

new products

New Products: Off The Wall 3-D

Need a one-of-a-kind face? Gigantic eyeglasses? A holiday gift box? For Off the Wall 3D it's all a possibility.

by Ellery C. Berryhill

You have this thought: "That board would be better if we had something to stand out, but I know the client can't afford the cost, and I don't have the manpower."

Before you write off three-dimensional embellishments as too costly, too heavy, or too cumbersome to even suggest to your advertisers or design staff, consider a new option in 3D billboard enhancement. Across our northern border, some Toronto Canucks have put on their thinking caps at Off the Wall 3D. Originally established as an air sculpture company for sports stadiums inflatables and sculptures for one-off events, the company has evolved its original technology and can now offer customized air sculptures for billboards. At approximately 10% the cost of traditional fiberglass and foam core embellishments, these custom-crafted designs offer a new option in creativity.

"When a client calls, we typically discuss what he or she is looking to do as far as goals for the campaign and then budgetary considerations. With those in place we can develop a design to enhance a campaign, whether it's a sculpture of a company's logo or a piece of food or an animal. We've produced 50,000 plus air sculptures," explains Off the Wall executive James Sheehan, whose clients have included Bacardi, the NHL, and Nintendo among others.

How It Works

Once a design is established, a world-renowned ice sculptor creates the design as a clay model. Then vinyl and



This 8-week teaser campaign for Sudafed began with just a big red bow tied across the air sculpture nose for three weeks. The snipe Now Open and the Sudafed box were revealed for the final five weeks. The 55-lb nose cost \$4,995 CDN.

nylon are laid over top of it. "The result is a tremendous level of detail and sophistication in the look," explains Sheehan.

In comparison to traditional fiberglass and foam embellishments, whose extremely large and heavy pieces often must be attached with hoists and transported by truck, Off the Wall's executions are shipped in a 2' x 3' duffel bag.

The embellishments are installed with a basic one to two-man installation crew. Every six inches the inflatable is bolted through the vinyl using hyper-reinforced seatbelt material in addition to a D-ring attached to the internal wall of the air sculpture and cabled directly to the board. "It's extremely durable. We've had executions in up to minus 50-degree weather, and we've had 12-month executions that have lasted with no trouble," notes Sheehan, "It's not going anywhere."

Once installed the vinyl form is kept inflated with the use of both internal and external blowers that run off

standard power at a minimal 2 amps. Additionally, any sculpture can be internally lit off standard power as well, offering extended effects for nighttime viewing.

While turnaround time generally is six to eight weeks, certain execution shapes can be produced faster. "We can rip cans and bottles off pretty quickly," notes Sheehan. "We try to accommodate quicker times as much as possible because we understand the fast pace of the outdoor advertising arena."

The most basic design, says Sheehan is a half-globe shape because it doesn't have internal walls to sculpt. However, the company has created designs as intricate as a 35-foot tall image of a real NHL hockey player to a 30-foot execution of a gorilla for Nintendo's Donkey Kong release.

Additional Benefits

Because both the production and installation costs are a fraction of what traditional 3D embellishments require,

