

Fuel Industries fans the flame of online branded entertainment to report three-fold growth

Ottawa's unique combination of urban convenience, nature and accessibility to US and UK markets allows Fuel to create and deliver award-winning online branded entertainment

Fast facts

Corporate profile

Fuel Industries is an award-winning interactive studio that lives at the intersection of marketing and entertainment. With close to 100 employees and presence in Canada, the US, and the UK, Fuel has built audiences by creating entertaining online experiences both for major international brands and its own licensed entertainment properties.

Why Ottawa

Quality of life and accessibility to US and UK markets are two main reasons Fuel's founders established the company's headquarters in Ottawa. Canada has consistently ranked as one of the top 20 cities to live in the world. In 2006, Ottawa ranked as Canada's least costly major city to work and raise a family in.

Business advantage

Studies report that interactive ads outperform non-interactive ads in making audiences more aware of the brand and more likely to purchase and/or use the brand. Traditional 30- and 60-second advertising spots are giving way to 600-second interactive experiences where people can have fun and engage with a brand.

Fuel Industries Inc. is one of the most technologically advanced creators of online branded entertainment in North America. Created in Ottawa in 1999, Fuel blends the capabilities of a game developer, advertising agency, animation house and SFX studio to deliver next-generation web content for major brands around the world.



Canada's Creative Economy Capital

With a range of clients including McDonald's Europe, Microsoft, FOX and FedEx, Fuel creates everything from branded arcade-style games and online worlds to digital toys and interactive video experiences.

Fuel tripled its revenues in 2006 over 2005 and predicts extremely healthy growth in 2007. With offices in Chicago, New York and London, UK, Fuel added a Licensed Properties division, doubled its staff to 96 and expanded its Ottawa office from 7,000 sq. ft. to 25,000 sq. ft. in the same year. The company's numerous awards include: a Triple-gold award, Billboard Magazine's DEMMX Advergame of the Year, 2006; gold, silver and bronze in the viral category, Canadian Digital Marketing Awards, 2006; and one of Marketing Magazine's Top Ten Canadian Marketing Agencies, 2006. Fuel was also short listed at Cannes for three projects in 2007.

Why Ottawa

When it came time for the Fuel's founders to make a decision as to why the company should establish its headquarters in Ottawa, quality of life and accessibility to US and UK markets were at the top of the list. Ottawa has consistently ranked as one of the top 20 cities to live in the world. In 2006, Ottawa ranked as Canada's least costly major city to work and raise a family in for the second time (Mercer HR Consulting). Ottawa's citizens enjoy unparalleled health, comfort, and economic well-being.

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Benefiting from a unique combination of urban convenience and accessible nature, Ottawa combines small-city life with a cosmopolitan vibe. This family-friendly city is an attractive offering when recruiting talent from countries around the world.

As a beautiful G8 capital, Ottawa is rich in culture and heritage with many national institutions and historic buildings. Home to Canada's national museums and art galleries, Ottawa hosts over 50 festivals ranging from the Tulip Festival and Winterlude to the Blues and Jazz Festivals to the Dragon Boat and Hot Air Balloon Festivals. For outdoor enthusiasts, Ottawa has the world's largest outdoor skating rink, over 850 parks, 300 kms of biking trails and over 200 kms of cross country ski trails to enjoy!

Benefiting from a unique combination of urban convenience and accessible nature, Ottawa combines small-city life with a cosmopolitan vibe. For Fuel, being located in a very family-friendly city is an attractive offering when recruiting talent from countries around the world and graduates from Algonquin College's Animation Program, many of whom have families with young children.

Business advantage

Fuel's clients realize that the way people consume media is changing dramatically. Traditional 30- and 60-second advertising spots are becoming 600-second spots where people can have fun and engage with a brand. In 2003, Dynamic Logic, a leading marketing research company

with expertise in measuring, advertising and marketing, reported that interactive ads outperform non-interactive ads in making audiences more aware of the brand and more likely to purchase and/or use the brand.

Nokia UK wanted an engaging online experience to demonstrate the benefits of its multimedia car kit CK-20W, an all-in-one hands-free calling, GPS Navigation Kit, and digital music player. Fuel created the award-winning Passenger, a branded driving game that has players race through the back alleys of Paris at night – scenes that were filmed with a car-mounted camera by the company's in-house production division. The Passenger has received hundreds of thousands of game plays to date, with over 60% of players coming from the target European audience. The average interaction time was 8.5 minutes or 510 seconds.

HBO (Home Box Office Inc.) and PHD Media Inc. wanted to conceptualize an online promotional experience for the creatively acclaimed wild-west drama Deadwood, one of the flagship shows for the cable channel. The award-winning experience captures the essence of the characters, the town and the realism of the show, while providing engaging entertainment. Half a million players averaged 2.5 repeat visits with an average interactive session of 25 minutes, engaging with the Deadwood advergaming for about the duration of one episode.

Future growth plans

Until recently, Fuel has played the role of the service-based firm. As it begins to diversify its business portfolio, the company is moving toward the development of a new business model. Fuel expects to double its growth in the next year, particularly in the US and Europe, with most growth predicted in the area of licensed properties. Fuel's Licensed Properties division is focusing on the creation of original content, including the development of casual games and portals, as well as helping Fuel expand its characters and concepts into narrative content for distribution through several new media realms including mobile devices, social media platforms and home media centres.

Contact information

Fuel Industries Inc.
+1-877-224-6738
www.fuelindustries.com



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