



Majority of Canadian Ad Companies Won't Run Abortion Rights Ads

45% refused • 30% didn't respond

March 28, 2026

Background

In the fall of 2025, the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada (ARCC) carried out an informal study in conjunction with an advertising campaign we planned to launch in the spring of 2026.

ARCC's Fundraising Committee sought to place advertisements that promote abortion rights in one or more regions across Canada, in particular billboards or transit ads. We first targeted Atlantic provinces but were unsuccessful because the ad companies we contacted were reluctant. Some didn't respond to our inquiries, while others claimed that abortion rights ads would be too controversial or might be vandalized. Other pro-choice groups and activists have experienced similar difficulties in placing ads. (Read [Sophie's story](#) from Kelowna.)

Student recruitment

We recruited a student from the University of Ottawa, Jessica, to conduct an informal study of advertising companies across Canada. The goals were to find companies in each region who might be willing to accept our abortion rights ad, and to share the data with other organizations interested in placing reproductive rights ads. Jessica's work involved:

1. Compiling names and contact info for ad companies that sell billboard or transit ad space in Canada, excluding Quebec.
2. Contacting companies, including follow-ups.
3. Recording answers on a spreadsheet and quantifying the data.
4. Preparing a report of the results.



Jessica's initial email

"I am contacting you from the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada. We are interested in running an advertisement through your company. The advertisement would say 'Abortion is Healthcare'. I would be happy to send an example of the advertisement we would be hoping to put out. Would your company be open to running this kind of advertisement?"

If they said NO

A follow-up was sent asking if they accept anti-abortion ads, and if so why the difference in policies.

If they responded with interest and/or requested more info

The sample ad was supplied to them for review and we told them: "The market we are hoping to reach out to are smaller cities or towns. Even rural areas would be great. We would like the advertisement to run for at least a month, but this is dependent on price. Right now our budget is at \$20K in total. But we are hoping this will be for several advertisements across Canada."

Results

34 advertising companies were contacted over Oct and Nov 2026. We withdrew one national company from our analysis, Curbex, because they said ARCC needed to seek permission ourselves from private landowners and we decided not to pursue that.

Results for the 33 remaining companies (see full table on next page):

Number	Percent	Response
8	24.2	Yes
15	45.5	No
9	30.3	No response at all after two follow-ups
1		No response after requesting our ad for review

Caveats

Some ad companies indicated they only accept commercial advertising, and many work with partners – primarily municipalities or landowners – who may or may not accept advocacy or pro-choice ads. The availability of willing partners and ad spaces may change over time.

For example, KB Media in Ontario at first said No, then later provided the option of OC Transpo in Ottawa, so we included them in our Yes category. They initially said:

"At this time, the municipalities we work with are not moving forward with advocacy-based or issue-related advertising content. Our advertising programs are currently limited to community, recreational, and commercial initiatives that align with municipal policies and public facility guidelines."

Response to follow-up: "Our Ad Joint Venture Program is in conjunction with local municipalities therefore I do have to receive consent from a representative as per their code of conduct."

Some companies who refused ARCC's ad may still accept ads that don't directly mention abortion. For example, in Halifax NS in 2025, Pattison Outdoor accepted bus ads from another organization for the "It's My Choice" patient decision aid.

Ad Company Responses to Accepting ARCC's Ad

Company	Reach	YES	No response*	NO
20 Twenty Marketing	Saskatchewan			
Billboard Hub	New Brunswick			
Crown Billboards	London, Woodstock			
Grow More	Calgary, Surrey, Toronto, Ottawa			
KB Media	Ottawa, GTA			
Kosick Communications	Vancouver, Calgary			
Pro Image Signs	Manitoba			
Wild on Media	National			
902 Digital Sign Group	Nova Scotia			
Ballistic Arts	British Columbia			
Bell Canada	National			
BM Outdoor	National			
Flipp Advertising	Calgary, Vancouver			
Lamar*	National		*	
Mediafinch	GTA			
Price Advertising	Ontario (+ small towns)			
Stellar Outdoor	Ontario (+ rural areas)			
Watchfire	New Brunswick			
BC Billboards / Mountain Media	British Columbia			
Big Sky Media	British Columbia, Manitoba			
Branded Cities	Ottawa, Toronto			
Creative Outdoor	National			
Direct West	Saskatchewan			
Future Sign Media	Ontario			
Impact Signs	Manitoba			
Muskeg Media	Saskatchewan			
Pattison Outdoor	National			
Pinnacle	Prince Edward Island			
Prairie Billboards	Saskatchewan, Manitoba			
Synergy Screens	Prince Edward Island			
Toner Outdoor	Nova Scotia, New Brunswick			
Top Outdoor	Ontario			
VENDO Media	National			

* Companies in yellow shading never responded at all after two follow-ups, except for Lamar, which did not respond after requesting a copy of our ad to review, despite follow-ups.

Other ad companies

We did not contact every ad company in Canada. A few are listed below that we received information about later. If you have info on other ad companies not listed in this report, please let us know and we will consider adding them below (info@arcc-cdac.ca).

Company	Reach	YES	No response	NO
Hi-Way Ads	Alberta			
Digipoint Media	Ontario			
The Electronic Billboard	Kelowna BC			

Companies that said No – reasons why

Of the 15 companies who said No:

- Nine specifically stated they also don't accept anti-abortion ads. (which does not mean that the others do)
- Four said they were bound by partner agreements, and did not specifically say it was their own company policy.

All emails or calls from the companies were received between Oct 23 and Dec 3, 2025
(Not included: Staff names, salutations, thank-you's, apologies, etc.)

Company	Reach	Response
BC Billboards / Mountain Media	BC	"Due to the threats we have received to destroy property on first Nations land it has been decided that that we will no longer be able to advertise pro life or pro abortion advertising. Any existing ads to that effect will be removed at the end of their contract. Our leases are on First Nations land with WFN & others. Westbank First Nations are a self governing body and are the owners of a number of the signs."
Big Sky Media	BC & Manitoba	"This company has a policy of not accepting advertising campaigns of this nature. Neither pro nor against, simply a company policy." <i>Response to follow-up:</i> "Jessica, kindly accept our decision not to accept your advertising - every company has this right."
Branded Cities	Ottawa & Toronto	"I can appreciate that this is an important issue, but we're unlikely to get approval for messaging of this sort. Unfortunately, we'll have to pass." <i>Response to follow-up:</i> "This isn't landing on one side of the issue or another, and is wholly separate from any independent feelings of staff members. All of our landlord partners have clauses in our representation deals that allow them to reject ads for any reason whatsoever. These are corporately-owned properties, the screens are seen as an extension of their outward-facing brands, and they have a right to manage that as they see fit. In our experience, anything with a politically charged or polarizing message/topic is simply rejected. Our goal is revenue, so we've explored many times. The end is always the same."
Creative Outdoor	National	<i>National office initially did not object to ad, BC office refused it Dec 3.</i> "I have spoken with my upper management team, and while we thank you for your interest in advertising with us - Our signs are on public property and are intended for

Company	Reach	Response
		local businesses to advertise their services. They are not intended for messages that can be seen as controversial to anyone. You may wish to consider alternative forms of advertising on private property. "
Direct West	Sask	<p>"We're unable to advertise for your organization because we do not advertise topics or causes that could be considered divisive, and your organization falls into that category."</p> <p><i>Response to follow-up:</i> "Our policy is to avoid advertising topics, organizations, or businesses that are considered divisive. If a subject tends to generate strong opinions on either side, we do not permit advertising. For this reason, we would not advertise for an anti-abortion organization."</p>
Future Sign Media	Ontario	<p><i>Phoned Jessica to provide reasons for declining:</i></p> <p>These are municipal contracts in municipal areas. As such, anything political needs to be reviewed and accepted by the elected officials of the municipality. Anything related to politics, religion, cannabis, and alcohol is to be approved by the municipality and not their company. This includes abortion ads.</p>
Impact Signs	Manitoba	<p>"Our company operates Billboards located on private property, under lease agreements with landowners. Those agreements prohibit us from displaying content related to any political messages."</p> <p><i>No response to follow-up.</i></p>
Muskeg Media	Saskatoon	<p>"Unfortunately, we won't be able to move forward, as our company's policy is to remain neutral on topics that could be interpreted as taking a public stance. We aim to avoid sharing or promoting messages that may invite public scrutiny."</p> <p><i>Response to follow-up:</i> "Our policy is that we won't accept any advertisement for messaging where our Board of Directors or our community might have polarizing opinions on. We like to remain as neutral as possible as we do not want to encourage any public scrutiny and accidentally seem like we are endorsing or not endorsing certain stances of opinions. Having said that, we would not promote any pro-abortion or anti-abortion messaging."</p>
Pattison Outdoor	National	<p>"For several years now, Pattison Outdoor has a policy in which we do not accept prolife or prochoice messaging on our displays, therefore we respectfully decline this request."</p> <p><i>Response to follow-up:</i> "Some years ago, PATTISON Outdoor made a business decision to no longer accept advertising related to pro-life or pro-choice advocacy. Our experience was that accepting messages from either side of this issue often led to challenges and disputes that required significant time and resources to manage. We determined that this category of advertising was not commercially viable given level of administrative and legal attention required."</p>
Pinnacle	PEI	<p>"Pinnacle Marketing Group has a long-standing policy of not accepting advertising for reproductive care."</p> <p><i>Response to follow-up:</i> "Our policy speaks to controversial topics, which we understand can be too broad. The policy used to mention women's reproductive health but that was removed, not to move off the topic but because reproductive health was broadening are we were not in a position to make a list of areas. ... It is attached and I will ask you not to take our wording as conflating abortion services with our use of other descriptors of advertising that we have considered and declined in the past on completely unrelated topics. ... Pinnacle Marketing and T3</p>

Company	Reach	Response
		<p>Transit have never accepted advertising on abortion and have been approached by abortion rights, anti-abortion and 'pregnancy clinics' alike.”</p> <p><i>Relevant part of Policy states:</i> “T3 and Pinnacle reserve the right to accept or reject any advertising content that it deems to be inappropriate for any or all of our constituencies to protect the public from content that is reasonably deemed by T3 and Pinnacle to be immoral, vulgar, disreputable, misleading, offensive to the general public of poor quality, erroneous, directed at or criticizing third parties or containing offers that are not able to be fulfilled. T3 and Pinnacle further reserve the right to accept or reject any advertisers who have, in the past, produced content intended for public consumption that has been controversial or offensive.”</p>
Prairie Billboards	Sask & Manitoba	<p>“We are sorry we do not advertise controversial topics and wont be able to take part.”</p> <p><i>Response to follow-up:</i> “We are a small family business and have made the decision to not get involved in promoting Pro-Abortion or Anti-Abortion campaigns. We also do not get involved in Religious platforms as well.”</p>
Synergy Screens	PEI	<p>“Unfortunately we won't be able to run your ads on our signs.”</p> <p><i>Response to follow-up:</i> “In alignment with company policy and our contractual commitments to partners, we will not be accepting or displaying advertisements that promote or oppose abortion.”</p>
Toner Outdoor	NB & NS	<p>“We are unable to fulfill your request.”</p> <p><i>No response to follow-up.</i></p>
Top Outdoor	Ontario	<p>“Unfortunately, at this time, we aren't able to accept this advertisement due to our landowner leases. Currently, we offer business to business advertising on the billboards as the main categories.”</p> <p><i>Response to follow-up:</i> “We are a small independent company and don't own the land on the billboards, we lease the space, and we are only able to offer billboard advertising to businesses. No, we do not work with or have any billboards with anti abortion messages.”</p>
VENDO Media	National	<p>“We purchased Canada Billboards earlier this year. It is policy of VENDO Media to refrain from taking advertisers on either side of this issue.”</p> <p><i>Response to follow-up:</i> “As mentioned, we do not accept advertising on either side of this issue. We had clients who expressed that this content was creating an ‘unsafe brand environment’ for their clients. That was the driver for this policy.”</p>