

Packaging bag trading

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Dupuis Frères store trade bag with a red, white and green floral-style pattern, with the word ITALY in the center. DUPUIS is marked on top.

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Date 1973 c

Materials plastic

Measurements 46,5 x 40,5 cm

Historical context

In the 1970s, Montreal department store Dupuis Frères, a French-Canadian institution, sought to diversify its clientele by attracting Italian immigrants, then more inclined to frequent English-language stores such as Eaton's. This trade bag was part of a marketing strategy designed to appeal to this community. This bag of tricks is part of a business strategy aimed at attracting this community.

Italians immigrated to Canada in two major waves: from 1880 to the First World War, and from 1950 to 1970. In the mid-1950s, 150,000 Italian families settled in Montreal, giving rise to Little Italy. In the 1970s, the Italian population remained the city's third largest European group, and a major potential customer for Dupuis Frères.

This tendency of Italians to turn to English-speaking circles dates back to the arrival of the first Italian settlers in the 18th century. Competing with French Canadians on the job market, Italians suffered from xenophobia and ghettoization. This pushed them towards the English-speaking community, seen at the time as a path to social and economic success.

This dynamic continued in subsequent centuries. In the second half of the 20th century, the majority of Italian immigrants turned to the English language, considered more prestigious. A 1986 study showed

that 73% of Italians in Canada preferred English to French. Faced with this reality, Dupuis Frères tried to change this dynamic by creating products specially designed for Italian customers, as illustrated by this trade bag.

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