

 **News Stories****Masterlift launches radical marketing plan** **OAKVILLE, Canada**

Masterlift Truck Service Inc is receiving industry and major electronic and print media attention for a provocative forklift marketing campaign.

Masterlift president Gary Wilson said the company wanted to "evoke positive emotions" and be original in its marketing concept. In early January, three key Masterlift employees and a representative from Toronto agency Effective Media Solutions Inc met weekly to set basic criteria for the marketing campaign. "The four of us locked ourselves in a hotel meeting room" for two to three hours, Wilson said.

Reaching forklift operators and buyers was the objective.

"Operators have more influence, power and leverage than years ago," Wilson said. "We are targeting operators with the concept of a cool, fun truck in a hot red colour with graphic lightning bolts and flames, special pedals and lever handles as standard features in the new Masterlift-brand forklifts."

The organisers adopted an edgy theme and used "pimp" as a contemporary term. One result is the www.pimpmylift.ca website, which features young women draped over a Masterlift forklift and a competition. It can lead viewers back to Masterlift's website.

Masterlift placed an initial newspaper advertisement across one third of a sports-section page in the April 11 issue of the Toronto Sun. Market and media responses were quick.

Wilson said Masterlift sold nine forklifts over six days because of the campaign.

Reporters from newspapers, radio stations and a television station have conducted interviews. "The website hits are unbelievable" in volume, he said.

"We will continue advertising in the Sun and on billboards, and introduce some other surprises," Wilson said.

Wilson would not disclose the program's budget, but said Masterlift "stopped spending C\$40,000 (US\$34,000) on Yellow Pages" advertising and reallocated the funds to the campaign.

In December 2006, Masterlift became the first Canadian dealer of Tusk Lift Trucks, of Covington, Georgia, USA, to have products in all classes. In addition, Masterlift has contracted with an unidentified manufacturer in Asia to produce Masterlift-branded forklifts in classes 1, 3 and 5. The supplier is "large" and "creditable", Wilson said.

>From 2001 through to November 2006, Masterlift represented the Mitsubishi brand. The dealership began evaluating a major change in June 2006. Last November, "our employees decided to dissolve the relationship with Mitsubishi", Wilson said.

Masterlift employs 59 people and occupies 41,000 square feet (3,690 square metres). The firm had sales of CND13 million (USD11.8 million) for the fiscal year ended May 31, 2006, and CND13.5 million (USD10.7 million) in the previous fiscal year. "The economy went soft", resulting in lower sales, Wilson said.