



A billboard | Photo source Buy Toronto Time

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Toronto marketing campaign urges residents to support local businesses during pandemic

TORONTO MARKETING CAMPAIGN URGES RESIDENTS TO SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES DURING PANDEMIC

 ADVERTISING & MARKETING

As a significant number of businesses in the city close, the collaborative pro bono effort has launched a major campaign across billboards, TV, radio and Instagram

Spotted: Buy Toronto Time (BTT) was the campaign message used as a reminder for Torontonians to support local shops, in order to help them stay afloat during the pandemic.

The message was commissioned by the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas (TABIA) and was created pro bono by Canadian agency, Berners Bowie Lee. The campaign was presented across over 100 billboard posters, depicted on TV and broadcasted over the radio and through an Instagram account, @buytorontotime which spotlighted the businesses. The entire campaign was one big collaboration, with Pro Print donating printing services and Corus Media donating the billboard spaces.

“Buy Toronto Time’ is about the life or death of an individual business in our city’s neighbourhoods,” John Kiru, Executive Director, Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas, said in a press release. He added, “With a possible end to the pandemic in sight, Torontonians may think that means all businesses will live on. But the fact is they need support now more than ever.”

Local businesses were also invited to participate by asking for their own poster design and putting it up on shop windows for people to see. There are currently more than 400 businesses participating.

The design of the poster portrays a tombstone. Each includes the business name, the date it first opened as well as a second, blank date to represent how businesses may not make it through the

pandemic.

Written By: Katrina Lane

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Takeaway:

According to Statistics Canada, the number of businesses in Toronto that shut down as a result of lockdown procedures reached an all-time high last February since June 2020, with a total of 10,186 closures. To put this into perspective, according to the BTT press release, the debt accumulated by the average small business in Canada is between €120,000 and €140,000 with almost three quarters of business owners suffering from with COVID-19-impacted debt.