

# Getting people to open new doors in new ways.

2007 FALL CONSUMER CAMPAIGN:  
**NEW DOORS**  
Canada Mortgage and  
Housing Corporation (CMHC)



## THE ISSUE

Canada's mortgage loan insurance (MLI) market is dominated by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), which holds an approximate 70% share. However, recent changes in regulations have allowed U.S.-based companies to enter the market, making it necessary for CMHC to clearly define not only its MLI expertise, but also its entire range of unique offerings in the minds of Canadians.

Targeting six major metropolitan areas (Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver), the 2007 fall consumer campaign highlighted CMHC's competitive housing finance products and services and, more specifically, four distinct product/service streams:

- general home renovation information and financing;
- energy-efficiency renovation or home purchase information and financing;
- home maintenance and other general housing information; and
- MLI.

Strategically and creatively, the campaign focused on the idea that CMHC provides consumers with everything they need to open new doors – both the literal doors of new or improved homes and the figurative doors of opportunity, stability and independence.

## THE CREATIVE PROCESS AND THE APPROACH WE TOOK

"Everything you need to open new doors" was originally introduced as a tagline for CMHC's MLI sub-brand, but HBS expanded its thematic utility to express the value of the corporation's full line of consumer products and services.

Given that the campaign needed to differentiate between, and express the value of, a broad range of products and services, we needed an open-ended lead message that would allow multiple, divergent executions while still maintaining campaign cohesiveness. So that's what we developed. Our lead messages across all media invited homeowners and potential homeowners to "open themselves" to new possibilities:

**Open yourself to homeownership.**

**Open yourself to your home's potential.**

**Open yourself to a greener home.**

**Open yourself to a world of housing information.**

However, the effectiveness of the campaign came as much from how the message was delivered as what it said. The media plan for the campaign involved an innovative, highly targeted and cost-effective mix of print, online, television, radio and out-of-home buys.

Content integration (a tactic HBS pioneered for CMHC in its spring 2007 campaign) allowed the corporation to place not only advertisements but also content – in the form of advertorials, branded articles and other information – on given web portals. Presented in this context, the content proved CMHC's claim that it provides consumers with everything they need to open new doors, and helped define what that "everything" was in the minds of consumers.

Building on the success of the spring 2007 campaign, we also expanded the use of content integration to other media, including:

- television (through closed-captioning of homebuying and renovation programming);
- radio (through economical placements around similarly relevant programming); and
- electronic out-of-home communications vehicles in major urban centres (onscreen advertising and content seeding in elevators and at subway stations, and pixelboard advertising at arenas and rinks nationwide).

Print executions focused on purchases of remnant ad space in free commuter dailies. These purchases place ads in any unbought or unused space in each issue of a publication, and represent incredible value for money. Based on our experience, clients can expect exposure equal to up to nine times their investment from remnant ad buys.

All tactics across all media drove audiences to the campaign website – a microsite addition to the main cmhc.ca site that provided direct access to the featured financial and information products and services. Each medium directed its audience to the site with a unique URL (cmhc.ca/open for radio, cmhc.ca/house for television, and so on) for tracking purposes.

**OUTCOMES**

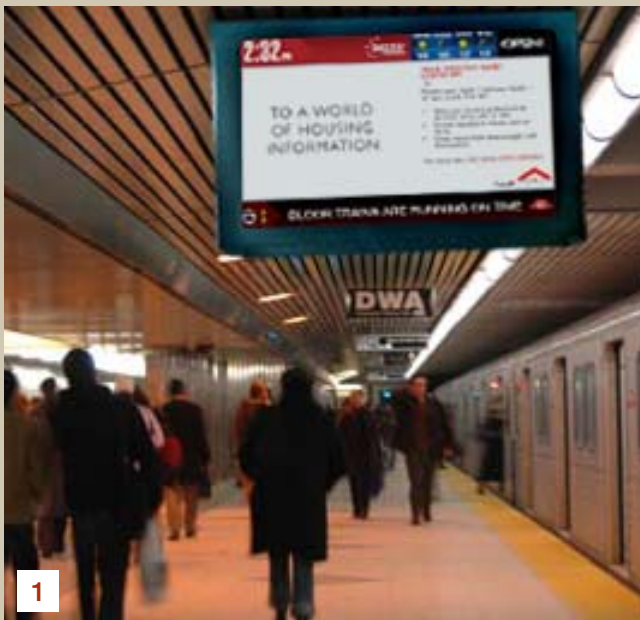
Evaluation of the 2007 fall consumer campaign showed that it achieved – and in most cases, exceeded – its objectives. It also revealed the potential of strategic new media communications tactics.

The campaign’s traditional banner advertising resulted in a 30% increase in traffic to cmhc.ca. The content integration portion of the campaign also yielded great results, with a click-through rate of 25%. Downloads of such engagement tactics as CMHC’s Mortgage Calculator and its *Homebuying Step by Step* guide resulted in a further 23% conversion rate. (It is important to note that users driven to cmhc.ca by content integration tactics were

inherently more engaged with the CMHC’s brand and content, and therefore more qualified and likely to respond to offers.)

Additional analysis of user behaviour once on cmhc.ca allowed us to refine the messaging, target demonstrated areas of interest and provide users with the types of content they most wanted. Armed with this information and working in collaboration with the CMHC team, we were able to optimize the campaign throughout its duration, altering online creative on the fly to enhance click-through rates and drive increased response.

Moreover, the use of unique URLs for each communications tactic allowed us to track which medium was driving the greatest proportion of hits to the campaign microsite, and thus evaluate the efficacy and economy of each media investment. Based on this information, we have been able to provide CMHC with recommendations on the best and most effective uses of communications budgets for future campaigns.



- 1 TTC subway platform advertising
- 2 Print ad
- 4 Elevator advertising
- 4 Online banner
- 5 Microsite