

Burlington's New Motto

I hear Burlington has a new motto, and I hear that those in charge of hiring a group to think up the new motto hired an out-of-state company and paid them 30k. This is what 30k got you Burlington:

“The West Coast of New England.”

Isn't there an existing marketing motto here that promotes buying Vermont? I think the motto is “Buy Vermont.” I hope someone didn't get 30k to think up that brilliant stroke of genius. Wouldn't be surprised if the person or persons who hired the out-of-state group to think up the new motto also hired the group who thought up “Buy Vermont?”

Don't you think it would have been cheaper to post a note asking us folks who live here, and who've been hanging around Burlington most of our lives, to come up with the motto?

I believe in the “Buy Vermont” concept, but I also think that if there's a better product made out of state, it shouldn't be counted out as un-buy worthy. I do think that some local company, or even just a local dude or gal off the street, could have come up with a better slogan for Burlington.

As long as they were throwing money around I woulda thunk them up a goodn for \$28,750. And I would have bought them lunch, at a place that uses only Vermont-grown foods.

You might ask why a city needs a motto in the first place. Well, a motto is used to attract people to the city it is mottoing. If that's true, then I think “The West Coast of New England” sucks as a motto.

Why, if you are trying to attract people to Burlington would you use the words West Coast in the motto? That's like trying to get your girlfriend horny for you by showing her a picture of Brad Pitt. Pre-Angelina Brad Pitt.

Besides, saying Burlington is like the West Coast is a lie. Are West Coast cars full of rust? Does the West Coast have ice storms? Sugar-on-snow parties? Does the West Coast have deer flies and girls that chop wood, hunt deer, and stay pregnant year round? No. At least not the part of the West Coast I think they're comparing Vermont to. In turn, does Burlington have the ocean? Ha, no way man! It has North Beach. It's funny to think of some West Coast sun-and-sand worshippers hearing about Burlington being West Coast-like, then coming here to tan on North Beach in their thong swimsuits and getting jawbreaker-sized rocks stuck in the crack of their skinny, toned, tanned asses. With that in mind

maybe a better motto would be, “Burlington, 2.8 miles of beach—Come Stand on It.”

We here in Vermont are all puffed up with ourselves, all proud and all, claiming we’re leaders in this and that, like saving the environment and being open and liberal-minded with our politics. We have Jim Jeffords, who broke camp on the strength of his independence, and Howard Dean who blazed a trail signing the civil-union deal, and we feel those things make us better than most. We think we’re great because we support independent workers, farmers, bakers, and candlestick makers, and we’re always boasting how we stand strong on principals and morals instead of letting ourselves be swayed by the media and our you’re-either-with-me-or-you’re-not-with-me government. Yes, we’re grateful and blessed to be thought of as independent-minded, strong-willed people who stand on our own whether it’s the popular thing to do or not. Vermonters are happy with who we are. Even those poor sons-ah-cussed liberals who read a lot, drive a Prius, and eat kale.

That’s all good stuff. So why when it comes to telling the world about our largest city do we publish a line that says we’re like some place else?

I’m not busting on the company who thought up the motto because I’m sure they put a ton of time and energy into getting the exact right set of words to go together. I’m sure they think they’ve written what’s best for our Queen City, and I’m pretty sure they handed a handful of motto possibilities to choose from to whomever picked the winner. So maybe it’s not the motto company’s fault. Maybe there is no fault in this case. I can’t say the motto isn’t going to be effective, because maybe it will. All I’m saying is I’d never picked it. Nope, no way. I don’t think it’s accurate.

I consider myself very fortunate to live in Elmore. Elmore is a small town that still maintains an old-fashioned small-town feel. Elmore’s kids go to kindergarten through eighth-grade in the same small schoolhouse for one thing, and another cool thing is Elmore’s motto: “Elmore—The Beauty Spot of Vermont.” Now that’s a kick-butt motto. It’s simple, clean, and to the point. Not like Montpelier’s motto, which is “Montpelier—the Newport of Central Vermont.” I also don’t believe Elmore paid more than five bucks for its motto.

Here, take a gander and see if you don’t think one of these mottos might be better at getting folks to come to Burlington.

“Burlington, it’s in Vermont”

“Burlington, it’s nothing like Elmore, but it used to be”

“Burlington, we finally got a Hooters!”

“Burlington, we’re not the coat factory”

“Burlington, the Burliest of the Ingtons”

“Burlington, not the one in Massachusetts”

“Burlington, dang, we had a Hooters, but it gosh damned went out of business because when it comes right down to it, the outfits the waitresses wear are bizarre!”

“Burlington, close to farms”

“Burlington, if you like the West Coast, don’t come here”

“Burlington, bring your motor boat—can thousands of drunk Canadians be wrong?”

“Burlington, home of the Green Mountain Boys”

“Burlington, U. S. presidents don’t visit us”

“Burlington, we finally got a Thai restaurant!”

“Burlington, beautiful weather . . . quite often”

“Burlington, never a line at our Thai restaurant”

“Burlington, we’ll give you 30 thousands bucks for nothing”

“Burlington, look over there, its Plattsburgh”

Some of the mottos may bring folks here, some may keep folks away. They are all accurate.

Only way I’d keep Burlington’s new motto would be if San Diego promised to change it’s motto to: “San Diego, the New England of the West Coast.”