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Paul Millsap to tower over Atlanta

By Darren Rovell

The Atlanta Hawks have commissioned a work of art that will be hard to avoid.

It's a 700-pound 3D billboard of power forward Paul Millsap dunking a basketball.

People driving along Interstate 85 North, a highly trafficked stretch in Atlanta, will see the billboard next month. It will encourage them to text **\*\*DUNK**.

Their phones will then dial a number and a recording of Millsap will take them through a contest that will offer prizes, including spending time with Millsap in Las Vegas at a summer league game, working out with him and a team trainer and playing against him in video games in the Hawks' locker room.

"We've always done a fair amount of outdoor signage," said Peter Sorckoff, the Hawks' senior vice president of marketing. "We're competing against a lot of other options in the entertainment space and our managing partner Bruce Levenson wanted us to do something big to blow people away."

So the team went to Atlanta-based Chisel 3D, which built its Millsap out of steel and foam. It took a month, and at 15 feet tall, the 3D Millsap is more than double the actual height of the 6-foot-8 Millsap.

"There's not that many people doing 3D billboard advertising," Chisel 3D CEO Gary Bystrom said. "So this should make an impact."

Sorckoff said the billboard, which is projected by ad agency CSE to be seen by 660,000 people a week, will help grow the personal brand of Millsap, who is making a big splash in Atlanta. He's averaging 18 points per game and recorded his first NBA triple-double in Tuesday's win against Toronto.

Sorckoff said the billboard will also help the team build its mobile database, as entering the contest will include an opt-in to future Hawks events.

Millsap told ESPN.com that he's completely focused on making sure the Hawks (31-35), who occupy the last playoff spot in the East by four games over the New York Knicks, are playing in the postseason.

"But this billboard," Millsap said, "is something I've got to go see."