

## Lottery's new ad team launches campaign

By [Paul Merrion](#)

March 16, 2012

(Crain's) — The Illinois Lottery rolls out new television commercials on Monday, part of a \$3.5 million advertising campaign to revamp its image and boost sales.

Will it work? Well, “Anything's possible.”

That's the tagline of the 30-second spots, the first by [newly hired ad team](#) Chicago-based Critical Mass and Downtown Partners.

“Anything's possible” essentially is the new brand itself, said Illinois Lottery Superintendent Michael Jones, who pushed for a change of advertising agencies shortly after he was named last November by Gov. Pat Quinn to oversee Northstar Lottery Group, the Chicago-based private consortium hired last year to run the lottery.

The idea is to get away from an emphasis on “winners and odds,” he said, which “seemed to be designed to encourage the same people to play more.”

The repositioning comes at a critical time, as the Illinois Lottery is set to be the first in the nation to [launch online](#) lottery [ticket sales](#) on March 25. That move is expected to be a major driver of Northstar's contractual goal to boost the revenues and profits the lottery returns to the state, which are dedicated to education and capital construction projects.

The new ad, which was shot in Chicago, shows a series of gauzy vignettes, with soft lighting and cheerful music — a young woman waking up in bed, a guy doing a cannonball into a pool, a young man and woman eyeing each other at a record store — while the voiceover says, “Do you believe that anything's possible? Well, do you?” At the end, the Illinois Lottery logo appears for a few seconds.

Research shows that “optimistic people are open to playing the lottery,” Mr. Jones said. “The first thing you have to do is rehabilitate or create the brand as something people want to participate in.”

The ads will run on all major networks and cable statewide, as well as on billboards, in theaters and even elevators through May. Full-page print ads in major market newspapers and radio are also part of the campaign.

Originally, Northstar included the lottery's outside ad agency since 2009, Chicago-based

Energy BBDO — but that agency [was dumped](#) last fall. The two remaining members are Providence, R.I.-based GTech Corp. and New York-based Scientific Games Inc., longtime providers of equipment and lottery tickets when it was run by the Illinois Department of Revenue.

All three ad agencies, old and new, are part of New York-based Omnicom Group.