

Canadian Council of Muslim Women

DARE To Be AWARE Campaign Paid Media Final Report

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HOBÉ HOSOKAWA MARKETING

Executive Summary

Hobé Hosokawa Marketing was initially engaged in late 2019 to implement CCMW's DARE To Be Aware Campaign's paid online initiative. This was composed of running ten graphics in English and French for ten consecutive weeks on all three major social media platforms: Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Before analyzing the campaign itself, we felt it important to touch upon some of the initial stumbling blocks that occurred.

Ads began running on January 24th, 2020 until March 31st. One of the first stumbling blocks that occurred was with the French ads on Twitter. After only a few days of running the ads, Twitter ceased the French version, sending a notification to the effect that CCMW was in violation of its policies, specifically pertaining to their [Caused-Based Advertising Policy](#). Although our firm reached out to Twitter on multiple occasions to challenge this decision, underlining that the campaign was not politically motivated but an awareness campaign, we were sent the same form letters back on each occasion.

After conferring with colleagues about this, we subsequently learned that Twitter had tightened its policies, as of November 2019, and that these decisions were very much in keeping with the current US political climate of bias against free speech. It was further pointed out that the individuals working for Twitter who were judging content, were scattered throughout the US, and that it was up to their own interpretation of the

campaign content that either allowed or disallowed it to run.

Following this, Twitter proceeded to cease running the English version of the ads as well, and froze CCMW's Twitter Ads Manager. It is unclear if Twitter will lift these restrictions any time soon. The most significant drawback to this was not only being unable to run paid ads, but having no access to the statistics tracker for organic postings.

Moving to Facebook and Instagram. It should first be noted that these two platforms are run through Facebook's Ads Manager, and therefore are separate from Twitter. Once we had set up the campaign, Facebook seemed satisfied that we were indeed running social awareness ads and that this was not a politically motivated campaign. Having said this, we did have to remove the sponsor logos at the bottom of the ads (Eg. Government of Canada), for fear that it too would be flagged. These logos were not removed for the organic postings.

Unfortunately, early on the French version of the ads were flagged by Facebook/Instagram as being in violation of their policies. Their claim was that the ads misrepresented themselves, and had a hidden politically motivated message.

Again, our firm attempted to have the decision reversed, but to no avail. What is interesting is that these ads were judged by

individuals located in Quebec. It is unclear if these decisions were made through the lens of bigotry, given the subject matter of the campaign and the current political climate in French Canada.

As a remedy to this situation, our firm suggested creating videos from the still ads to run concurrently. Ultimately, these short videos far outperformed the stills, as can be seen by the charts and analysis that follows.

Although our firm was initially engaged to disseminate and monitor the paid ads for the campaign, it was requested that we post the organic component to all three platforms for stills in both English and French, and corresponding videos. This process went smoothly.

The only area that fell short was statistical tracking of organic posts. This did not fall within our purview, but we nonetheless attempted to aid in finding solutions to this. As a stop-gap, our firm began using the paid service, [Sprout](#) in order to supply weekly statistics for Board Members' review.

Despite the above issues, our firm endeavoured to ensure that the paid campaign was a success. With over one million impressions over the course of ten weeks, and a significant number of link clicks leading the user to the website module pages, we were extremely pleased with the outcome.

Overall Results of Facebook & Instagram Ads

1,146,309 Impressions

The number of times the ads were on screen



219,073 Reach

The number of people who saw the ads at least once



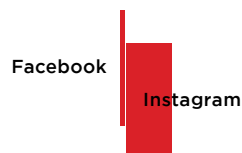
80,145 Post Engagements

The total number of actions that people take involving the ads



49,749 Link Clicks

The number of clicks on links within the ads that led to destinations



Despite the initial hurdles of the campaign noted above, we were able to land on two of the most powerful social media platforms in order to disseminate the campaign messaging: Facebook and Instagram.

These platforms were a perfect fit for social awareness. As an aside, Twitter, though extremely popular, is now considered to be more of a news and current affairs platform, after it moved its app from the 'social networking' category across to 'news' on Apple's App Store. Currently, 86% of users say they utilize Twitter for news, the vast majority doing so daily.

That aside, the integration of Facebook and Instagram in Facebook's 'Ads Manager' meant better tracking and reporting for the campaign. It also allowed for consistency in programming the right target audience. After discussions with both Nuzhat Jafri and Firdaus Ali, we landed on the following targeting strategy:

Location: Canada-wide

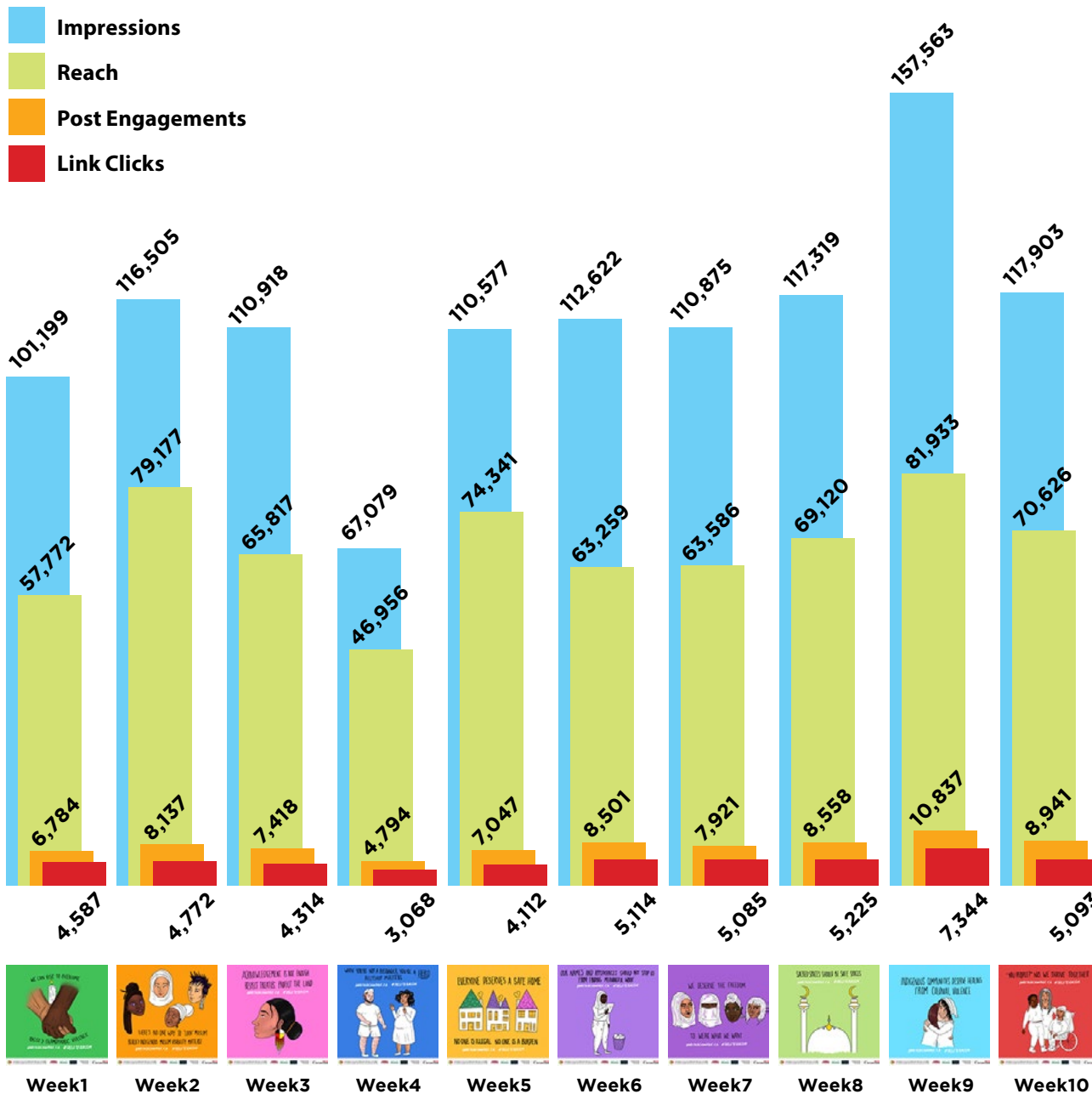
Gender: Females

Age: 18-65+

Interests: Social Justice

This gave us a potential reach of 12 million people per week. Our result was a 9.5% success rate at: 1,146,309 Impressions, with Instagram far outweighing Facebook. Post Engagements were 80,145 leaning again more towards Instagram, as well as Link Clicks totalling 49,749 for both platforms.

Results By Graphics



For the most part, Impressions, Reach, Post Engagements, and Link Clicks remained consistent throughout the campaign, with the exception of Week 9. On this particular week, we chose to highlight International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which fell on March 21st. Hashtags included: #IDERD #ColonialViolence #colonisation #colonized #colonialism, with the accompanying text,

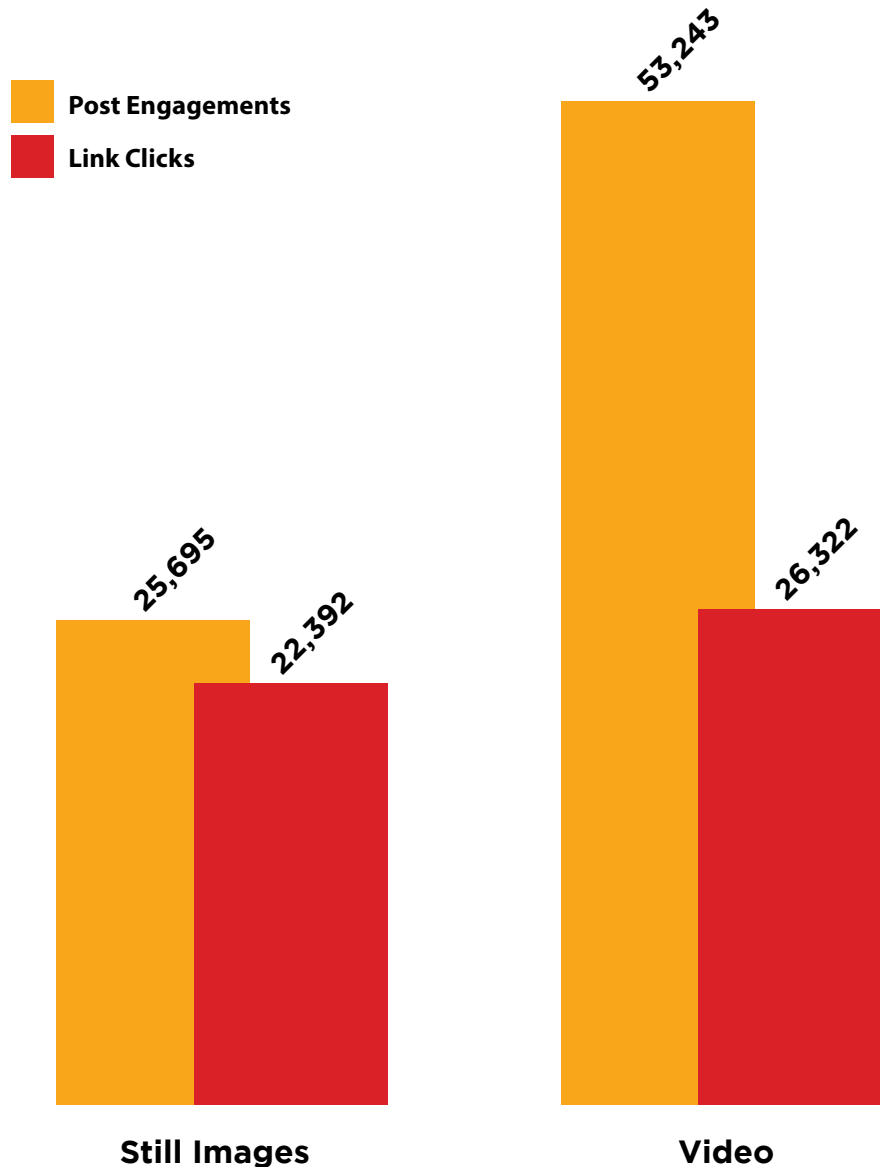
“March 21st is International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. On that day, in 1960, police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid “pass laws.

In tandem, we are running our campaign “DARE TO BE AWARE!” a unique, national anti-hate & anti-Islamophobia social media campaign...”.

This approach of linking the DARE initiative to key dates was used throughout the campaign, in order to further drive traffic to the module site. Our recommendation would be to continue using this strategy moving forward for either paid or organic content. Other key dates and subject matter included:

- Jan 25-31: Muslim Awareness Week (marking Quebec mosque shootings)
- Feb 1: Beginning of Black History Month
- 20 Feb: World Day of Social Justice
- 1 Mar: Zero Discrimination Day [UNAIDS]
- 8 Mar: International Women’s Day
- 15 Mar: NZ Mosque Shooting Anniversary
- 21 Mar: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Video Versus Graphic Still Images



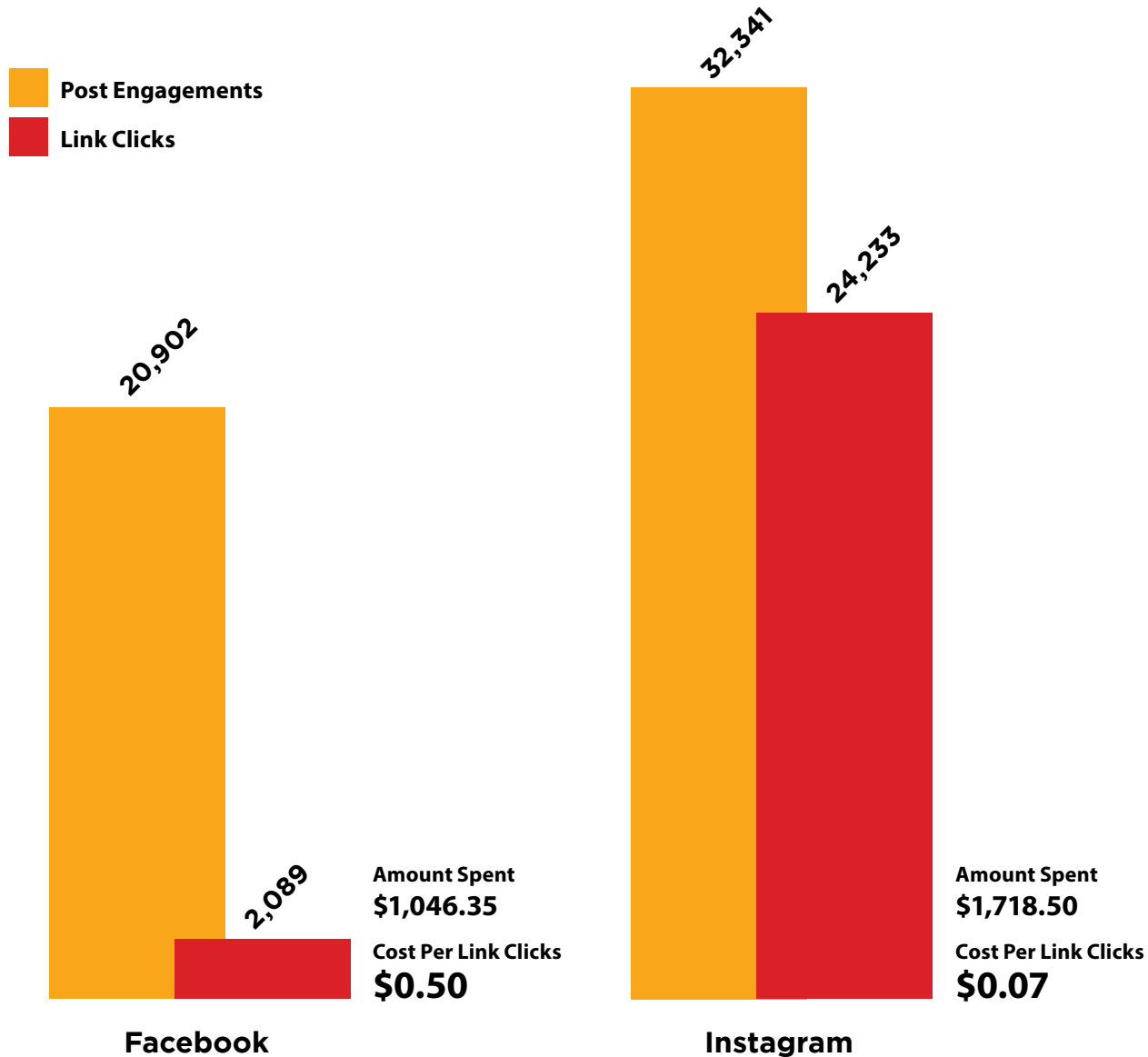
This graphic exemplifies the power of video. It is now acknowledged within the industry that on average video will outperform still graphics with up to a 50% increase in engagement. This was certainly reflected in this particular campaign with stills sitting at 25,695 and video at 53,243.

The simplest explanation that experts give for video's effectiveness is that current users of social media have become accustomed to quickly scrolling through still images, whereas video catches their eye and allows, even for a split second, more information to be transferred. This increases the possibility of the user clicking through to find out more. Here we did see increased click-through rates of 22,392 on stills and 26,322 for video.

We should pause to make a note about video length. The length of a video can be determined by many different factors. Targeting excluded, the platforms chosen will significantly dictate optimal video length. For instance, on Facebook a video should play no more than two minutes in length; on Instagram the optimal length is thirty seconds. Even though Instagram does allow videos of up to one minute in their general feed, and up to an hour on IGTV, users are scrolling faster on their mobile devices.

Another platform that CCMW should consider, moving forward, is YouTube. There are huge benefits to having a fully optimized YouTube Channel, that will house all of CCMW's portfolio of videos. YouTube is the second most used search tool, the first being Google (which owns YouTube), and therefore is extremely important as another hub for information for people world-wide to search for initiatives that combat online hate and islamophobia.

Video Comparison Facebook Versus Instagram



It became clear early on that Instagram was outperforming Facebook regarding video statistical results. Link clicks for Instagram totalled 24,233 versus Facebook at 2,089. The cost per result is also worth noting, with Instagram averaging 0.07 cents versus Facebook at 0.50 cents. Finally, post engagements for Instagram totalled 32,341 versus Facebook at 20,902. It should be noted that video has become increasingly popular on Instagram, more so now that the platform has integrated "Instagram TV" (IGTV) which allows for videos of up to one hour in length.

Concurrent to running the videos on Instagram "Feeds", we made sure that it was also present on Instagram "Stories". The short format of the CCMW videos lent itself well to both avenues.

In terms of budgeting allocation, after some initial A/B testing, we subsequently weighted more towards Instagram in order to leverage these results. We continued to closely monitor the two platforms throughout the campaign to ensure maximum engagement.

Recommendations

Our primary recommendation would be to request that our firm be engaged early in the Phase II process, to aid in developing a robust marketing strategy, thereby identifying market segmentation, targeting, and positioning goals, and ultimately the development of the visual creatives for paid and organic media.

We believe that we can offer benefit in terms of overall cohesion of messaging that will resonate with the desired audience. Further, on the implementation end, we are equipped to provide both design and video services, in conjunction with the posting dissemination.

Because we were engaged later in the process for Phase I, we inherited the creatives that were used and we subsequently built messaging around these. For some graphics this proved tricky. For instance, in our honest opinion, referencing indigenous peoples, as well as transgendered individuals, is a far stretch from the primary objectives of combating anti-islamophobia online with a view to engaging women and girls to take the modules. It is important that the campaign messaging is focused and not too broad in nature. We suggest that it might be misinterpreted by some that we are attempting to leverage other groups in order to gain more viewers on social media. Moving forward, it is appropriate that we be sensitive to this, before it becomes an issue.

A further note on the graphics. Because of the creative direction of the still graphics being hand drawn, this did not play well with the online algorithms. Both platforms evaluate the 'text to picture ratio' of ads. Because it couldn't decipher the difference between what was "text" versus "image", it flagged each still graphic as having too much text. Although it did not cease to run these ads, the warning flagged that they would not run as effectively, and viewer counts would be lower as a result. In future, we would like to make sure this does not occur again.

As can be seen in the statistics analysis above, video was extremely effective in this campaign. If CCMW were to execute another paid media campaign, we would like to recommend further thought in terms of video ideas. These may not only be the utilization of still graphics in video, but also short thirty second personal messages from people advocating for the campaign and its necessity from a personal perspective. Different types of video resonate on different platforms. On Facebook, as an example, telling stories is paramount.

As mentioned above, we would like to see the continuation of linking campaign messaging to key calendar dates that are befitting of the campaign thematically, such as human rights, women's rights, LGBTQ+ issues worldwide and so forth. Utilizing popular hashtags to this

end will prove effective in both paid and/or organic results. It's also important to continue tagging influencers, politicians, and reporters in order to gain traction.

Further, time permitting, if organic videos are created, it is important to link up with key advocates / influencers who believe in the cause and have a substantial social media following on their accounts. This is the best way to ensure success by creating a snowball effect in "sharing".

Finally, it would be our recommendation that further thought be given as to tracking organic postings more effectively. Although somewhat cumbersome, one approach is to create a master tracking sheet in which CCMW can input and monitor "Comments" both positive and negative, "Page Likes", "Post Shares", and other activity more closely. This data could prove very useful in the formation of future campaigns and their approach.

Conclusion

Overall, we were very pleased with the results of this campaign, despite the initial hurdles faced. Consequently, there were some key take-aways from this experience that it's worth touching on.

First and foremost, this initial Phase I of the campaign saw growth in processes that had not been initially defined. In partnership with Firdaus Ali, we were able to collectively build a systematic approach to both implementation, monitoring, and reporting. Having said this, there is certainly room for improvement, and our hope is that time can be spent in the coming weeks to analyze the ten week campaign, noting its successes and failures in order to improve on future approaches.

We would also highly recommend, as mentioned, a comprehensive marketing strategy for Phase II, based on current learnings. This strategy should take into account creating a cohesive plan that encompasses both paid and organic approaches to dissemination; analyzing platforms and forms of distribution and reporting; engagement of partners, allies, and social media influencers, well before the campaign begins, in order to gain buy-in.

Finally, time should be taken in the messaging itself and creative output. This should take into account not only those closest to the subject matter, but the objective input of marketing professionals who can weigh in on campaign effectiveness – specifically when it comes to messaging and audience targeting.

Finally, from our experience on the project, it's worth noting that we very much enjoyed working with CCMW. This project speaks to our own ethos, ethics, and struggles that we have faced personally with discrimination in the form of homophobia and racism. We would also like to thank our primary point-of-contact, Firdaus Ali. There were a lot of moving parts to this project, and communication flowed effortlessly between all parties.

Our sincere hope is that we can continue being engaged with CCMW, from strategy to creation, and finally implementation. Bringing a fresh perspective and passion to CCMW's communications.

About the Author, Steven Hobé

Steven formed Hobé Hosokawa Marketing in 2010, focusing on marketing strategy and implementation. Since then, he has led strategy sessions with a wide range of organizations in the fields of healthcare and advocacy to sustainability, human rights, and the arts. He also holds the designation of Chartered Marketer (CM) from the Canadian Marketing Association, and currently teaches Marketing Strategy & Consumer Behaviour courses at George Brown College.



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