



Applicants waiting in line at the Charmin ambassador auditions held by the toilet-paper maker in New York on Thursday. PHOTO: ASSOCIATED PRESS

## UNUSUAL EMPLOYMENT

# Potty ambassador job awash with applicants

Toilet post at NY's Times Square promises \$14,000 pay for six weeks' work

**NEW YORK:** Wanted: Outgoing and enthusiastic applicants to work as restroom ambassadors in central New York location. Good pay.

Amid a struggling US economy, hundreds of jobseekers have applied at the open auditions for the opportunity to interact with guests at the Times Square restrooms, lured by the promise of US\$10,000 (\$14,000) for six weeks' work.

In addition to greeting guests, the five lucky applicants will comment and blog about the experience on social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook.

"I'll glue myself to a toilet for US\$10,000," actor Carlos Lozada told the panel of casting agency judges who will select the winners of the national search.

For the past few years, toilet-paper maker Charmin has been setting up the toilets

to provide relief for the throngs of tourists in midtown Manhattan during the holiday season.

This year, the company wanted to enhance the experience with five bathroom ambassadors. The winners will be announced at the opening ceremony of the toilets on Nov 23.

Competition was fierce, with some candidates arriving at 4am for the chance to wow the judges with demonstrable enthusiasm for all that goes on behind stall doors.

Aspiring actors vied with students trying to raise tuition money and even a businessman hoping to seed his enterprise.

Bathroom humour was in abundance and costumes were elaborate, including toilet-paper dresses, a pair of superheroes and at least one claim to royalty by a self-styled toilet-paper princess.

"My roommate will hate me! This was our last roll of toilet paper," said Ms Molly Robinson, a 22-year-old actress who balanced the roll atop her head, with tissue spilling over her white dress.

"I'm the Potty-Paper Princess," she declared, emerging from her 90-second try-

out with a sign: "Call back pool." She would be back for an elimination round held yesterday.

Not everyone auditioned for the money. Ms Loren Hudson, an elegant mother of three from Georgia whose husband works in aeronautics, flew in for the fun of it. She and her sister stayed at a hotel in a Queens neighbourhood called - Flushing.

The company estimates that 500,000 people a year use the toilets, which are open during the last six weeks of the year.

The lucrative contest comes as the US economy is still shaking off the effects of the worst recession in decades, with nearly 10 per cent of the nation's workforce without a job.

"With like 10 per cent of the public out of work, Charmin thought...why not elevate it to a situation where we could employ five ambassadors and really give them an amazing salary for an amazing job," said Mr Phillip Sontag, senior vice-president at MS&L, a public relations firm working for Charmin. The company also employs up to 150 people to work in the washrooms, presumably at a less lucrative salary.

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