

Mike chez RONA

Most of the best ideas in advertising come from the culture itself.

In Québec, a French-speaking province where French and English effortlessly intermingle, playful word mashups and auditory illusions are part of everyday life. Case in point: My Sharona by The Knack. To many Québécois ears, “Sharona” sounds strikingly like “chez Rona” : French for “at Rona.” And yes, that’s RONA, the beloved Canadian hardware chain.

This auditory hallucination and pop culture inside joke unknowingly planted the seed for one of the most joyful and talked-about ad campaigns of 2025 in Québec. When RONA and their agency decided to bring Mike chez RONA to life, the re-record became the heart of the idea, and our team was brought in to make it sing.

This is how My Sharona became Mike chez RONA. So straightforward, so smart.

The fantastic thing about re-records is that they allow total control over the performance, instrumentation, and lyrics, without sacrificing the nostalgic punch of the original track.

To bring Mike chez Rona to life, we focused on all the musical details to capture the essence of My Sharona. The instrumentation, tone, and rhythm were all carefully recreated to mirror the original 1979 track with uncanny accuracy. But it wasn’t just about sounding the same; it was about finding the right balance between homage and humour. Casting the right singer was essential: someone who could channel the energy of the original while making the parody feel effortless. It’s a process that goes beyond technical precision. It’s about feeling the music and reimagining it with intent.

The campaign didn’t just land. It took off. Construction workers danced and sang along on TikTok. A fan-run Instagram account appeared overnight. Memes and parodies were created by the public. Even an AI version of the Québec prime minister François Legault dancing on “Mike chez RONA” appeared online. The voice actor and creative team were invited to talk about the song on radio shows, and the actor playing Mike got in the national newspaper talking about this spot. People who weren’t even born when My Sharona came out were suddenly whistling Mike chez RONA at work. A phenomenon in Québec! If “viral” were still a word we used in advertising, this campaign would be the definition.

This kind of moment reminds us why re-records matter. When done right, they become narrative tools, bridges between nostalgia and novelty, between global pop culture and local meaning.

At their best, re-records don’t just support the idea. They are the idea.

The campaign returned for fall, with a twist no one saw coming. This time, RONA wasn’t just helping with renovations; they were orchestrating them. Literally.

For the reboot, Mike chez RONA went orchestral. Our team had the incredible opportunity to record the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal performing the iconic track at La Maison Symphonique de Montréal. Recognized as one of the world’s leading orchestras, the OSM stood out once again as a pillar of Québec and Canadian musical life.

Adapted track : My Sharona - The Knack

https://youtu.be/bbr60l0u2Ng?si=0261rjh5pka_dI0k

Lyrics translation of Mike chez RONA :

When spring rolls in, you're like, "Let's go!"
This is the year we redo the patio
Let's go to RONA!

When it's your fifth trip back, in two days,
Stop searching and just ask Mike at RONA

Now you're looking for the stud, it's not there.
Oops, a pipe!
Water's flying everywhere, this is BAD, you need

Mike-Mike-Mike-Mike-Mike-WOUUUH!
Mi-mi-mi-Mike at RONA!

When you're still waiting for the sink delivery, on-site,
And your plumber is here to install it

Call Mike at RONA.

When the painter's on his way but the mud hasn't dried, don't freak out
Just ask Mike where the fans are at RONA

Otherwise, there's Robert, Julie-Pierre, Marie, and Albert.
They're all experts, you'll see, it's not just your:

Mike-Mike-Mike-Mike-Mike-WOUUUH!
Mi-mi-mi-Mike at RONA!
There's always Mike at RONA!