



Can Montreal Become the Ad World's Ideal Test Market?

Having Signed L'Oreal, an Initiative by Montreal Agencies Will Target American Advertisers

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MONTREAL (Marketingmag.ca) -- L'Oreal Canada is the first marketer signed on to the Association of Quebec Advertising Agencies' experimental YUL-Lab, a cooperative effort by Montreal's agencies to position the city as the ideal location to develop and test international marketing strategies.

The agreement was announced at an event in Montreal on Tuesday night, where the new YUL-Lab moniker -- YUL being the three-letter airport code for Montreal -- was unveiled.

The Quebec agency group also confirmed Tuesday night it would embark on a series of trade missions to cities within a two-hour flight of Montreal -- that would be the U.S. -- to sell new clients on YUL-Lab.

The first, to Chicago Nov. 19-20, will be headed by Daniel Lamarre, CEO of Cirque du Soleil. New York and Philadelphia will also be visited.

Long in the works, YUL-Lab sees many of Montreal's agencies working together to attract American and other marketers to Montreal. Their pitch? According to Sebastien Faure, the association's chairman and president of Montreal agency [BleuBlancRouge](#), Montreal is an ideal testing ground for marketers because its different cultural influences have produced advertising styles that would be considered groundbreaking in other markets.

And aside from the city's multilingual, multi-ethnic population, Montreal agencies also have the technical and new media expertise to help companies understand emerging platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

"We truly believe Montreal could be the innovation center of global brand teams in the world," said Mr. Faure.

"Consumers are in control so, basically, we need to learn how to talk to those consumers in the way they want now."

Montreal is the perfect place to figure that out, he argues, because it has a large talent pool that mixes a "Latin spirit with American business sense."

By selling Montreal as a global hot-spot of advertising experimentation and innovation, its agencies should eventually attract major new international clients.

"L'Oreal often proves to be part of the avant-garde in promoting its products," said L'Oreal's director of communications, Anik Gagnon. "It was thus tempting for us to test these kinds of initiatives within a restricted market before launching them across Canada."

She declined to name the product and the type of campaign YUL-Lab is working on and said YUL-Lab will be more valuable in terms of testing the mechanics of a campaign rather than in development of new creative.

Go to [Marketing](#) for the full story.

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