

Believe in the sleeve

Vancouver marketing firm enjoys soaring revenue growth with coffee cup advertising initiative

There are few places advertisers have yet to mine to grab your attention. Now you can add coffee sleeves and parking lines to the 'done' list.

Michelle Herlihy and Nancy Green of Vancouver-based Fairway Media Sales have wrapped millions of cups of coffee across the country with advertising-laden coffee sleeves.

Distributed to hundreds of independent and micro-chain cafés and restaurants in major markets across Canada, Fairway has seen continued growth in the past couple years.

Revenue has grown to \$120,000 in 2006. For 2007 to date, Fairway already has billings in excess of \$250,000, with that number projected to grow to half a million by the end of the year.

Central to the concept is developing a network of cafés to distribute coffee sleeves, and providing advertisers with a medium where a message stays with a potential customer for hours instead of minutes or seconds.

Fairway signed two advertising campaigns in the fall of 2005, which jumped to five in 2006.

In the first couple of months in 2007, they've booked eight campaigns that will keep them busy until May and expect to have 10 to 15 by the end of the year.

Clients have included Tourism British Columbia, Ontario Tourism, General Motors and Sotheby's International

Realty. Its most recent campaigns include a 300,000-sleeve campaign in sports arenas across the province with the B.C. Lottery Corp., for its SportsFunder lottery, plus a national

is what they expect to keep their options open if – or when – coffee sleeves cease to exist as new types of cups enter the coffee market.

Fairway has partnered with

BlueCasting Canada and Gigazad Networks to provide cell phones, laptops and PDAs as additional advertising mediums for clients.

Meanwhile, Vancouver-based ThinkBox National Marketing Inc. is taking a cross-medium approach to advertising, offering ad

space on parking

lines in many parking lots and parkades across Canada.

Called adlines, clients can grab consumers' attention with a minimum campaign of 30 lines per location. Clients can expect to pay between \$99 and \$25 per line depending on the location in a parkade, the number of lines and the length of advertising campaign.

As part of their campaign, clients can also incorporate a text messaging campaign in conjunction with the parking line ads, encouraging consumers to text a certain number for special deals, said Erin Chapman, ThinkBox's national account director. "It's a way to reach the consumer before they enter the location," she said. ThinkBox's first adlines campaign is expected in June. ◆

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Advertising: Nancy Green and Michelle Herlihy at Triggiano's Café, one of the cafes in their coffee sleeve network

676,000-sleeve campaign for ING Direct.

One of the keys to the business is constantly maintaining and growing the network of cafés to distribute the sleeves.

Given franchise agreements of major coffee chains that prevent franchisees from accepting outside sleeves, Fairway mainly distributes its sleeves free of charge to independent and micro-chain cafés and restaurants.

In B.C. alone, it has created a network of more than 300 locations and has more than 200 in the Greater Toronto area.

"We never take for granted that a café will be there for the next campaign," Green said. "When we go to start a new campaign, it's right back to square one and everyone gets called again."

For Herlihy and Green, that network