

MARKETING DAILY

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MARKETING DAILY TOP STORY

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New advertising vehicles for Toronto

For the past year-and-a-half, **Les Horenfeldt** has envisioned a day when Torontonians will be able to hail an ad. After securing the necessary approval from city council—including an amendment to the municipal code—that day could come as soon as this fall.

Horenfeldt is the co-founder of a new outdoor advertising venture called **TaxiArt**, which aims to put full advertising wraps on Toronto cabs. The company has partnered with **Co-Op Cabs**, which operates more than 400 taxis in Toronto's downtown core, and recently began making the rounds of agencies and marketers.

While Horenfeldt touts ad-wrapped taxis as a Canadian first, the concept is already popular in Europe. In the UK, outdoor advertising giant **Clear Channel** operates a taxi advertising division called **Taxi Media** that offers marketers access to 10,000 cabs in more than 100 cities. Its clients include Coca-Cola, Gillette, Energizer and Virgin.

Horenfeldt says TaxiArt will offer marketers unsurpassed, cost-effective reach. Each cab in the Co-Op fleet is on the road nearly 19 hours a day, driving between 450 and 500 kilometres, and delivering a projected 25,000 unique impressions. "The penetration and reach of a taxi is so far beyond a typical static media or a medium like a streetcar that moves from point A to point B," says Horenfeldt. "We know for a fact that the reach is phenomenal and that is something you just can't get from one media, moving or static."

The wraps are superior to other forms of taxi advertising, such as ads on hubcaps, adds Horenfeldt, because they provide marketers with greater visibility. "If you're in traffic and have got cars to your left and cars to your right, your hubcaps are going to be hidden," he says. "The (wraps) will encompass our client brand/message throughout the full exterior of the taxi, excluding window space."

Horenfeldt believes the TaxiArt concept will appeal to marketers in the consumer packaged goods, beverage, cosmetics and electronics sectors. "We haven't had anybody say 'Are you insane?' Which is nice," he jokes. The company is already fielding serious inquiries, he says, and is currently developing a rate card.

Horenfeldt and his partner, **Don Graham**, are executives in a Toronto company called **BGM Imaging**, which deals in large-format printing for clients including Roots, Holt Renfrew and Mercedes.

—Chris Powell



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