

Canadian Public Relations Society, Inc – PR In The News Weekly

PR in the News Weekly – Week Ending October 26, 2001

ITEM #6

PAPER: The Edmonton Sun

DATE: October 26, 2001

PAGE: 58, Business

BYLINE: John Mather

HEADLINE: Light our darkness with subway ads

ADVERTISING SINKS TO NEW DEPTHS: Passengers riding in the Philadelphia subway system were startled recently to see an ad for bottled water zapping them as the trains sped through the darkened tunnels.

With subway stations crammed with billboards, Submedia of New York placed luminescent billboards along the darkened passages. As trains speed by, the ads get a life of their own, and passengers see what appears to be a moving advertisement.

The signs run along a 137-metre stretch of the tunnel. The ad agency says plans are under way to develop a similar package in the Atlanta subway system.

“The riders seem to like them,” says Submedia chief executive Joseph Spodek. “When we unveiled them in Atlanta people were actually going for a second ride to get another look.”

Is this something we can expect in the Edmonton LRT tunnels?

Not likely, says Gord Ganser, contract administrator for Edmonton Transit. “We took a look at it with our advertising agency Pattison Group and we weren’t certain it would work here,” said Ganser. “The walls along the LRT route through downtown are quite irregular - they curve quite a bit.”

He said it didn’t look like an item ETS would pursue without some idea of a customer base. It would be expensive to install, he said, and they would need a market for it. Ganser says ETS is always seeking new advertising packages for the system. “We’ve tried several new things this year, mainly with the buses. We added murals on the buses, headers half- and full-wraps - all introduced this year.”

He says Toronto tried a new advertising package which ETS would be interested in if they had a client for it: Total domination of a station. “In Toronto they sold the stations for \$125,000 for a four-week period and the advertiser was the only one allowed into the station. All signage was for one advertiser.”

Four stations were tried out in Toronto, with the advertisers being Kellogg’s, Travel Alberta, Pizza Pizza and the Art Gallery of Ontario. The station-domination package included vertical posters, station posters, stair risers, wallscapes, floor graphics and recycling boxes, all featuring the single advertiser.

So, knowing ETS is always trying to find unique advertising concepts for the system, ride it more often. You could see the landscape change around you while you ride.