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Rogers' outdoor games

by Jonathan Paul
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Video games have found a bigger audience (and a bigger screen) in interactive promotions in Toronto's Dundas Square.

Over the holidays, Rogers Wireless allowed consumers to play a branded video game promoting its Blackberry Pearl flip phone. Up to 10 passersby were given flip phones and dialed in to play the game in real time. Each phone corresponded to a hand on Outdoor Broadcast Network's (OBN) 40' x 30' video board, and by yelling "flip" into the phone, participants controlled their respective hands as they tried to catch as many Pearl flip phones as possible. The effort represented a first in Canada.

"Given the number of people who directly interacted with the board and played the game, our cost per interaction was similar to more traditional street team activities," says Paul Brousseau, director of consumer advertising, wireless division, at Rogers. "The exciting news is that we had a much higher level of engagement with the product and the message as people interacted with the game for several minutes."

OBN utilized software called "Dial to Play," developed by New York-based MegaPhone and distributed in Canada by Montreal-based iGotcha Media. It allows consumers to interact with video boards by playing different games after dialing in from, ideally, their cell phone.

Many types of games, from racing to Space Invader-type options, are available. Advertisers can expect to pay a base fee of around \$25,000 for the use of the software, excluding media and frequency costs.

www.obn.com, www.igotchamedia.com, www.playmegaphone.com