



Marketing Messages

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New ad campaign keeps Vancity well ahead of the enviro-pack

So where does a company take its advertising when increasingly the green turf they have occupied of social and environmental responsibility begins to get crowded? How do they continue to differentiate themselves when these values, at the core of their brand DNA, become more common? That is the question that is answered in the recently launched **Vancity** brand campaign, which will continue to roll out during the balance of this year. Vancity, Canada's largest credit union with \$12.3 billion in assets and 56 branches throughout the Lower Mainland, Fraser Valley and Victoria, is driven by a triple bottom line of financial, social and environmental returns.

This year's campaign, created by **TBWA Vancouver**, has a more fun-loving, cheekier and personalized tone than past advertising, which leaned on inspirational messages to establish authenticity. And that seems to be where Vancity is one step ahead with this campaign. Where other new entrants to the environmental and social responsibility movement need to establish credibility, most often through earnest and thoughtful messaging, Vancity, has moved on to humour within this serious message as a point of differentiation. This option could only be available to an established player. "From a strategic point of view it's good that everyone is getting in and addressing these issues. But from a brand point of view, we want to stay ahead. We've earned the street credibility on this issue to not be seen as offering window dressing," says **Sloan Dinning, Director, Brand & Marketing Communications**.

The new campaign theme, "we all profit" explains why Vancity does all the things it does. "We fundamentally believe we can help our members profit personally, and also help the communities they live in and our environment profit as well," says **Kari Grist, VP Marketing**. "This year's campaign reinforces the notion that with a triple bottom line approach to everything we do, we all profit, and communicates a point of difference in a humorous, yet smart manner," adds Grist.

The new campaign unleashes Vancity's everyday creativity and innovation and demonstrates it both through products and services that set them apart and through an innovative execution. You'll see Western Canada's first solar-powered billboard in early July along Expo Boulevard. It will serve not only as a brand-positioning icon, but also as a testament to the company's commitment to environmental sustainability. A completely transparent bus shelter will advertise their transparent business practices. The mixer mortgage, an innovative product only offered by Vancity which enables groups of people to buy a house, will be advertised with humorous TV and online spots. One TV spot features four people in bed, an irreverent and humorous illustration of the shared mortgage. Other TV and online spots feature bad behaviour in a bathroom with aerosol cans and a couple in an ice igloo that appears to be melting from global warming. Both spots humorously take the high road and position Vancity as environmentally astute while offering innovative mortgage solutions. Transit shelters stating, "For hardcore environmentalists who can't stop buying shoes" will help promote their Enviro Visa, a credit card where 5% of members spend is donated to environmental causes. Guerilla marketing efforts include a bike share program, launched this past week, to get more people out of their cars. Youtube and Facebook postings will encourage online word of mouth to augment the initiative. A micro website, www.weallprofit.com has been launched to educate visitors about how Vancity initiatives realize profit on many different fronts.

The new campaign elements work collectively to draw attention to Vancity's values. And the use of humour and a quirky approach help them stand out in the increasingly crowded field of marketing with a social conscience.

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