

## Getting inside changing minds

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO CHANGE?  
Carleton University



### THE ISSUE

From its very beginnings, Carleton University embraced the idea of change. Founded in 1942 by Henry Marshall Tory to provide evening classes to wartime workers, the university was dedicated to the idea that individuals can make a difference and, in Tory's words, "that it is people, not buildings, that make up an institution. And if we put our hearts to it we can do something worthwhile."

That drive to make a difference is still one of the key reasons that students and faculty come to Carleton. They come because there are things – in their lives, in their communities and around the world – that they want to change.

Our 2006/2007 undergraduate recruitment campaign for Carleton asked prospective students to tell us exactly what those things are.

### THE CREATIVE PROCESS AND THE APPROACH WE TOOK

Because both internal and external audience buy-in was essential to the success of the campaign, the decision was made to link it thematically to messaging HBS had developed for Carleton's corporate awareness initiative, which had garnered great support from industry and partner organizations, alumni, faculty and staff:

**Changing Lives.  
Changing The World.**

However, it was necessary for the meaning behind that initiative to be re-stripped in order to credibly inspire and motivate the primary audience of potential undergraduate students. Specifically, we reworked the message to directly address and engage potential students by asking them: **What do you want to change?**

While the intention was for each prospective student to answer the question for him- or herself, we also solicited answers from Carleton students and faculty. Their stories supply the proof that the university provides the

support, tools and knowledge you need to make change happen, and were essential to the campaign's credibility.

Full-page newspaper ads, featuring a mosaic of students and faculty representative of Carleton's ethnically, culturally and academically diverse community, introduced the campaign. The copy in the ads speaks not only to the individual aspirations of Carleton students and faculty, but also to the university's broad range of programs and its professional and community connections. It concludes with a challenge to prospective students to define their own path:

**We are artists, engineers and mentors. Politicians, business leaders and innovators. Architects, journalists, researchers – and friends. We are the people who make change happen. And we are at Carleton.**

**Now tell us, what do you want to change?**

Simultaneously, we deployed fleet-wide transit advertising with OC Transpo – the primary transportation option for our target audience. With 850 internal and external ads travelling bus routes across Ottawa, the campaign literally changed the city’s visual landscape. External ads either reiterated the campaign theme or highlighted other intriguing “I want to change” statements. Inside the buses, where captive audiences have more time to read, ads went beyond the headlines to tell fuller stories of students and faculty members who are making change happen at the university, in the community and around the world.

Cinema advertising was released to coincide with prospective students’ winter holidays – and their peak movie attendance. Although each student or faculty member featured in the cinema ads generally spoke only a single line – or a fragment of a line – we had each person read the entire script, allowing us to pick the best, most sincere and most convincing performances.

All tactics drove potential students and influencers to Carleton.ca, a robust, interactive website where prospective students could learn how Carleton is changing the university experience, could meet Carleton professors and students who are driven to change, and change their own lives by applying to enrol.

**OUTCOMES**

According to system-wide numbers released by the Council of Ontario Universities (COU), Carleton’s first choice applications increased by 11.3 percent in the wake of the *Change* campaign – significantly higher than the average increase of 5.2 percent. While a program-by-program breakdown is still being compiled, the preliminary figures show an above-average increase for each of Carleton’s five undergraduate faculties.

With this proof that the *Change* campaign is taking Carleton in the right direction, current plans include additional media tactics and a strategic evolution of the theme for the next iteration of the university’s recruitment campaign.



- 1 Print Ad
- 2,3 Bus Interiors
- 4 Cinema Spot