise Vaillancourt, executive director, planning, marketing and communications, Société de transport de Montréal (STM) prides herself on pragmatically balancing customer needs with operational realities. But as her work this year has shown, she's not resigned to accepting the status quo, and is rather clever at finding the upside hidden within organizational weak spots.

One of the most compelling arguments for choosing public transit over driving is the environmental impact. But while research conducted by STM in 2007 found that concern for the environment was a characteristic shared by users and non-users alike, it also found that, when it came to its green brand image, STM was not doing so well.

"With public transport being such a pivotal environmental component, we were somewhat surprised at the company's results at that time," says Vaillancourt, who joined STM in 1983, after completing an internship there as part of her master's degree in industrial and organizational psychology.

Vaillancourt and her team (which includes 22 marketers, plus 42 communications people) decided to spend more time exploring the possibility of developing environmental positioning, considering its consumer relevance and its ability to build volume and uniqueness versus public transit's main competitor – driving alone in a car.

While it was clear that green had become the new black – with many consumers actively seeking eco-friendly alternatives – Vaillancourt wanted to understand just how willing consumers were to take action for the environment and what role they thought corporations should play. She didn't want STM to be accused of simply greenwashing.

Further research turned up a critical

insight: citizens are willing to adopt more environmentally friendly behaviours, but only if they feel that corporations and public entities are taking similar action.

"From this research, we gained the assurance that, with more than 100 environmental actions already to its credit, the STM was well-positioned, [unlike] most corporate citizens, to deliver an environmental promise," Vaillancourt says. "However, the lack of awareness of the STM's green actions clearly highlighted a need for the STM to communicate."

This led the way for STM's environmental positioning, developed with Montreal-based brand consultancy Cohésion Strategies and unveiled in mid-2009. Anchored by a corporate campaign called "Society in Motion," the environmental platform focused on three main elements: public

Montreal. The notion that STM and its travellers were entering into a pact with each other was represented by the symbol of a chevron, with a blue arrow (representing the STM) and a yellow arrow (representing clients) overlapping to reflect action taken for the environment (green). The chevron also resembles a French quotation mark, evoking the idea of dialogue.

To fulfill its end of the bargain, STM upped its green efforts beyond its existing 100 environmental actions, cleaning its biodiesel buses with biodegradable detergents and retreading their tires to get more use out of them. It completed the implementation of the OPUS smart card (a rechargeable card used for fares on multiple public transit systems in Quebec), putting it into the hands of over two million people in less than one year.

As part of its new brand positioning, STM



transit's positive impact on the environment, STM's concrete actions to become more eco-friendly, and recent service improvements and innovations.

To develop new visual branding that aligned with this platform, Vaillancourt turned to Sid Lee in

also elected to drop its corporate tone when communicating with customers and instead engage them in dialogue via social media. With help from Montreal web agency TP1 and production company Jimmy Lee, STM created a blog at

MouvementCollectif.org, posted YouTube videos and began using Twitter and Facebook to issue service disruption announcements.

It also engaged in a new sponsorship strategy, achieving a 10:1 visibility vs. investment ratio while partnering with Cirque du Soleil, Roger's Cup, Montreal Jazz Festival and Just for Laughs Festival to encourage the use of public transit. For the Roger's Cup, free public transportation was available to all ticket holders, with tickets bearing the STM logo and the initiative promoted through transit campaigns, the STM website and *Metro* newspaper. During Just For Laughs, STM used a 24-foot balloon to reach out to the public, while on-site entertainers interacted with crowds to talk about public transportation. With media by Touché!PHD, these efforts resulted in 45% of 2009 Roger's Cup visitors and 48% of 2010 Just for Laughs Festival visitors choosing public transit.



Above: Sid Lee's chevron-based iconography has breathed new life into STM's communications.
Opposite page: Ads on biodiesel buses carry the new environmental positioning.

While customers were reminded that public transit was the eco-friendly way to get around, employees were reminded that they were doing noble work. This resulted in a surge in employee motivation, with the Secor organizational mobilization index jumping from -4 in 2006 to +23 in 2009.

François Lacoursière, VP/senior partner, Sid Lee observes that Vaillancourt has an amazing ability to rally people behind a brand idea. "She can communicate and show internal stakeholders the true potential of a creative platform. And when everyone jumps on the bandwagon, she has all the strengths required to keep everyone on track."

He explains that STM is a huge company and yet, "in no time, almost every new project was aligned with the expression of the vision, from advertising to bus interior and exterior, interactive presence, events, sponsorships, internal communications and signage."

The end result of these efforts was that the record level ridership seen in 2008 – spurred by the opening of three new metro stations and a 16% increase in metro service – was maintained in 2009, even while the recession led to 35,000 job losses in Montreal.

Overall customer satisfaction, as measured by Leger Marketing, increased from 79% in 2007 to an all-time high of 86% at the end of 2009.

Perhaps most impressive of all, an Ipsos Descarie survey in July 2010 saw Montreal residents identify STM as the number one promoter of the environment, ranking ahead of Greenpeace.

And STM's commitment to the cause doesn't end there.

"Our brand positioning is also driving us forward," Vaillancourt says. "For example, we are aiming to completely electrify our public transport system to achieve zero polluting emissions for any new vehicle by 2025. To cement its commitment to the environment, the STM signed the International Association of Public Transport's sustainable development charter."

As STM works towards a greener future, the upbeat Vaillancourt's commitment to teamwork will propel progress. Lacoursière says, "She has the confidence to be the angel's advocate before being the devil's advocate. We build on the strengths of the ideas instead of always focusing on what might not work. It makes the ride very enjoyable and we all feel we are doing something together that is meaningful to STM and Montreal."

Is pleased to announce the addition of a new strategist to our team:



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STRATEGIST

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2010 MARKETER SURVEY

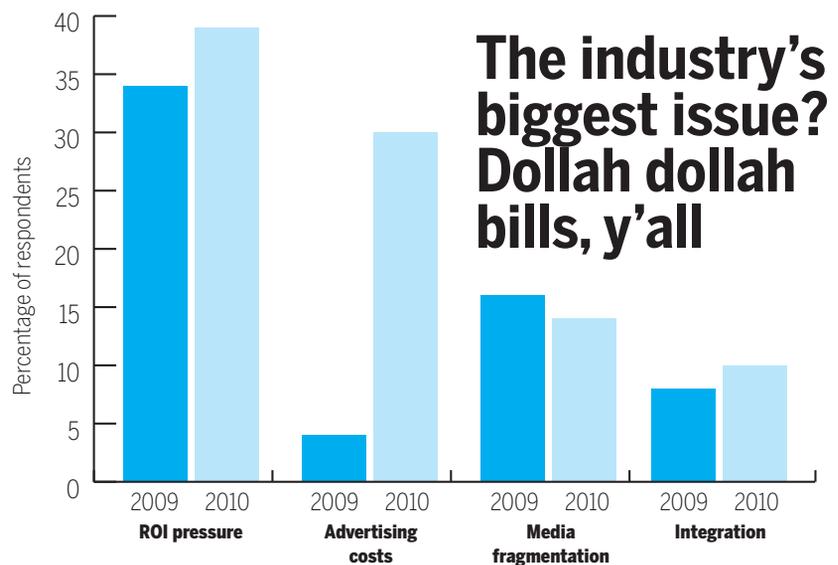
BY MELINDA MATTOS

We've taken a fresh temperature read on the state of the marketing nation, and the results are in. As we trudge into another Canadian winter, our seventh annual industry survey provides some sunshine, revealing increased budgets and growing marketing departments. Meanwhile, **new tech continues to change the game**, with interactive agencies growing in importance and social media inspiring increased investment.

Over 150 marketers responded, almost evenly split between men (51%) and women (49%). **Ten percent occupy corner offices as president or CMO**, while 28% are VPs or directors of marketing, and 61% are in managerial roles. Meanwhile, age ranges were fairly evenly represented, with 28% of respondents between 26 and 35, 34% between 36 and 45, and 23% between 46 and 55.

In terms of salaries, 20% are under \$70K, 49% earn between \$71K and \$150K, 21% make between \$151K and 250K, and **10% take home over \$250K**.

So, what did your colleagues have to say about priorities, agency relationships and job pressures? Read on, and for full results, visit Strategyonline.ca.



21% LESS FEAR + LOATHING = 71% HAPPY HAPPY, JOY JOY...

After a financially rocky stretch, things are looking up, with **only 14% reporting a decrease in marketing budgets** – down 21% from last year. Better still, 53% reported an increase.

And that wasn't the only good news: **49% said their marketing department was growing** in size, compared to just 30% last year. Only 6% reported shrinkage, down from last year's 15%.

With these stats in mind, it's no wonder that a whopping 71% of marketers described the morale in their department as high, very high or excellent.

The ups and downs of 2010

73%

say their media agency's strategic input is as important as their principal creative agency, up 9% from 2009.

72%

say their brand's image awareness has improved, up 4% from last year.

67%

say the influence of marketing in the overall company is growing, up 4%.

55%

say social media is the new marketing initiative they'll spend more on this year, but mobile is the real grower, with 14% vowing to increase spend, up 9%.

52%

say their principal creative agency's work has been above average or outstanding, down 7%.

40%

are looking for more overall strategic insight from their principal creative agency (up 6%), while 23% want better creative and 17% want more integration across marketing disciplines.

30%

say their priority for future brand development will be better execution of existing programs (up 7% from last year), followed by 25% who say their priority will be more strategic partnering to expand reach.

29%

say when it comes to innovation, their focus is on connection planning and media strategy, a leap of 10%, topped only by customer action, which ranked at 34%. Product innovation dropped by 12% as an area of focus, landing at 27%.

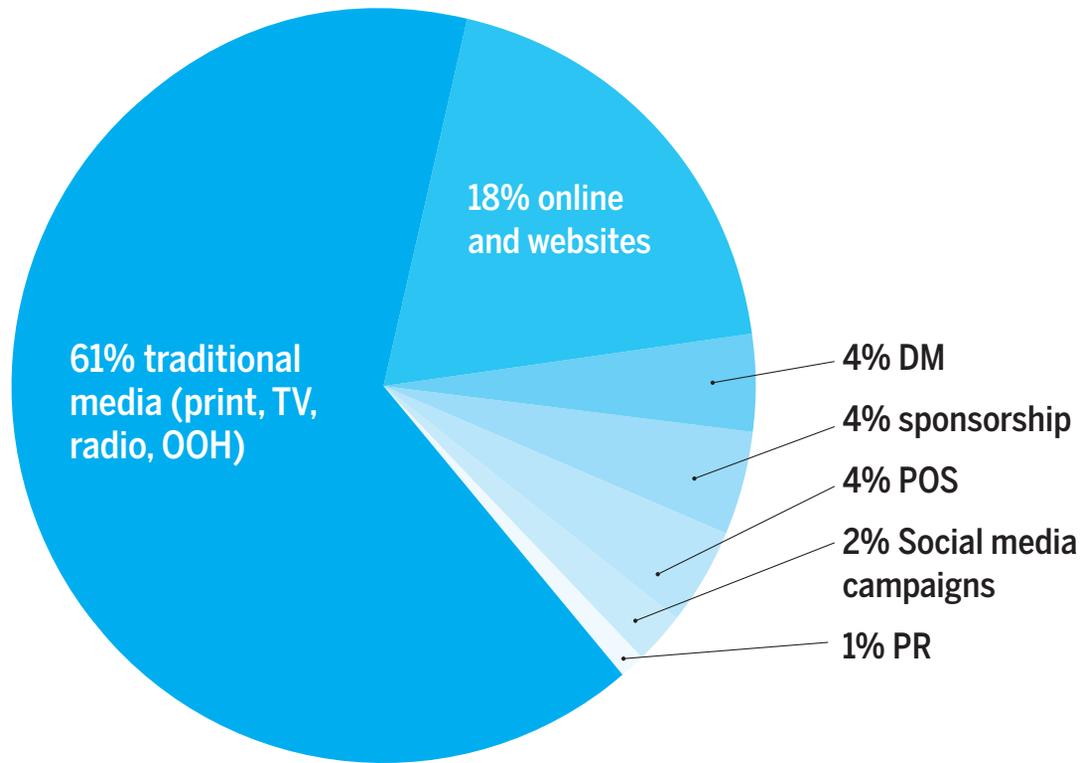
27%

say their interactive agency's support is increasingly important to their brand, a 12% jump. Meanwhile, 22% named their media agency as an increasingly important partner – an increase of 6%, but not enough keep the top spot.

4%

still haven't made social media part of their core marketing efforts, and aren't even testing it out. This is a noticeable drop from last year's 9% abstainer rate. We'll see the other 96% of you on Twitter!

In the past 12 months, I have spent the most on:



Last year's top 3

67%	traditional media
15%	online and websites
6%	POS

Should I stay or should I go?

This year's survey heard from far fewer company newbies, with only 14% of respondents reporting that they'd been with the company for one to two years, compared to 26% last year. Most reported being there for either three to five years (31%, down from 33%) or six to 10 years (29%, up from 22%).

Forty percent are working 51- to 60-hour work weeks, up 9% from last year, while 39% are working 41 to 50 hours and 14% are working 61+ hours.

When it comes to jumping ship, **50% of you said the opportunity for professional development would be your top motivation for leaving.** The second most popular reason for a career move – support of senior management for the marketing department – was new to the top three, at 15%, while “chemistry with the person I report to” was bumped to third place at 14%.

What's stressing you out? Like last year, the bulk of respondents (39%) reported that **balancing work with family obligations was the biggest stressor.** Delivering on ROI remained one of the top three stressors as well, with 13% selecting it as their biggest obstacle (down from 17% last year). But a new stressor nabbed second place, as **14% of you said that keeping motivated and inspired was your biggest headache** – this jumped from 9% last year. Chin up, folks.

Last year's big spenders

1. Procter & Gamble
2. Government of Canada
3. Rogers Communications
4. General Motors
5. BCE Corporation
6. Telus Corporation
7. Provincial Government Lotteries
8. **Kraft***
9. Johnson & Johnson
10. **L'Oréal***

*New to the top 10.

Off the list this year: Ford Motor Company, Government of Ontario.
All data is national for 2009, courtesy of The Nielsen Company.

The biggest ad-spend categories of last year

14.3%	retail
10%	automotive
8.2%	food
6.8%	entertainment
6.1%	financial and insurance services
5.1%	restaurants, catering services and nightclubs
4.8%	local automotive dealers
4.3%	travel and transportation
4.1%	telecommunications
3.9%	drug products

All data is national for 2009, courtesy of The Nielsen Company.

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As 2010 wraps up, *strategy* takes a look back at who and what made waves during a period of economic highs and lows, and fast-paced change. Read on to learn more about the person, agency and brands that came out on top

BEST OF THE

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HUGH DOW

MEDIA PERSON OF THE DECADE

BY PATTI SUMMERFIELD

When a lad at the tender age of 15 shows unwavering resolve as to how he wants to spend his life – and it's not as a rock star, A-list director or celebrity athlete – he's well on his way to making it a reality. For Hugh Dow, chairman of Mediabrands Canada, realizing his goal led to becoming one of the main architects of the agency industry in Canada.

From opening Initiative Media in 1989, the first agency-parented stand-alone media services company, to deft navigation through the turbulent media environment of the last decade, Dow has more than delivered on his early vision and has helped move media management companies to the top of the agency heap.

It all began when Dow stood his ground against school counsellors who thought accountancy was his destiny. He knew he wanted to work in advertising, specifically, the media side, where he could sense the potential for greater understanding and better relation

to consumers. With that battle won, Dow finished school at 18 and began his chosen career with a five-year stint in television audience measurement in the U.K. before taking a media research gig with Leo Burnett in London.

A few years later, Dow took a leap of faith when he replied to a small but intriguing ad for a media research supervisor at an agency he'd never heard of in a place where he didn't know a soul – McKim Advertising in Toronto. That was in 1967 and Dow has been blazing trails in Canada ever since.

"I spent two years at McKim and then MacLaren Advertising approached me. I have been very fortunate to have worked for a company that addressed all my crazy notions of what media should do," says Dow. "And I've now been here 41 years."

The years have been eventful. Dow took the former media department of MacLaren McCann through restructuring and expansions, arming it with the tools and expertise to keep up with the media industry's challenge and change.



**HUGH DOW.
PERSON OF THE DECADE.
ANY DECADE.**

HUGH'S REACH AND INFLUENCE EXTENDS WAY BEYOND THE PAST TEN YEARS. AND WE'RE PROUD TO HAVE KNOWN HIM AND WORKED WITH HIM AS LONG AS WE HAVE.



BEST OF THE DECADE

He quickly moved up the ranks at MacLaren to become media director in 1974, and piloted the agency through its acquisition by Lintas/Interpublic and the launch of Initiative Media in 1989.

In February 2000, Initiative Media was renamed M2 Universal to reflect its ties with Universal McCann, the media management brand of IPG's McCann network. Dow led M2 first as president and more recently as chairman. A few months after the birth of M2, Initiative Media returned as the new moniker for Western International Media to indicate its alliance with IPG's Initiative Media Worldwide network.

This last decade Dow has also been spearheading product placement and multi-platform campaigns. He embraced digital and mobile media and demonstrated how combining the old and the new can create compelling convergence campaigns.

"It's a question of giving people the confidence to come forward with new ways of doing things – and having people who are naturally curious about more engaging ways of using media," says Dow.

"Everything we do now is multi-channel and obviously digital is an increasingly big component of that. The next arena will be mobile and that's coming like a freight train down the track at us."

Dow's emphasis on innovation could be seen throughout this past decade. As media suppliers were being transformed into conglomerates with properties across multiple platforms, Dow saw that M2 was ready to take advantage of the opportunities via convergence planning.

One of M2 Universal's first big convergence efforts was in 2001 for RBC Financial Group through Canwest's TV, newspaper, magazine and web properties. The content was based on quarterly polling to take the pulse of the nation on social and economic attitudes and the state of education. It included a four-part TV series, 12-page inserts in the *National Post* and advertorials in *National Post Business* magazine as well as 60-second features on Global's dinner-hour newscast and a half-hour program on Prime – all sponsored by RBC Financial Group brands. It may sound like old hat now, but it was a radical level of brand involvement and far more integrated than programs of its time.

Dow quickly followed that up with a convergence program called *Innovating Tomorrow* with the newly created Bell Globemedia for GM's new Cadillac CTS model. Content based on the innovation theme ran as half-hour TV programs, vignettes on specialty nets such as ROBTv (now BNN), in the *Globe* and, through Sympatico, included a microsite and a contest.

Andrew Saunders, VP advertising sales for the *Globe and Mail*, was VP of integrated sales for Bell Globemedia at the time and says the deal

innovating tomorrow Main Technology Design Business Innovation PRESENTED BY CADILLAC

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IT, a three-part series on technology, design and the people who are innovating tomorrow - today!

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FALL SCHEDULE
Tune in to CTV on October 20 at 2 p.m. for the Design installment of *Innovating Tomorrow*. The Business installment airs November 16 at 4:30 p.m.

Dow was a pioneer of convergence planning, as seen in his early work with Bell Globemedia for GM.

was a great example of Dow challenging media organizations to look beyond where business is today to where its going.

"Part of the success of today is based on the trials and tribulations of what you went through in the past," says Saunders. "A media organization needs to partner with high-calibre clients who could provide that thought leadership and be able to facilitate those deep strategic conversations. Hugh is very good at that."

"What an impact he's had on the entire industry," observes Saunders. "Specifically with newspaper, Hugh's definitely been a big supporter. He's pushed on working in a partnership environment, whether it's the relationship between editorial and advertising, or the ability to strive for creativity and push the envelope on measurement, accuracy and ad effectiveness."

Dow also ensured brands received unique, custom-made media solutions. For example, innovation for Johnson & Johnson has been outstanding year after year, such as the award-winning "Balance" campaign in 2003 designed to promote J&J brands in meaningful environments with tailored content on TV, online and print.

In 2005, M2 Universal did a deal with *Canadian Living* that involved publication of an extra edition entitled "Health for Life," wholly owned and branded for Johnson & Johnson, and leveraged in-store.

In recent years under the agency's dedicated J3 unit, mother and baby have been a big J&J focus with 2009 campaigns including partnerships with Slice TV's *The Mom Show* and MySweetBaby.ca.

Despite all the long-lead complex content deals on the go, Dow's team stayed nimble and unafraid to tackle fast-moving opps. In 2005, M2 Universal discovered that one of the tasks on *The Apprentice* involved designing a brochure for GM's Pontiac Solstice. With 10 days and a small budget, M2 came up with a campaign to capitalize on that, yielding 200,000 visits to the website.

Dow's early mobile forays included bbTV in 2006. This Canwest MediaWorks ad-supported video service for BlackBerry launched with a roster of M2 clients: General Motors, RBC, Tylenol and Labatt.

In 2007, M2 also got GM's Cadillac into the *Dragons' Den* on CBC, plus a presence on ROBTv. That year was also memorable for Dow's provocative cha-cha during a Dancing With the Media Stars performance at the CTV Upfront.

In 2008, the agency beefed up its understanding of how consumers are really using media by creating a proprietary online panel of 5,000 Canadians. "Sometimes we do spot checks on particular subjects that the planners or buyers might have. Now we're spending a lot of time determining people's mobile usage, for example," says Dow.

"It's essential to have regular information on consumer behaviour, how they're using new communications channels, and how they tie them all together. When that's combined with syndicated research then you have some pretty powerful tools that enable you to develop the right connections."

Dow's passion for research has been evident in the work he's been doing with industry organizations, including ABC, PMB, BBM Canada and CMDC. His

BEST OF THE DECADE



In 2007, M2 got GM's Cadillac a product placement deal on CBC's *Dragons' Den*.

contributions to the industry were recognized with the Association of Canadian Advertisers' Gold Medal Award, and he's been a winner of numerous Media Director of the Year honours.

Part of Dow's contribution to furthering media measurement involved spearheading CMDC's Unity Project. The plan, set it in motion in 2001, called for the fusion of local and national product and media usage data to form a central databank used by the entire industry in conjunction with individual media audience measurement. Although it came to an inconclusive end, Dow is optimistic that it will happen once methodology and cost are better aligned.

Sunni Boot, president and CEO, ZenithOptimedia, says her longtime competitor and industry colleague has been a calm, credible voice in media

issues and has led the Canadian media agenda.

"Hugh's contribution to the industry has been immense," says Boot. "He helped start the groundswell of moving media departments to become independent media companies, and he has worked to consolidate and improve media measurement."

Dow's Canadian track record was also noticed outside of the country, and he was named EVP/director of global operations for Universal McCann in 2007. In February of last year, Interpublic Group's Canadian media operations – M2 Universal and Initiative Media – were aligned under the Mediabrands Canada umbrella, with Dow as chairman. Mediabrands was first established in the U.S. in 2008.

"The role of Mediabrands is to coordinate the activities of IPG media holdings in Canada and, for that matter, in other countries as well," explains Dow. "Whereas these companies previously competed against each other, we're looking for a much more focused direction."

Following the Mediabrands launch, Dow saw an opportunity to form a third Mediabrands agency to specialize in global and international accounts. UM opened in the U.S. in 2009. UM Canada followed in early 2010 with its first account being Chrysler, for which it was media AOR. More recently, UM won the Coca-Cola MAOR. J3 has also been aligned under UM Canada.

Like the decade, the Dow Era comes to a close at end of 2010 – but he's definitely retiring on a high note: Mediabrands Canada agencies picked up over \$150 million in new business in 2010.

Dow has every confidence that the strong leaders of the three Mediabrands agencies – Sara Hill, M2 Universal president; Michele Pauchuk, Initiative Canada EVP managing director; and UK-import Peter Mears, UM Canada president – will continue the momentum.

Dow adds, "I can walk away with a great sense of satisfaction that the company is in good hands – and media is generally held in very high regard now, both by the advertiser and anybody that works in the business. It's very satisfying to see where we've come from and where we are now. We've seen a lot of changes but media will continue to change – we ain't seen nothing yet."

Congratulations Hugh!

**You are BBM Canada's Person of the Decade too!
Thank you for your outstanding contribution.**





If you are
going to go,
**go out
on top.**

Congratulations to Hugh Dow,
Strategy Magazine's Person of the Decade.
We couldn't agree more.

THERE'S NO STOPPING **TAXI**

For 10 years, Taxi has consistently been on top of the ad game, racking up awards, big clients, new offices and off-the-charts growth. Now it's poised for the next leg of the journey

BY EMILY WEXLER

It's been a big decade for the agency that Paul Lavoie and Jane Hope started as a small office in Montreal in 1992. So it seems fitting that Taxi should end 2010 with some big news. By now it's common industry knowledge that it's been acquired by global holding company WPP and is now part of the Young & Rubicam Brands portfolio.

But rather than signal the end of an era for the agency, the deal can be seen as the beginning of its next evolution – Taxi won't be changing its name, management or famous attitude any time soon.

"I sold the company, I didn't sell the brand," says Lavoie, noting that the acquisition will allow Taxi to have access to more services like CRM and PR, and will help the agency grow even further globally.

According to Peter Stringham, chairman and CEO of Y&R Brands, it's the Taxi attitude that makes it a great fit within Y&R. "In 1923, [Raymond Rubicam] wrote the phrase 'resist the usual' as a mission statement for the agency," he says. "Be original, be innovative, whatever people are doing in the marketplace, do it differently. Paul also really believes in challenging convention and talks about doubt."

This past decade has seen the agency spread its roots across the country and internationally. In 2004, Taxi opened a New York office, and while some big U.S. agencies couldn't cut it in the big apple, Taxi continues to thrive. In 2006, Taxi 2



opened in Toronto, as well as a Calgary office. That year the agency experienced 49% year-over-year growth. The following year, a Vancouver office was opened, and Taxi's top-line growth was 50%. In fact, it's grown financially year-over-year, every year for the latter half of the decade despite the



Above: The Taxi philosophy is written on the wall of the Toronto office.

Left: Work for Mini, such as the "Hands Up" guerrilla campaign, took off globally.

recession. The most recent expansion has taken the agency overseas to Amsterdam in May 2009.

CEO Rob Guenette, who joined the agency in 1998, notes that the key to successful expansion has been to be smart about cash flow and never put the base operations at risk. "To facilitate that foundation, we kept the backroom in Toronto," he says. "So when we opened Taxi 2, Vancouver and Calgary, we didn't burden those offices with extra costs, we centralized the cost and had one system – one gigantic P&L. It wasn't a dog-eat-dog environment."

While risk is always calculated, Taxi has never been afraid to dive in head-first, whether it be expanding into new markets or taking on clients that come with big challenges – as proven with one of its crowning campaign achievements of the past decade. In 2002, a TV spot aired featuring a man skipping to work to a happy tune. Viewers didn't know why he was so happy until the spot ended without a word spoken, just a super that said "Viagra."

"Viagra is probably the one campaign that the global creative community associates with Taxi,"

says CCO Steve Mykolyn, noting that wherever he is – whether it's Cannes or the Czech Republic – he just has to mention Viagra and people automatically know Taxi.

To make a pharmaceutical campaign clever, sexy and even fun is one thing. To make it those things under intense restrictions is another – it was a solution to draconian DTC regulations that heavily restricted product information. The campaign has since become ingrained in pop culture, and has spawned various other Viagra campaigns, all using humour to get the message across.

Among the agency's other prized campaigns is the consistent (and consistently cute) work for Telus. For over a decade, Taxi has introduced countless critters to the Telus roster, with the result being an easily recognizable brand identity that stands out from the highly competitive pack.

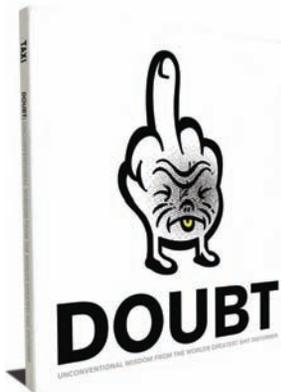
Telus reflects a source of pride for Guenette and the agency – keeping clients. "I think the reason why we've had this amazing client retention is because we have one foot in the present and one in the future," he says. "We act as much as possible as brand stewards and strategic partners,

Agency of the Decade?

Beats the heck out of a folding chair to the solar plexus, no?



Congratulations TAXI on being named Agency of the Decade, from your amigos at Koodo.



The Book of Doubt

Taxi has written the book on doubting convention – literally. On Dec. 13, *Doubt: Unconventional Wisdom from the World's Greatest Shit Disturber* hits bookstores. Told from the perspective of a little character named Doubt, the book presents 12 insights into using doubt as a catalyst for change. The insights are backed by stories about 40 “Disciples of Doubt” (the Sony Walkman, for example), imparting wisdom in 250 words or less. Illustrated by Gary Taxali, the book features a QR code that drives to Doubttheconventional.com, where readers can submit their own “doubtful” stories.

“It this book fails to disturb its readers, its authors will be deeply disappointed. Only the most blinkered traditionalist will fail to benefit,” says Sir Martin Sorrell, CEO of WPP, in praise of the book.

so without that kind of vision we wouldn't have such great client retention.”

Taxi's work for Telus also led the company to have enough faith in the agency to entrust it with the brand identity and launch of Koodo in 2008, which became instantly recognizable at warp speed, and which was recently named one of *strategy's* Brands of the Year for 2010.

Taxi seems to have a magic touch when it comes to launches. It launched BMW's Mini in Canada in 2001 and its work for the brand has since been consistently awarded locally and internationally, and picked up around the world.

A more personal source of Taxi pride is the 15 Below project, launched in 2007 to celebrate Taxi's 15th anniversary. Mykolyn led the creation of a jacket that could be stuffed with newspaper to achieve various levels of warmth, or folded up into a pillow, and handed them out to the homeless to keep them warm in the winter. All the Taxi offices participated in the year-long project, which distributed about 3,000 coats.

People who shit their trousers should go work someone else.
This is not a place for timid people

“It reflects our philosophy that we love to do work that gives back to the community and is socially responsible,” says Mykolyn, also noting Taxi's work with Toronto-based youth shelter Covenant House, for which Guenette is a board member (as was Lavoie before he moved to New York).

The notable work, often humorous, could stretch on for pages – for WestJet, Reitmans, Reversa, Dairy Farmers of Canada, and the list goes on. Taxi's enviable track record has been duly noted by international and home turf juries; it's been amongst the top three most awarded agencies in Canada, according to *strategy's* Creative Report Card, every year since 2001 (in 2000 it ranked fourth). And it has been amongst *strategy's* Agency of the Year top three a total of nine out of 10 years, including five Golds. Overall, in the last decade, the agency has won roughly 1,200 national and international awards (2,000 including shortlist/finalist positions).

Taxi was also named one of the 50 best managed companies by Deloitte each year from 2003 to 2007.

“The work has been consistent through the decade, but more telling, it's been consistent through periods of extreme growth,” says Guenette. “A lot of people, through extreme growth, lose their way, and I'm proud of the fact that we're still Taxi in every sense of the word.”

Part of being Taxi is a work culture that caps each office at 150 people maximum (hence the opening of Taxi 2 when the Toronto office reached capacity). Guenette says that without that rule in place, “I'm not sure our work would be that diverse, I'm not sure that we'd have a strong succession plan [or] our client base would be quite as diverse.”

Lance Martin, ECD at Taxi 2, coincidentally celebrates his 10th anniversary with the agency this year. He carried the Taxi work ethic – which involves a lot of collaboration and leaving egos at the door – with him when they opened the second Toronto office. “There's really no politics here,” he says. “The only thing that holds you back at Taxi is whether or not you can think of the idea.”

Guenette notes, with pride, that Taxi is a hard place to work. “I always tell people, the standards



Mykolyn (right) delivers Taxi-created 15 Below coats for the homeless to the Salvation Army.

are really high, so if you're not part of that, you're not part of Taxi... It's an intense place. It's not personal, this is about building a better company, this is about doing the right work for our brands and creative standards. People who gravitate to that love the intensity. People who shit their trousers should go work someone else. This is not a place for timid people.”

Adds Mykolyn: “Rob's famous – he sets goals, and if we meet them, he sets new ones.”

In another 10 years, Lavoie wants Taxi to be known as the “biggest little agency in the world” – big ideas, within a culture of staying small and agile. “A bus leaves at a certain hour and you have to wait for it. A taxi – you can call it up and get there.”

TAXI

TO ALL OUR CLIENTS AND STAFF, BOTH PAST AND PRESENT, **THANK YOU** FOR A GREAT RIDE.

Brand of the Decade



We've actually known that for two decades.

For 20 years, JWT has been working closely together with Tim Hortons to help connect a great brand with Canadians. Congratulations Tim Hortons, for being named Brand of the Decade.

JWT

A DOUBLE-DOUBLE FOR THE NATION

Tim Hortons has stayed true to what it means to many Canadians: a kind, neighbourly part of their day-to-day grind. In the last 10 years, it's cemented its place as an essential part of the nation's social fabric by linking to, and communicating, positive truths about Canadians from Victoria all the way to Kandahar

BY JONATHAN PAUL

Tim Hortons has long been a Canadian stalwart, first opening its doors in 1964. But over the last 10 years it's really cemented and expanded its place in the Canadian zeitgeist beyond its donut origins, becoming ensconced in more urban Canuck culture as a beloved go-to snack stop, particularly a daily morning pilgrimage.

Recent years have seen mounting competition in the QSR category, including aggro offensives like free coffee campaigns from the competition, doppelganger "Roll Up The Rim" promotions and flash-in-the-pan competitive imports (remember all the fuss about Krispy Kreme?). But with a 40% share of Canadian QSR traffic, the top market share of the breakfast and snacking day parts and second highest for lunch, and being the largest publicly traded restaurant chain in Canada (fourth largest in North America) after going public in 2009, Tim Hortons is arguably Canada's QSR king.

Throughout the decade it has achieved solid status as a national icon: Canadians culturally identify with the double-double as readily as other nationwide institutions, like hockey. In fact, thanks to savvy advertising efforts on the part of Timmy's and its AOR of 20 years JWT, for many parents a hot cup of Tim Hortons coffee goes hand-in-hand with watching their kid's early morning hockey practice.

The advertising is one of three factors that Bill Moir, chief brand and marketing officer, Tim Hortons, says drives the fervent loyalty Canadians have for the brand. Aside from its annual "Roll up the Rim to Win" promotion, a tradition beloved by many a Canuck, the long-standing "True Stories" has gone a long way to make Tim's an integral part of the Canadian condition since launching in 1998. The success can be ascribed, in no small part, to the fact that the inspiration behind many of the stories are tales submitted by customers, a phenomenon that



Inspired by the stories of newly arrived immigrants, one emotional TV spot featured an African man meeting his family at the airport with winter coats and Tim Hortons coffee, underscoring the chain's role in Canadian culture.

increased when the brand launched its "Every Cup Tells Story" website in 2008.

A "True Story" that recently aired, leveraging the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, portrayed an African man welcoming his family home to Canada for the first time with winter jackets and Tim Hortons coffee. It was a play on the many tales the chain has received from newly arrived immigrants who found that while discovering what it means to be Canadian, their search inevitably led them to Tim Hortons.

"['True Stories'] has been crucial to us and we've been very consistent every year with a new spot," says Moir. "It reflects the emotional connection that our customers have with the brand."

Another emotional driver, says Moir, is the work that Tim Hortons does on a local grassroots basis;

its involvement in the Canadian communities where it has stores. The QSR chain has 300 store groups, based largely on geography, each with a separate regional budget for local initiatives. The brand has flagship programs that run in most markets, albeit with a local focus, like Timbits Sports, which has been around for 20 years, and the Smile Cookie campaign – store owners sell a Smile Cookie for a dollar with the proceeds going to a local charity. Taking place in September, it raised \$3 million this year.

There is also, of course, Camp Day. Along with Timbits Sports, it's run under the purview of the Tim Hortons Children's Foundation established by chain co-founder Ron Joyce in 1974. Every year it raises close to \$10 million and sends children from every market where Tim Hortons

BEST OF THE DECADE



TV spots leverage the personal connection Canadians have with Tim Hortons, including the true stories of both everyday Joes and athletes like Sidney Crosby (centre).

has a location – the number of kids depending on the number of stores – to camps. The rest of the local budgets are delegated to more community-specific events like waterfront festivals and fundraisers.

“The structure of the regional marketing allows us to do local, grassroots programs in a very strategic way,” says Moir. “There are some programs that get done in most markets and then the other ones are really what are important to the community.”

Tim Hortons’ community outreach isn’t just domestic. In 2005 it initiated the Tim Hortons Coffee Partnership in markets where it buys its coffee, like Guatemala, Brazil and Colombia, aimed at small farmers. The brand helps farmers produce better coffee with higher yields, shows them how to be sensitive to the environment and spearheads efforts to help kids in those communities. As of 2010, the brand is working with 2,500 farmers.

The emotional connection is also deepened by the relationship between the customer and their local Tim Hortons employees, which Moir says is often founded on a high level of familiarity. He cites a conversation he had with a truck driver, who said all he has to do when he gets to his local Tim’s drive-thru is rev his engine so the staff knows who he is and what he wants to order.

“I think when you treat your guests the way they want to be treated then they’ll keep coming back to you and you’ll get to know them and help to establish that connection,” says Moir.

He adds that beating expectations is also a goal, and was the impetus behind a revamp over the past year to focus on increasing order accuracy, speed and the receptive attitude of staff.

Tim’s holds its products to similarly high standards. It put a 20-minute freshness guarantee on its coffee, decreeing that it can’t be served once its shelf life has exceeded that time limit. The same holds true for its baked goods. Product innovation focuses on maintaining three brand fundamentals – freshness (both in food and in keeping the brand relevant), price value and convenience – across three categories: hot

and cold beverages, snacks and prepared foods.

In 2003, the company introduced its Always Fresh baking system. Whereas before its products, like donuts and Timbits, were scratch baked – made by a supplier, flash-frozen and then shipped to stores – now the company bakes its wares in-store to ensure quality and consistency of look, taste and shape. The system also reduces waste as stores can produce to demand.

Breakfast became a focus in 2006 with the introduction of its breakfast sandwich and has grown from a biscuit to English muffins, breakfast wraps, hash browns and, new this year, oatmeal. “Once we successfully launched the first [breakfast] product it allowed us credibility,” says Moir.

Though Moir admits that, relatively speaking, Tim Hortons came a little late to the breakfast game, its offering has helped bolster the brand’s status as the go-to destination for mornings. According to market research company NDP Group, in 2009 Tim Hortons commanded the highest market share of breakfast out of all QSR chains in Canada with 67% of the traffic.

A continual focus on lunch and the “evening snack day part,” along with its breakfast innovations, have helped Tim’s go far beyond its initial coffee and donuts offering to become more competitive throughout the day. The chain’s done a lot of work on its soups, offering up more featured flavours over the years and has developed its sandwich bread, creating “Bigger, Softer, Better Buns,” basically innovating in the same way as its bakery items: constantly tinkering with price points, improving and introducing new products.

In 2009, it launched a co-branding initiative, which brought Scottsdale, Arizona-based Cold Stone Creamery to Canada. And, when it comes to keeping customers informed about these new products, it doesn’t slouch. Tim’s has a new promotional program every four weeks that communicates what’s new.

Where Tim’s has really been delivering on the convenience aspect has been through its real estate build-out, with a particular focus over the

last decade of hitting up more urban areas, like downtown Toronto, and non-traditional sites like hospitals, universities, airports and train stations (it recently opened up a location in Toronto’s Union Station). They even opened one in Kandahar, Afghanistan to serve the men and women of the Canadian Forces.

“Over the last 10 years what we’ve been able to do is really take the brand to where people are; it’s found business, because we wouldn’t [normally] get a sale because of where they are,” says Moir. “It’s been a very important aspect of the brand.”

Over the decade Tim’s has experienced a Canadian average of 6.6% same-store sales growth per year. Two thousand stores in Canada in 2000 have grown to 3,000 today. The U.S. has also been a part of the expansion plans over the decade, particularly in designated market areas (as they’re called south of the border) located around the Great Lakes, which contain roughly 90 million people. Once the brand feels it has achieved enough penetration in one DMA, it moves on to contiguous markets. Notably, it launched its first New York City location in 2009.

Currently, Tim’s has over 500 stores in the U.S. and over 10 years has seen an average same-store sales growth of 6.9%, though it made a strategic decision in November to close 36 locations mostly located in Providence, R.I. and Hartford, Conn. They were underperforming, causing the company to fall short of the expected 53 cents per share earnings in the third quarter of this year, instead earning 42 cents per share – \$73.8 million – which was still up over 20% from last year.

No doubt, Tim Hortons is Canada’s QSR mascot, the torch-bearer. Its success, says Moir, comes from a combination of things: its iconic status, its business success year over year, but it mostly comes by being humble.

“I think the success of the brand has always been that we believe that we need to get better every day,” he says. “There’s humility in the system that keeps everybody pretty grounded.”

There’s nothing more Canadian than that.

The real beauty is in the impact you've made.

Our communication partners have done a lot for Dove over the last decade.
A heartfelt thanks to Ogilvy, Harbinger, Capital C, PHD and Mindshare for helping
make girls and women feel beautiful.



BEST OF THE DECADE

A LEGACY OF LOVE **FOR DOVE**

The brand has redefined beauty – in advertising and in the hearts and minds of women around the world – via programs that got their start right here in Canada

BY EMILY WEXLER

There was a time, around the middle of the decade, when you'd be hard-pressed to open an issue of *strategy* without reading about Dove. It wasn't for lack of other brands doing interesting things, but rather because Dove kept doing remarkable things. Like winning two Grand Prix awards at Cannes. Or garnering two million YouTube hits in two weeks. Hard to ignore.

When the decade started, Dove was bar soap (although its earlier marketing centred on the idea that it actually wasn't just bar soap). Today, Dove is hair products, deodorant, men's body wash, a line of spas, and the list goes on. In fact, Dove has doubled in the last 10 years. The success is largely thanks to its "Campaign for Real Beauty," which gained attention for using real people (not actors or models) in its ads.

Using real people in its advertising was nothing new to Dove – its AOR Ogilvy had experience shooting real men and women for ads as far back as the '80s and '90s. And just prior to the campaign, Dove, Ogilvy and PR agency partner Harbinger were experimenting with a similar message through an exhibit that asked photographers around the world to submit their diverse visions of what real beauty was.

But in 2004, a global study of 17 countries came back with the finding that only 2% of women



describe themselves as beautiful – a powerful insight that would define the Dove work for the rest of the decade and beyond. The Ogilvy offices from around the world – including Toronto, South Africa, Chicago, New York and London – collaborated to develop a campaign around that insight.



Above: With 12 million YouTube hits, Dove's "Evolution" provided an early example of the power of viral video. Below left: "Tick-box" kicked off the "Campaign for Real Beauty," running without product messaging.

"The creative that came out of that was the most unbelievable collection of ideas," says Sharon MacLeod, brand building director at Unilever, who's been at the company for 12 years and worked on Dove for seven of them. "I remember sitting in the Toronto office when they showed us everything and there were [so many] things to choose from...It was mind-blowing how much was presented that day in terms of quality of work."

The first creative to come out of that meeting was "Tick-box" – a series of ads featuring real women that asked whether they were "fat or fab" or "weathered or wonderful." It had no product messaging. MacLeod and the Dove team knew it was the right creative to run, and Ogilvy adapted it for Canada with former media partner PHD, which also helped to bring the idea online.

"I think Canada was just really ready for it," says Aviva Groll, group account director at Ogilvy, who has worked on Dove since 2004. "There was a

lot of support internally at Unilever, it struck a chord...[It was] a time of great experimentation and great leadership that allowed that to happen." Groll also notes that having the budget available and co-operation amongst the product categories to allow for a campaign centred on the brand as a whole, meant everything fell into place for a Canada-first launch.

What followed was unexpected buzz as the campaign gained traction around the world, becoming a major watercooler topic before the days of social media spreading ideas like wildfire. New Dove products were launched using the same creative idea – showing real women with different hair types, skin types and body types, loving themselves and their favourite Dove products, often in their underwear.

While the watercooler buzz and media attention escalated (Oprah had those underwear-clad women on her show), one of the most talked-about aspects of the campaign came as a complete



Congratulations to our partners at Dove.

BEST OF THE DECADE

surprise to MacLeod and her team – the viral power of striking the right chord.

By now, almost everyone has seen the “Evolution” video on YouTube (12 million people and counting), depicting a woman who gets transformed, through makeup and Photoshop, into a model, proving that even models don’t start out looking like models. The video, conceived by Ogilvy’s Tim Piper, Michael Kirkland and Janet Kestin, was originally posted to drive participation in a series of workshops for moms and daughters.

With no media budget, the video was posted to

YouTube – on the day YouTube was sold to Google. “It was like getting hit by lightning,” MacLeod says. But the sudden interest in the video-sharing website aside, it was the brilliant concept and execution that spread “Evolution” before viral videos seemed like a daily occurrence. And the talk about “real beauty” spread even further.

But for Dove, it became about more than just a conversation. A year after “Campaign for Real Beauty” took flight, the Dove Self-Esteem Fund launched – again, first in Canada – with a mandate to educate and empower young girls around the world through everything from seminars and mentorships to a “Sleepover for Self-Esteem” program that was integrated into TV content and aimed to open dialogues between moms and daughters.

The latter was created with one of Dove’s long-time agency partners Capital C, which also created a “Thank You” retail program that tied purchases to the Fund in-store, with girls “thanking” Dove for showing them they could be beautiful.

Dove expanded into the spa business last year

“I think a lot of brands would take an insight like that and turn it into a 30-second ad,” says Tony Chapman, president of Capital C. “The thing that differentiates Dove from other brands is that they don’t want to simply buy their way in by shouting loud on television, they walk the talk.”

When the Self-Esteem Fund launched, Dove set a goal to reach five million girls by 2010. As the year draws to an end, MacLeod says they have surpassed that goal.

While the “Campaign for Real Beauty” and the Self-Esteem Fund powered on, Dove continued to embark on new territory. In 2008, Ogilvy came up with the idea of *Body & Soul* – a Toronto-based play commissioned by Dove, written by playwright Judith Thompson, and starring real women.

“It wasn’t a huge departure for us to do a theatrical production,” says MacLeod, noting that Dove had ventured outside the traditional realm before, with the photo exhibit, for example. “It was an interesting time because you started to see how people wanted to get behind what Dove was doing. The fact that [Thompson] wanted to do this play with us, and Veronica Tennant (who made



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STIMULANT



a documentary about it) – those are things you can't get if you're not really serious about what you're doing."

Dove continues to look outside the traditional, having opened the first Dove Spas in Oakville, ON., and Toronto last year. Its success has meant expansion at the rate of a new spa every six months.

And this year Dove took on the other gender by launching a skincare line for men. The campaign took a page from the "Campaign for Real Beauty" playbook and focused on the idea of men being comfortable in their own skin.

"Men would tell us they don't feel like they're accurately portrayed in advertising, they feel like the images are very stereotypical," explains MacLeod, noting that while it's not necessarily about beauty pressure for men, it's also not necessarily about sports cars, wealth and superhero imagery. "Guys tell us there's more to being a guy than those things – it's success on their terms." And the approach is paying off, through both sales (taking 2.3% and 2.5% dollar share for bar and body wash respectively in 10 months) and positive feedback on the position Dove's taken.

Dove's numbers in all its categories prove its success: it leads the body wash category with 24.5% dollar share, it's tripled its growth in the antiperspirant/deodorant category (from 3.8% to 11% dollar share) and it's become a major player in the hair category.

When asked what legacy she hopes Dove will leave, MacLeod tells a story about meeting a woman at the AMA conference in Seattle. The woman approached her and said, "I just have to thank you, you've changed my life. I've always been a bit heavier and I didn't think beauty was possible for me. I was



In 2008, Dove commissioned *Body & Soul*, a play by Canadian playwright Judith Thompson, which starred real women.

pretty down on myself, and when I saw the campaign, I knew I could be beautiful too. And it's completely changed the way I look at myself and how I live my life." MacLeod, naturally, was humbled by this statement.

"If that's the legacy – if it's changed one person's life, or if it encouraged one marketer to talk to women or men differently – we've done our job," she says.

Harbinger congratulates Dove on being Global Brand of the Decade

We are proud and honoured to have helped you create
and realize your amazing vision for the past 10 years.



**START
HERE**

Molson Canadian
unleashes
"The Rant"

2000

WPP Group buys
Young & Rubicam

Roots launches
RootsAir

Go back one space
and pretend it
didn't happen

Thomson
Corporation
newspapers
the *Globe and Mail*

Facebook Places
joins the social
mobile craze

Your privacy has been
invaded, move back 9
spaces

Coke's Happiness
Factory hooks
brands on
transmedia

iPad hits
stores

Magazine publishers
roll again

Vancouver Winter
Olympics

Buy red mittens, move
ahead one space

2010

Molson
into

WINNER
(YOU NOW OWN TAXI)

The Adland

DECADE

The federal
sponsorship
scandal hits the
news

Agency brass
lose a turn

Virgin arrives in
Canada
Ignore the rules and
pick a new partner

2005

PHD gets into
neuromarketing



It's been a wild ride. Over the
ad game than in prior decades
down memory lane. (Caution:
cause dizziness.)

CBC and Bell Canada
join the branded
entertainment rage
with *Making the Cut*

Creatives lose a turn

Xbox 360
debuts
Lose two turns while
playing *Call of Duty 2*

Ad nets roll
out dynamic
in-game
advertising

Facebook and
YouTube make the
scene social

"Like" yourself
into 2009

Leo Burnett
Canada's first
Black Panther

2009

Etc.tv is
unspooled

A&W introduces
Allen the restaurant
manager to TV

2004

MySpace and
Second Life launch

Move ahead 10 spaces,
and then back 5

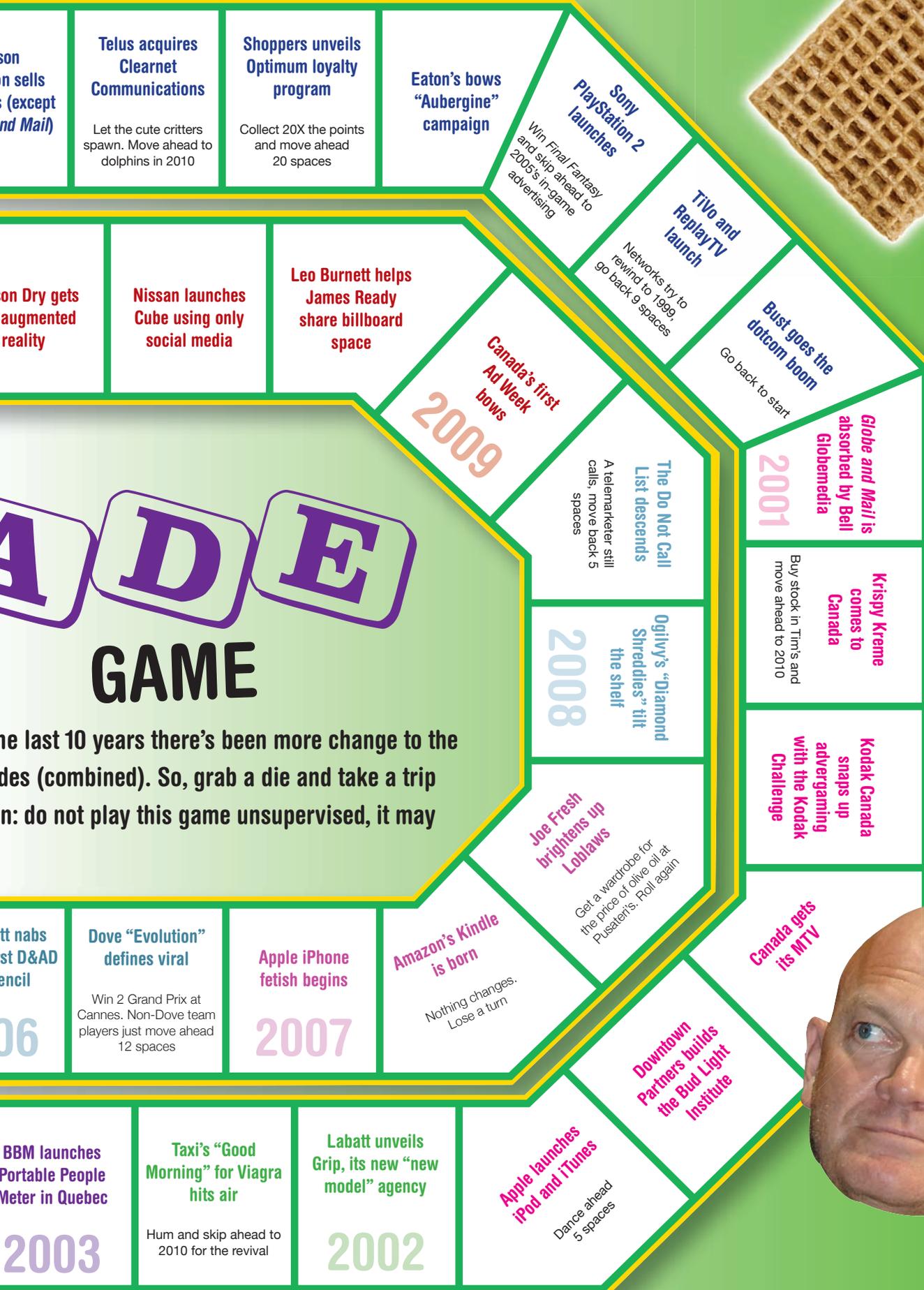
Tobacco ads go
AWOL thanks to
Bill C-71

Throw away your dice,
it's over

Labatt joins SMS
fray with "Labatt
Blue Cup Crazy"

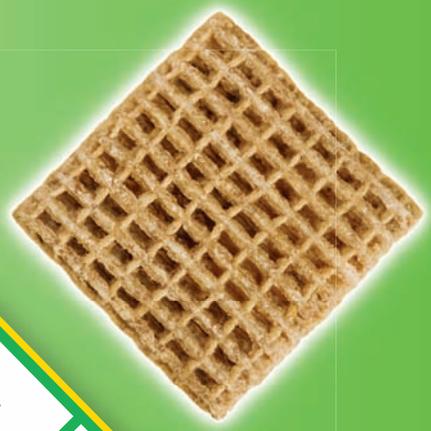
Text 2009 and meet
yourself in the future





ADDED GAME

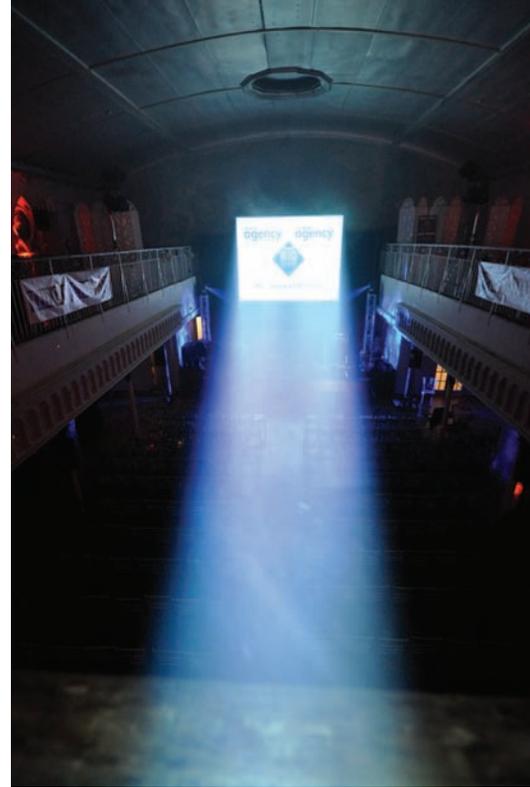
In the last 10 years there's been more change to the marketing landscape (combined). So, grab a die and take a trip down memory lane. Do not play this game unsupervised, it may





DDB Canada took Gold for the second year in a row at *strategy's* 21st annual Agency of the Year event, held at the Berkeley Church in Toronto on Nov. 11. PHD snagged Media Agency of the Year Gold, while Taxi took AOY Silver plus Gold and Bronze B!G Awards. Our Brand of the Year winners were there to join the party too. Congrats to all!





a. Agency of the Year Awards host Fiona Stevenson, category brand manager, P&G; b. the team from DDB Canada; c. Andrew Saunders, director, VP advertising sales, *Globe & Mail*; *strategy* exec editor Mary Maddever; Media Director of the Year winner Sheri Metcalfe of Jungle Media; d. Lauren Richards, who led Starcom to MAOY Silver before joining Media Experts; e. *strategy* special reports editor Emily Wexler; f. Steve Mykolyn and Paul Lavoie from Taxi, who took AOY Silver plus B!G Gold and Bronze; g. TIFF CEO Piers Handling receives a Brand of the Year award; h. *strategy* associate editor Melinda Mattos; i. *Degrassi's* Linda Schuyler and Stephanie Cohen take Brand of the Year honours; j. PHD president Fred Forster accepts MAOY Gold; k. Michael O'Grady's band sets the stage; l. the Gold in all its glory; m. AOY finalist Lg2's president Sylvain Labarre and VP account services Mathieu Roy. **All photos by Dwayne Hill.**



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 OF THE YEAR



Ready for 2011? *Strategy* columnists reflect on the last whirlwind decade to try to divine what it will take to succeed in the next one

BY TONY CHAPMAN

DRINKING ADRENALINE FROM A FIRE HOSE

THE ENTREPRENEUR

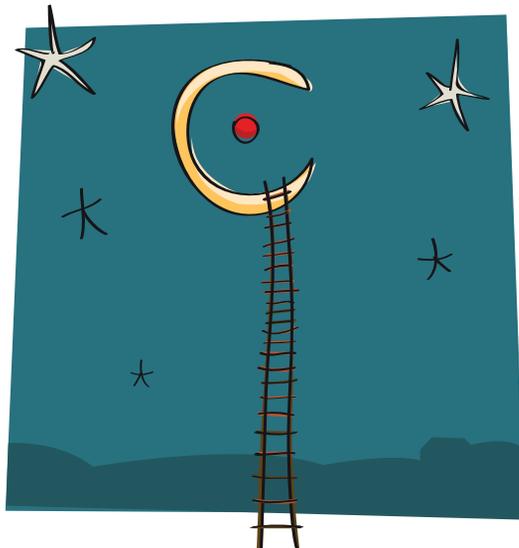
Do you remember the first time you climbed a stepladder? I do. I was a toddler blatantly defying my mother's warning. I used all of my strength to pull myself 10 inches off the ground, gripping the rails in a near death lock, my feet frantically searching for footing. I was so alive – my eyes were shining, my heart was beating, standing at a place where I had never been before.

That afternoon I tasted adrenaline for the first time. We all know the taste: saliva that's almost metallic, the euphoria of conquering fears. It never presents itself when you're maintaining the status quo, only when you attempt or conquer.

I developed an insatiable appetite for that taste, that feeling. It's probably why I became an entrepreneur. My game was to identify white spaces in the marketplace and try to seize them. I learned early on that most of the rungs I coveted were out of reach for me as an individual and only achievable through a team. More importantly, the intellectual and emotional rewards of "all for one, one for all" far outstripped individual conquest.

As a result, Capital C continuously ended up where we didn't belong: inventing the story of the Easter Bunny and designing products that ended up being marketed around the world (for Cadbury), launching the largest teen magazine in Canada (Pepsi's *Pop Life*), creating a rogue \$3,000 viral video that found its way onto Jay Leno ("Bridezilla" for Sunsilk) and launching a car without a dollar in advertising (the Nissan Cube). So often with wonderful clients we boldly and at times blindly leapt for the opportunities that the marketplace always seemed to offer.

That was then. The marketplace has shifted drastically,



and I have to ask what the next decade will bring for any of us who make our living on the client or agency side of marketing. Will there be new rungs for us to reach for or will the forces of change become so overpowering that the footholds of opportunity become impossible to grab on to?

We grew up in an industry where CPG marketers leveraged their brands to attract, build and keep more consumers, not by cost cutting, downsizing the package, slashing marketing or justifying irrational trade spending to source volume at any cost to simply feed infrastructure.

Today, even the most muscular national brands are highly vulnerable. Even with extraordinary talent, dominant market share and engaging marketing, they can have their position overturned and their supply chain and marketing budgets permanently impaired if an important retailer consolidates the number of brands on shelf and auctions off their space to the highest bidder versus the best brand.

This situation won't go away. A combination of retail saturation and consolidation makes the CPG cash grab a layup play. For national brands that depend on a handful of retailers it will be survival of the fittest. The clients and their agencies will have to reach for a rung that will only be accessible via a revolutionary change in the way we collectively do business.

The route through this revolution is not price competition where brands all reach the same rung, become commodities and

essentially make themselves extinct. We need to climb to that fresh plateau where we unleash human talent and unmatched choreography – seamless and effortless use of left brain and right brain individuals working together, linked to common purpose and goals.

CPG organizations will have to smash down silos and bring marketing, sales and shopper marketing together to precisely map out the path to purchase; identifying how their consumer thinks and feels and, equally important, how they behave as shoppers. They will need to invest their dollars faster, better and more efficiently than their competition. They will need to win back control. Their agencies will need to be less preoccupied with awards and more focused on how their strategy, creative and account management can deliver sustainable results.

Both organizations will require cultures that flourish with curiosity, creativity and imagination powered by algorithms fuelled with the freshest of intelligence. Planning, creativity and execution will need to be democratized and deployed at the speed of the marketplace.

For brand promises to truly resonate, they'll need to be personalized and relevant to the individual or a value-centric community. HR will need to attract and fast-track 25-year-old revolutionaries armed not with a business degree but with expertise and attitude garnered from years of collaborative game play to lead the charge alongside industry dogmas.

Welcome to the new decade; a time in the history of brand building unprecedented in terms of disruptive change. Where rungs are so high they seem impossible to reach. Those who find their way there will have discovered the ability to continuously drink adrenaline from a fire hose. What a wonderful time to be in the business of building brands.

Tony Chapman is the CEO of Toronto-based Capital C and a founding partner of Fresh Intelligence.



BY WILL NOVOSEDLIK

BREAK A LEG

At the end of the decade, nursing a broken leg, I am compelled to reflect.

Though the decimalization of time produces a handy excuse to take a breath before plunging into the next 10 years, the actual events of the last 10 are never so neatly packaged. Nonetheless, we seem compelled to render the data into some kind of pattern, some kind of sense, as if the comfortable illusion of an imposed logic will protect us from the inevitable uncertainty that lies ahead.

Not sure I can do that. If I were to map my own experience over the last decade, it would resemble a labyrinthine journey oscillating between moments of blind panic and periods of intense learning. As the year 2000 unfolded, Russell Inc., the design business I had co-founded in 1990, was being structurally altered amid the madness of the internet bubble. This restructuring was doubly fuelled by the anticipation of digital riches and the fear of being left behind in the "boring" old world of print.

Moment of blind panic: jumping from a disintegrating partnership onto the heaving deck of a large but faltering web services firm just months before they started manning the lifeboats. The firm was San Francisco-based Organic. A global title, 20 years of brand experience and a byline in the national business press were not enough to prevent me (along with about 600 other employees) from going overboard a mere six months after boarding. Intense learning: a) figuring out that a web services firm had no business building a branding practice, and b) when Mammon is at the helm, you either bill or you walk the plank.

Two weeks later I was employed by one of this country's strongest and most celebrated ad agencies – Taxi. It struck me that the advertising world seemed blissfully unaware of the digital bubble bursting (unless their clients were bursting with it), or of any of the painful changes resulting from the profound technological disruption that was going on around it. It had its own bubble.

Nonetheless, the ensuing two years were full of learning, mostly about the distance an ad agency can go in the development and management of a client's brand. My conclusion was that although an ad agency could provide strategic insight, and even help define and reinforce

a client's brand position, it could never meaningfully address anything more than communications.

At this point, the concept of brand as experience – what a brand actually does in relation to what it says – became a personal focus. The challenge of aligning experience with communications seemed the natural place for brands to go. But was an agency the right place to do that? I'm sure there are exceptions, but agencies aren't generally asked to tread outside their clients' marketing departments.

Then an angel appeared in the form of a recruiter who was looking for someone to help build a brand experience platform for Europe's fastest growing wireless provider, then named Oskar (subsequently purchased by Vodafone). It was a contract position in one of the western world's most beautiful cities, Prague. It also happened to be on ancestral turf.

Moment of blind panic: do you give up a full-time job at Canada's hottest ad agency for a three-month gig in eastern Europe? Intense learning: only if your wife lets you. Mine did, bless her heart. Three months turned into two years. But we created something special over there. It was the right place to be in the world of brand experience.

Another moment of blind panic brought me back to Canada: the illness of a close family member. Armed with fresh knowledge and experience from another market,

I co-founded a brand consulting practice called Chemistry. Intense learning: what works in Prague doesn't necessarily work in Toronto. As successful as the Prague project was, the concept of brand as experience was, and still is, a tough sell in Canada.

Especially in a recession.

Moment of blind panic, 2008: how do you sell brand expertise at a time when most clients are focused on protecting their revenue and controlling their costs? The answer to this question presented itself as an offer of employment from Wind Mobile. A brand new, well-funded wireless start-up looking to differentiate itself in an industry that is infamously inconsiderate of customer experience. Seemed like a job description from heaven.

Intense learning: There's nothing like a blank sheet of paper. But when you're in a position to leverage massive customer discontent, you really only have one strategic choice: base the value proposition on easing that pain. And that is exactly what we did.

Now that I'm on the other side of that experience, what's the big learning of the decade?

The customer owns your brand (but there's no reason why you both can't profit from that). Engagement is the new black. Don't hesitate: differentiate. Authenticity is table stakes. Say what you do; do what you say.

Break a leg!

Will Novosedlik has worked on brands both as a consultant and as a client in Canada, the U.S. and Europe. These brands include Nestlé Canada, Corby Distilleries, Swiss Chalet, Harvey's, RSA Security, Bata International, Deutsche Telecom, Butterfield and Robinson, Telus Business Solutions, The Reitman Group and, most recently, Wind Mobile. He can be reached at novosedlik@gmail.com.



Of all the ideas conceived in the past decade, only two percent lived. Strategy is everything.



Draftfcb. Photography courtesy of Andric.



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HOURS SPENT PER WEEK BY WORKING 18-27-YR-OLDS: Figure 3



REAL-TIME COMMUNICATION
INSTANT MESSAGING
E-MAIL

TEEN INTERNET USERS SPEND 11 HOURS WATCHING TV PER WEEK. Ipsos

87% OF 20-29-YR-OLDS HAVE A FACEBOOK PROFILE. SRG

54% OF TEENS USE A CELLPHONE DAILY. University of Lethbridge

TOP ORGANIZATIONS 16-29-YR-OLDS DONATED TO:
35% RELIGIOUS
32% EDUCATIONAL
20% HUMAN SERVICES
15% DISASTER RELIEF Digital Millennials



76% OF TEENS ACTIVELY SUPPORT WORLD SOCIAL CAUSES. Nexopia

13 USING THE INTERNET
3 DOING CHORES

SKATEBOARDING TEENS INCREASED TO 1.5 MILLION IN 2010. Maclean's

24% OF 12-19-YR-OLDS HAVE A TWITTER ACCOUNT. SRG

8 OUT OF 10 TEENS ARE WILLING TO SHARE THEIR BRAND PREFERENCES ONLINE. E-Marketer

37% OF TEENS SMOKED IN 2000. 22% OF TEENS SMOKED IN 2008. Maclean's

85% OF 16-29-YR-OLDS BUY PRODUCTS WHERE A PORTION OF SALES SUPPORT A CAUSE. Digital Millennials

HOURS SPENT PER WEEK BY CANADIAN TEENS Ipsos

80% OF TEENS EAT FAST FOOD ONCE A WEEK. Nexopia

78% OF TEEN INTERNET USERS PLAY VIDEO GAMES ONLINE. SRG

TEEN INTERNET USERS SPEND 1.9 HOURS READING BOTH NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES (OFFLINE) PER WEEK. Ipsos

18-30-YR-OLDS SEND OVER 740 TEXTS PER MONTH. PR Newswire US

TEEN INTERNET USERS SPEND 10.4 HOURS TEXTING PER WEEK. Ipsos

70% OF CANADIAN TEENS PURCHASE THEIR OWN CLOTHES. Nexopia



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