

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Pitt's hybrid 'campers' seek Insight from inside

By Rick Stouffer
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Three University of Pittsburgh marketing students hope to gain "insight" into Honda Motor Co.'s new hybrid by living inside the car for three days.

Beginning Sunday afternoon, seniors Steven Lerch, Brendan Picorra and Bob Johnson will set up housekeeping in the Insight in the middle of the Oakland campus' highly visible Schenley Quadrangle.

During their relocation, the three, members of professor Bob Gilbert's projects in marketing class, will use Twitter, Facebook and video blogs to record their experiences while answering numerous questions about their new digs.

"Our main purpose in doing this is to raise awareness of the Insight, and we think we will get a lot of attention while living in the car, and after, at our release party on Tuesday," said Lerch, 21, of Spring City, Chester County.

Projects in marketing teamed with Honda to create awareness and try to promote sales of the Insight to Generation Y, those born between the early 1980s and the late 1990s.

"Who better to put together a campaign to attract Generation Y than members of Generation Y?" Gilbert said. "The class of 18 has been working on this campaign since the beginning of the semester."

Pitt is one of 21 campuses nationwide chosen to participate in the Honda Insight marketing competition. Teams from each campus are competing for a chance to present their marketing ideas to Honda executives in December.

The top three teams will be flown to Honda's U.S. headquarters in Torrance, Calif., for a chance to win first-, second- and third-place prizes of \$5,000, \$3,000 and \$1,000, respectively.

This isn't the first time Pitt students have put forth their best marketing ideas for new vehicles. In 2006, 22 Pitt seniors under Gilbert's direction were part of the marketing campaign for the new Honda Fit subcompact.

One year earlier, a Gilbert class created a similar campaign for the launch of the Chevrolet Cobalt.

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