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▲ Nuance has contracted Adflow Networks to promote items in its duty free stores in Toronto's Terminal 3, Lester B. Pearson International Airport

# Moving messages

Encouraging consumer spending in duty free shops goes high-tech as Canadian company Adflow Networks brings advertisements to life

By Wendy Gallagher

Statistics prove consumers are 5 to 10 times more likely to respond to dynamic messaging than static print signage. Dynamic messages aimed at the right target, at the right time, with the right amount of frequency are even more compelling. ADFLOW's Dynamic Messaging System helps retailers reach their customers at the critical ready-to-buy point

— Adflow Networks

At the heart of your digital signage system is the ADFLOW Dynamic Messaging System. It's simple to access and manage messaging worldwide. All you need is a password to upload, review, approve and distribute targeted messaging across your network of digital displays anywhere in the world. ADFLOW makes it easy to implement the most targeted and compelling form of messaging available today

— Adflow Networks

**A**t 5 p.m., more than 400 people will board a JAL flight to Tokyo at Toronto's Pearson International Airport, Terminal 3.

In the two to three hours they will wait for their flight, duty free operators hope to draw every single one of them into their stores and hear the cash registers ring.

Welcome to the brainchild of Adflow Networks president David Roscoe, whose company takes targeted marketing to a whole new level. Using plasma television screens, retailers can now change the advertising or messages to coincide with the type of traveler who will be passing by their store at different times of the day and night.

Neon signs, posters, samples and flyers are a traditional way to help boost sales. But in Terminal 3, Adflow Networks is taking care of the marketing for Nuance Group's duty free stores with their plasma screens. Prior to the departure of the JAL flight, the marketing will be targeted specifically at all the JAL passengers.

Known as the Dynamic Messaging System (DMS), the concept is web based and allows retailers to program messages from their own computer. In the case of the JAL passengers, Nuance could run commercials that cater to the Asian sweet tooth or feature made-in-Canada items to take back to Japan.

"These retailers know their demographics. They want to target their market at the right time," says Wayne Ruttle, senior account manager for Adflow Networks, headquartered in the Toronto area.

## Turnkey operation

DMS clients are provided with access to a central database in Chicago that houses their messages. "There are two different objectives with the messages," says Roscoe. "We are targeting a specific customer and we are influencing that customer to come into the store."

According to Ruttle, the screens offer one-stop-shopping for retailers who want a turnkey solution for their marketing. "It doesn't take much time to make [retailers] understand how [DMS] can impact on their business," he says, "[While] suppliers are looking for new ways to communicate to their customer."

The DMS system can be purchased by a duty free operator or by an individual supplier. In Toronto's Terminal 3, Nuance uses the DMS system to promote various specials within the stores. Inside, a 19-inch plasma screen is contracted to The Famous Grouse Scotch whisky company. Below the screen, which continually plays advertisements, sit three shelves of the product.

Roscoe was traveling more than 100,000 miles a year in a previous job when he came up with the DMS idea. He found himself sitting for hours in airports and noticed that billboard signs rarely changed. He also thought about the process of printing, shipping and installing the advertisement, which would eventually end up in the trash.

Roscoe knew there had to be an easier way to streamline the process while still getting out an effective message. It was then he came up with the DMS idea, developed the application and patented the software in 1998. After doing extensive testing in the market, he incorporated his business in 2000 and began selling the product. "The next generation of consumers is a technology-savvy customer," says Roscoe.

As well, retailers don't want to shell out a large investment for electronic messaging. "The retailer doesn't have to buy any hardware or any software. We're a technology company. We look after the technology so the retailer can look after the retailing," explains Roscoe. "This is a dynamic point of purchase with zero IT."

The idea appealed so much to Roots Canada Ltd, a clothing manufacturer and outfitter to several Olympic teams, that they put the DMS system in stores across the country. "Roots has a very short sale cycle," says Roscoe. "They found the DMS cost efficient and simple to use. We already have the infrastructure in place."

DMS clients can either use their own messages and advertisements or have Adflow Networks create them. Companies can adjust the messages throughout their stores from their head office.

Cost for the DMS system varies on the length of the contract and size and quantity of plasma screens needed, ranging from 19 inch to 50 inch in size. Typical monthly fees, which include on-site support and unlimited access to hosted messages, range from \$250 to \$400. □

## People respond to dynamic messaging.



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### ADFLOW Networks

DYNAMIC P.O.P. WITH ZERO I.T.

3170 Harvester Road  
Burlington, Ontario, Canada L7N 3W8  
Tel: 905 333 0200  
Fax: 905 333 0125

1 866 4 ADFLOW (1 866 423-3569)  
sales@adflownetworks.com