



Women in Information Technology (WinIT)

Communications Issue

Women are significantly under represented in Information Technologies (IT). In Canada, IT exceeds other growth sectors for growth in job creation, revenue, and research development by about 20%. Yet, women only make up 10% of the IT workforce, and at the same time, there is a shortage of highly skilled IT workers in Canada. This shortage – coupled with under representation of women – resulted in support from Human Resources Development Canada and members of the private IT sector for WinIT to create an awareness campaign for women about the growing demand for IT employees and the excellent opportunities for women to enter the sector. The campaign came to us when an already-retained commercial agency “just wasn’t getting it.”

Communications and Brand Response

Two audiences were targeted: Young woman (14 – 25), focusing on the exciting, creative nature of a career in IT, and women in career transition (25+) focusing on flexibility and advancement. Both messages included the financial rewards of a career in IT. We called the campaign “Consider This!” in English and “Pensez-Y!” in French. Two role-modeling videos were produced, which featured women with experience in the sector and women who were new to the sector or still students.

“Consider This!” was officially launched at Microsoft Canada with representation from government, industry, students and media. Following the launch, the National Marketing Strategy we created was picked up and implemented by all local WinIT offices across Canada. The strategy involved local televised Public Service Announcements, a Cable TV Strategy, Earned Media, Paid Advertising and local activities such as job fairs and trade shows.

Result

Response to the Campaign was positive with the target audiences and the partnership funding the project. The Campaign was introduced and implemented across the country. Women’s participation in Information Technology is creeping up and many IT companies who were a part of this project now have specific recruitment programs aimed at women.

