2014 SWANA MARKETING EXCELLENCE AWARD

City of Toronto, Canada
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STATEMENT OF INTENT

The City of Toronto is submitting the "Chuck and Vince - We Want It!" mixed rigid plastic advertising campaign for the 2014 SWANA Marketing Excellence Award as an example of a campaign specifically designed to inform and educate residents and ultimately enhance participation in the City’s Blue Bin recycling program. The campaign used various tactics including advertising and direct mail to reach nearly 2.8 million people and achieve its marketing goals.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In late 2012, the City of Toronto, Canada added mixed rigid plastics to its Blue Bin recycling program. It was the first addition to the blue bin since 2009 and a comprehensive public education campaign was needed to inform residents about this change.

After four successful campaigns using the iconic "Chuck and Vince" characters, Toronto decided to bring back the enthusiastic “waste collectors” one more time to promote the addition of mixed rigid plastic to the Blue Bin recycling program. The "More Plastic! We Want It!" marketing campaign was born – and the results were remarkable.

The combined efforts of the “soft” launch in the fall of 2012, followed by further advertising and a direct mail campaign in 2013 resulted in an increase in the amount of mixed rigid plastic material collected, increased traffic to the City’s website and a surge in requests from residents to “upsize” their Blue Bins.

RESEARCH/PLANNING

BACKGROUND

Toronto is Canada's largest city and home to a diverse population of approximately 2.8 million people. With its size and diversity, Toronto faces unique challenges in communicating important information about waste diversion and other solid waste issues. All of our communication and advertising efforts must take into account language differences, cultural diversity and a mix of housing types across the City. Almost 20% of Toronto's population does not speak English (2006 census), over one million people are immigrants to Toronto, and nearly 55% of residents live in apartments or condominiums.

In order to educate our audience and encourage them to sort and dispose of waste correctly, Toronto uses various tactics including advertising, direct mail and social media. With a three-container system – the Blue Bin for recyclable materials, the Green Bin for organic waste and the Grey Bin for garbage - residents are sometimes confused about what can and cannot be recycled, where to recycle it and how to do it correctly. The number and complexity of some of Solid Waste's programs is an added dilemma when creating effective communication / advertising strategies.
Toronto is also faced with the challenge of a particularly sophisticated and heavy media market. With four major daily newspapers and dozens of radio stations alone, we strive to break through the hectic information landscape to reach our audience.

**THE BLUE BIN PROGRAM**

Toronto’s Blue Bin (formerly Blue Box) Recycling Program was launched in 1988/1989. The first materials that were accepted for recycling were glass bottles, jars, metal cans and newspapers and throughout the years other products were added such as magazines, telephone books, catalogues, pizza boxes, plastic food jars, tubs and lids.

The last addition of items to the Blue Bin took place in 2009 when plastic grocery and retail shopping bags and foam polystyrene packaging were added.

Currently, 96% of single-family households participate in the Blue Bin program. These residents receive recycling collection free of charge, but are required to order a collection container in one of four sizes (small, medium, large and extra large) – depending on their household needs.
Toronto’s automated Blue Bin collection requires all recycling to fit into the bin. "Overflow" recycling may be placed beside the bin, but it must be bundled or in a clear bag that collection crews can fit back into the emptied Blue Bin. Residents who regularly have overflow recycling are encouraged to “upsize” their Blue Bin or order an extra Blue Bin free of charge.

Under provisions in the *City of Toronto Act* and the *Toronto Municipal Code* all apartment and condominium buildings that receive City collection service are required to provide a recycling program in their building, and to meet certain source separation requirements that promote reducing, reusing and recycling.

To help multi-residential buildings increase recycling, Toronto provides free in-unit recycling containers for residents. Building owners, managers or superintendents can order in-unit recycling containers for every unit in their building, and are eligible to receive an additional 10% yearly based on the original order for replacement in-unit containers.

There is a choice of two different recycling container types designed to make it easier and more convenient for residents to recycle. The options are either a hard-shell blue box or a soft-shell blue bag.

Building owners that receive City collection service pay a fee for waste collection based on how much garbage is set out at the building. There is no cost or limit on the amount of recycling that can be set out for collection. Therefore, the more recycling, the less garbage and potentially lower the costs for the building owner - and the environment.

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**ADDING MATERIALS TO THE RECYCLING PROGRAM – CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES**

The City of Toronto added mixed rigid plastics to its Blue Bin program in the latter part of 2012. This was the first addition to the Blue Bin program since 2009.

Residents in Toronto were eager to have more plastics added to the Blue Bin program; however, mixed rigid plastics were an ongoing issue for recycling programs in Ontario due to the diverse nature of plastic packaging and an absence of an industry standard for mixed rigid plastic packaging. Prior to officially adding mixed rigid plastics as a new item to the Blue Bin, Toronto met with industry stakeholders to address this existing challenge.

Toronto also participated in a pilot project to test sample loads of mixed rigid plastic material for processing. This testing included developing guidelines for Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) to prepare suitable feedstock for markets.

The industry decision to cooperate and use standardized plastic feedstock, Toronto's new processing contract and access to a state of the art processing facility made it possible for the Solid Waste Management Services division to add mixed rigid plastics to the recycling program.
This processing capability allowed Toronto to accept most food-related containers and packaging, and some common household items, such as:

- Clamshell containers (hinged, clear plastic containers for food items such as berries and take-out)
- Clear fruit and vegetable containers
- Clear take-out food containers
- Molded bakery item trays
- Plastic plates and glasses
- Egg cartons
- Cold beverage cups/lids
- Compact disk cases (empty)

Despite this good news for residents, Toronto had to also continue to dispel the “mobius loop” misconception – just because an item has a mobius loop mark on it, it doesn't mean it's recyclable everywhere.

Toronto also does not promote the number system for identifying recyclable plastics either. We remind residents that plastic products with the same numbers may not be compatible, for example PET (Polyethylene Terephthalate), shown with #1 symbol, is used in a wide variety of packaging applications from bottles to egg cartons to food trays. Although the base material is PET, the manufacturers can alter the composition depending on the designed end-use. The result is that the various products can no longer be mixed for recycling purposes.

Ultimately, the addition of mixed rigid plastics to Toronto’s Blue Bin recycling program was to achieve four main goals:

1. Increase the number of materials that can be recycled
2. Improve Toronto’s overall waste diversion rate by adding 2,000 tonnes to our diversion annually by the end of 2013 through the increase in recycled plastics
3. Remind residents how easy and beneficial it is to participate in the City’s recycling program
4. Remind residents about proper sorting and that they could upsize their bins (or get a second one) for free to accommodate the correct materials
PREVIOUS RECYCLING CAMPAIGNS

Prior to implementing this newest advertising campaign, Toronto had used several communication methods over the years to remind residents about what can and cannot be recycled.

These tactics include the annual recycling calendar (versions for single-family homes, multi-residential dwellings and apartments above commercial properties).

Other communications include the Solid Waste management Services website, outreach through Toronto’s 3Rs Ambassador Program and at Community Environment Day events (held seasonally in each of the 44 wards across the City from April through October) and through the Solid Waste Management services division website.

IMPLEMENTATION / EXECUTION

AUDIENCE

The primary target audience for the 2013 marketing campaign was all residents in single-family homes, apartments and condominiums because the requested behaviour change (adding new items to recycling, instead of putting them in the garbage) is important and relevant to everyone. This audience was targeted to improve Toronto’s diversion rate, and thereby decrease the amount of waste going to landfill since participation from both single-family homes and residents in apartments and condos is required.
The media chosen for the campaign was also skewed towards females aged 25-65 because research shows that they are the prime household recyclers and most of the new mixed rigid plastic we accept is generated from food purchases and preparation.

A secondary audience for the campaign was the media itself in order to help boost public awareness of this change in Toronto's recycling requirements.

**STRATEGY**

To support the addition of the newly added materials a communications/marketing campaign was launched in two phases. The initial “soft launch” in the fall of 2012 was followed by the more broad reaching campaign in 2013.

The campaign, called "More Plastic! We Want It!" was undertaken to inform residents that new plastic items were now accepted in the Blue Bin program and defined which materials could now be added. Adding these new materials meant that more capacity could potentially be needed for residents in their Blue Bins. The campaign also took advantage of the opportunity to remind curbside residents that they could upsize their current Blue Bins or request additional bins from the City free of charge.

The timing of the operational/collection change was an important factor in how the marketing plan was rolled out. A "soft launch" was initiated with a media release in September 2012 to inform residents about the upcoming changes to the list of items accepted in the Blue Bin.

However, the single-family collection calendar (an important annual communication tool delivered directly to residents) was produced and distributed before the change to the Blue Bin program was implemented, therefore the calendar did not reflect the new items added to the recycling stream. The second phase was an opportunity to repeat the initial message and specifically target single-family homes through the use of direct mail to "correct" the information in their calendar.

Over the two phases of the campaign, the following tactics were used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected media</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direct Mail</strong></td>
<td>• Delivered directly to over 430,000 curbside customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Clear call to action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Studies show that 79% of Canadians agree that mail is the preferred way of receiving general business communications (versus 17% by email and 3% over the telephone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Out-of-home (transit shelters, subway posters and digital screens)</strong></td>
<td>• Every day 1.5 million people in Toronto take public transit, 82% of them take subways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transit shelters help establish mass city exposure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected media</td>
<td>Rationale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Daily Newspapers           | • Immediate mass reach  
                             • Environment suitable to explain products/news/information  
                             • High credibility with readers, used as a resource for knowledge  
                             • Cost efficient                                                      |
| Multi-lingual newspapers   | • Reach diverse audience through six multi-lingual vehicles in the most  
                             commonly spoken languages in Toronto                                  |
| Community Newspapers       | • 53.8% of target audience read any issue within past 7 days  
                             • Direct to households                                                  |
| Radio                       | • Build reach quickly  
                             • Establish frequency among the target group  
                             • Reasonable cost for media buy and production                          |
| On-line ads                | • Focus investment by strategically targeting desired demographic using sites  
                             such as "flyerland.ca"  
                             • High reach to Torontonians in a cost-effective and impactful way       |

**CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT & CREATIVITY**

Toronto worked with its agency of record, Publicis Canada, to develop the attention-grabbing campaign that became known as the "More Plastic! We Want It!" campaign. When the agency was engaged to develop concepts, it was not “a given” that the iconic "Chuck and Vince" characters would return to help promote the recycling of mixed rigid plastics. Keeping in mind the popularity and success of the previous four "Chuck and Vince" campaigns (E-waste, HHW, Multi-Residential, and Waste Wizard – Toronto’s on-line search tool) and after reviewing various creative options it was decided that "Chuck and Vince" would return.

The original premise behind "Chuck and Vince" was to move away from more traditional municipal advertising and use humour and a light-hearted style to capture the audience's attention. Based on the "we want your jewellery" style of pawn shop commercials, "Chuck and Vince" have become the ambassadors for what to do and what not to do with your waste materials. This brand recognition was used to help this campaign convey and reinforce that Toronto is now doing even more to increase diversion from landfill.

The creative used for the campaign was produced in two versions for print ads and subway posters. This enabled us to purchase a unique advertising space on subway cars where the ads appeared on either side
of subway doors ("door surround") for maximum visibility and impact. We also alternated the two versions of the newspaper ads for added impact and visibility.

Two radio spots were also produced. One radio spot used a more straightforward message ("Upsize It"), while the other spot ("Rhyme Time") was more unconventional and targeted a younger demographic. The rationale was to use different styles to reach different sectors of our audience.

The most unique aspect of the campaign – implemented in phase 2 - was the use of a die-cut direct mail piece. The style, shape and size of the piece was specifically designed to stand apart from other letters, advertisements, flyers, etc. that residents receive in their mail. The delivery of the direct mail to curbside residents and the immediate response in calls, Blue Bin orders and visits to the website indicates that the direct mail was not only delivered successfully, it contributed significantly to the resulting positive behaviour change.

**Direct mail (front)**

**Direct mail (back)**

SEE APPENDIX FOR OTHER SAMPLE MARKETING MATERIALS
**TIMELINE OF EVENTS**

**Mixed Rigid Plastics recycling campaign**
*(CoT = City of Toronto)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task/Deliverables</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C of T confirms that mixed rigid plastics will be added to recycling</strong></td>
<td>September 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planning &amp; Implementation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief to agency to engage planning/creative process</td>
<td>September 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency presentation to CoT</td>
<td>October 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final feedback/approval on creative and media plan</td>
<td>October 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo shoot</td>
<td>October 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase one implementation</td>
<td>Nov 12 (4 weeks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of Phase 2</td>
<td>March 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief to Agency</td>
<td>April 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct mail concepts presented</td>
<td>May 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct mail approved / production</td>
<td>late May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase two media launch</td>
<td>week of April 29 (8 weeks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct mail piece mailed (430, 000 homes)</td>
<td>June 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BUDGET**

The budget for each phase of the campaign was approximately $600,000 – including taxes, photography, production, fees and media.

The cost per household was about $0.73 (based on 880,000 single-family homes and multi-residential units). Included in this cost was the direct mail production and delivery to single-family homes. The total for this tactic alone was approximately $0.11 per household.

This campaign did not receive any outside funding support; however we did use some newspaper space allocated by Waste Diversion Ontario’s Canadian Newspaper Association / Ontario Community Newspaper Association In-Kind Advertising Program.
Costs for Phase 2 (Spring 2013) were broken down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mixed Rigid Plastic</th>
<th>Budget $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>17,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print, radio and on-line media buy</td>
<td>394,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct mail development and production, mail prep and delivery (0.108/piece)</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees</td>
<td>60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL (excl. taxes)</strong></td>
<td><strong>$521,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PARTNERSHIPS**

In late September 2013, the City of Toronto partnered with six other local municipalities to promote recycling of certain plastic containers and packaging. The campaign was "generic" to meet the specifications of all the municipalities due to different collection / recycling requirements. There was no monetary cost for Toronto – instead in-kind newspaper space was used to 'pay' for our participation in the campaign (for more information see [WDO In-Kind Advertising Program](#)).

Results of this campaign are not factored in to the overall results for the "More Plastic! We want it!" campaign, but it did serve to further remind residents that certain plastics can go in the Blue Bin.

In addition, Toronto also acknowledges the ongoing support of Publicis Canada, the City's ad agency of record, for their creative expertise that brought Chuck and Vince back for a fifth successful time.
The overall success of the "More Plastic! We Want It!" marketing campaign was measured by the amount of desired materials captured at Toronto’s Material Recovery Facility (MRF), the number of requests/calls to 311 (the City’s 24/7 information line) from curbside residents to change the size of their Blue Bin and the number of visits to the Solid Waste website.

**MEASUREMENT**

In order to see the improvement as a result of the announcement of the program it is helpful to look at mixed rigid plastics as a percentage of the total container stream and its subsequent increase in percentage from May 2013 onwards. The average monthly tonnage of mixed rigid plastic (MRP) from January to April 2013 was approximately 70 tonnes and went up to more than double in May (165 tonnes) and tripled in August (315 tonnes).

Despite the challenge of making direct links between communication campaigns and tonnage diverted (due to seasonal fluctuations, a lack of isolated program changes etc.), Toronto has received approximately 100 tonnes of mixed plastics monthly since the launch of the campaign.

The direct mail piece, delivered to over 430,000 curbside customers, in June 2013 announced the addition of new plastics to the Blue Bin program and reminded residents that they could upsize their recycling bins for free to make more room for the new recyclables. After the delivery of the direct mail piece, the City's 24/7 311 Call Centre received a surge in requests for additional bins or larger bins.

- In May 2013, there were 883 requests for either additional bins or to upsize the Blue Bin.
- In June this increased to 1,364; over 150% increase in requests compared to May
- In July there were 2,219 requests; over 250% increase in request compared to May.
- When compared to 2012 data, the increases in June and July were not related to any seasonal fluctuation.
The number of visits to the Solid Waste website also increased significantly immediately after the delivery of the direct mail piece from 500 to 1,000 visits over a two week time period in June 2013.

**Qualitative results**

We believe that there was a direct correlation between the use of "Chuck and Vince" and the success of the campaign because of their high recognition and likeability factor.

A number of residents remembered receiving the direct mail piece and were able to recall the message.

The impact of the campaign has also lead to requests that we consider using "Chuck and Vince" for future advertising campaigns because they have become "Ambassadors" for Solid Waste.

**REPLICATION IN OTHER COMMUNITIES**

The "Chuck and Vince - We Want It!" campaigns have been successful in teaching Toronto residents about the ease and importance of recycling and proper disposal of various items - including mixed rigid plastics.

Toronto achieved its goals on a tight timeframe with a strict budget. The simple, straightforward message with humourous delivery could easily be replicated in other communities that want to encourage the recycling of any items that can avoid landfill.
NEWSPAPER ADS

Now you can recycle more plastic stuff – like fruit and vegetable containers, clear takeout containers, molded bakery trays, plastic egg cartons, disposable plastic plates and cups, empty CD cases and more. So listen to Chuck and Vince and fill up your Blue Bin, not the landfill. Need a bigger Blue Bin? Call 311 to upszie it for free.

For more information, go to WeWantIt.ca

Call 311
Livegreen Toronto
您現在可以回收更多的塑膠製品，新增可回收物品包括水果和
蔬菜容器、透明外賣盒、模壓烤盤、塑膠盤和盒、
一次性塑膠盤子和杯子、空CD盒以及更多。所以，聽從
Chuck和Vince的建議，填滿您的藍色回收箱，而不是垃圾桶。
需要更大的回收箱？請致電311免費升級。
欲了解更多信息，請上網瀏覽WantIt.ca
TRANSIT SHELTER

WEBSITE

Blue Bin Recycling Program
RADIO ADS (click to play):

Radio Spot 1: Rhyme time

MUSIC: (FUN, HIP-HOP BEAT THAT
HELPS THE BOYS ALONG - PLAYS THROUGHOUT)
CHUCK: (RAPPPING) Yo, I’m Chuck!
VINCE: I’m Vince!
CHUCK: And we’re here to say…
VINCE: Put new plastic in yer blue bin…
C & V: And we’ll take it away.
CHUCK: Clear…
VINCE: Containers…
CHUCK: Plastic cups…
VINCE: Party plates that are blue.
CHUCK: Muffin trays…
VINCE: Fruit containers…
CHUCK: Plastic egg cartons too.
VINCE: Toss ‘em in yer blue bin…
CHUCK: Do it lickety split.
VINCE: ‘Cause more plastic stuff…
CHUCK: Yo!
C & V: (IN UNISON) We Want it!
CHUCK: (SPEAKING NOW) Toronto now takes more plastic.
So fill up yer Blue Bin.
VINCE: Not the landfill.

CHUCK: Go to WeWantIt.ca or call 311.
Radio Spot 2: Upsize It!

CHUCK: Yo, Chuck and Vince here and...
C & V: (IN UNISON) We want it!
VINCE: So...what do we want now, Chuck?
CHUCK: Toronto wants more plastic.
VINCE: Really?
CHUCK: (STARTING A LIST) Like molded bakery trays, ...
VINCE: (ALARMED) Moldy?!?
CHUCK: (LIKE TALKING TO A CHILD) No, molded. Like fitted for cupcakes...
VINCE: (ATTEMPTING TO SAVE FACE) And what of muffins?
CHUCK: (EXASPERATED) Ugh. (BACK ON MESSAGE) Plus we want clear, plastic food containers, plastic egg cartons....
VINCE: Well...what if I can’t fit more stuff in my Blue Bin?
CHUCK: Call 311 and upsize it for free.
VINCE: For free?
CHUCK: Yep. So fill up yer Blue Bin, Toronto, not the landfill.
VINCE: Go to...
C & V: (IN UNISON) WeWantIt!
VINCE: ...dot ca.