

FDFA Gold Standards Program 2019 - Innovation Award
Philipsburg Duty Free



We have found that in general, travellers are often unaware about land border duty free and the opportunity they have to shop and save. We realised over the past few years that during long weekends and holidays, as soon as a lineup forms at US customs, customers stop coming into our store. This brought home the realization that travellers, Quebecers in particular, were often reluctant to shop land border duty free, either because they were not fully aware that they could, or they were not well enough aware of their exemptions. In an effort to increase awareness, reduce this hesitation, and alleviate the fear of customs, we embarked on a 'Yes, you can shop here' campaign.

The intent of this campaign was to send the message to all travellers that yes, they can shop at land border duty free. We decided that the best way to communicate with potential customers would be when they are the most engaged and ready to receive information. This means communicating with them before they get to the store, as they are on their way to the store, waiting in line and in our bathrooms.

We developed a campaign around the concept of 'Yes, you can shop here', aiming to inform travellers that duty free is for everyone. Starting about one kilometre from the store, we installed giant sized colorful billboards talking about exemptions and duty free. These signs are simple to read and easily visible from the car. For travellers who didn't have the intention of stopping at our store or were unsure about duty free, it is made clear that they are allowed to stop and shop. The same campaign also runs in our bathrooms, so that even once in the store, customers are reminded that they can purchase. In our bathrooms, we installed a series of questions and answers based on the most frequently asked questions from customers, always highlighting the fact that our staff can happily answer questions and alleviate any hesitations they might have.

To address the challenge we face when a lineup forms, and in an effort to continue communicating to customers, we installed a high-resolution digital screen outside our store, which is visible from about 1000 feet from our entry. This innovative technology allows us to educate customers who are in the lineup about duty free. We continued with our 'Yes, you can shop here' theme, while also using the space to highlight promotions in the store and new product arrivals.

We are able to personalise our message based on the type of customer that is in line. For example, on St-Jean Baptiste holiday weekend, a holiday only in Quebec, we personalized our messages for Quebecers, always re-enforcing the message that that they too are allowed to shop duty free. We highlighted promotions on the screen that would be of interest to them, while at the same time inviting them to try some cocktails at our tasting bar.

Not only does this screen work well when there is a lineup and travellers have the time to read the message, it is also a great tool to encourage travelers to stop and shop on days where there is not as much traffic. Since the screen is visible from far away, we have more time to convince potential customers to stop at the store. Because of how the highway is built at our store, customers used to have a split second to decide if they were turning in or not. With our new signage and digital screen, they now have more time to make a decision about coming in to our store.

The impact of this innovative screen, accompanied by our roadside signage and our 'Yes, you can shop here' campaign cannot be quantified. However, every customer who drives by or stops to use the washroom is informed about duty free. Those that are hesitant are reassured that they can shop or stop here, that our staff can answer any questions, and that our savings are significant. Traveller awareness about duty free in general is increased.

We believe that this new innovative way of communicating directly with customers deserves to be considered for the 2019 Gold Standards Innovation Award.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Our new digital screen.

OUI! TOUT LE MONDE PEUT ACHETER ICI.

Posez-nous vos questions sur les exemptions personnelles!

YES! EVERYONE CAN PURCHASE HERE.

Ask us about your personal exemptions!

Grandes marques, meilleurs prix. **DUTY FREE PHILIPSBURG HORS TAXES** Name brands, best prices.

OUI! NOTRE ALCOOL EST MOINS CHER.

Les consommateurs oublient parfois de tenir compte des formats de bouteilles et du taux de change. En bout de ligne, nos prix sont plus bas que sur le marché domestique – nous les comparons régulièrement!

YES! OUR ALCOHOL IS CHEAPER.

Shoppers sometimes forget to take into consideration bottle sizes and the exchange rate. Overall, our prices are lower than on the domestic market – we compare prices regularly!

Grandes marques, meilleurs prix. **DUTY FREE PHILIPSBURG HORS TAXES** Name brands, best prices.

OUI! VOUS POUVEZ VOUS PROCURER PLUS QUE L'EXEMPTION PRÉVUE si vous consommez l'excédent durant votre séjour aux États-Unis.

Venez nous poser vos questions!

YES! YOU CAN PURCHASE MORE THAN YOUR EXEMPTION if you consume the excess during your stay in the United States.

Come ask us your questions!

Grandes marques, meilleurs prix. **DUTY FREE PHILIPSBURG HORS TAXES** Name brands, best prices.

An example of our bathroom marketing campaign, based on the most frequent questions we get from customers.

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Our giant colorful billboards by the side of the road.