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Shoppers Turn to Web for Holiday Wish Lists

***Survey reveals increase in consumer traffic to the Web
and the importance of cause marketing this holiday season***

Chicago, IL (Nov. 15, 2007) – This holiday season will bring a significant jump in the number of consumers turning to the Web for gift ideas. According to a recent American Marketing Association (AMA) consumer survey, nearly 50 percent more consumers than last year looked online for information about products and services.

“Today’s consumers are completely wired; our research demonstrates just how crucial it is for marketers to find new channels and innovative ways to reach shoppers online,” said Dennis Dunlap, Chief Executive of the AMA.

When asked to think about how they use media, 44 percent of consumers responded that the best way to connect them with information about new products and services is through online channels, including the Internet, email and e-newsletters, social networking Web sites and user-generated video sharing sites. In 2006, only 30 percent of consumers rated online sources as best.

“With skyrocketing numbers of consumers turning to the Internet this holiday season, the significance of successful online campaigns is clear,” said Nancy Costopulos, Chief Marketing Officer of the AMA. “Companies that get it right will fully integrate their online strategy with all other aspects of the marketing mix for a comprehensive approach.”

Social Networking and Shopping this Holiday Season

According to AMA’s research, more than half of total respondents said they would visit a social networking site this holiday season, if shopping and video-posting activities were available at that site.

“Our 2006 survey revealed the quickly narrowing gap between social networking and e-commerce. This year, AMA’s consumer survey reinforced this trend, demonstrating that the proliferation of new media channels is important and lasting,” said Nancy Costopulos.

AMA's survey revealed that consumers interested in visiting social networking sites would search for holiday gift ideas, find out about upcoming holiday sales, or download coupons, if given the option.

- Nearly half (47 percent) of all respondents said they would go to a social networking site to download coupons or search for gift ideas if those services were available.
- Nearly as many said they would visit a social networking site to find out about upcoming sales in stores or discounts on products (45 percent); while fewer (31 percent) said they would buy products, if given the option.
- Twenty two percent of respondents would read or write a product review on a blog. Additionally, 26% would post or view videos, if those services were available.

"We're starting to see a commercialization of social networking sites through the use of targeted advertising. Social networking sites have already begun offering targeted ad capabilities," said Costopulos. "While the research shows an opportunity for marketers to participate, they must have something real and relevant to say or they may face a serious backlash by users looking for unobstructed connections with their network."

Cause Matters for Holiday Shoppers

AMA's consumer survey also found that 35 percent of respondents said they would be more likely to buy a product or service if they knew that a certain amount of the purchase price was being donated directly to a cause or campaign.

According to the study, some demographic groups were more likely to buy a product or service if a portion of its price were donated to a cause. Women were more likely than men to buy a product or service connected to a cause, and young people, ages 18 to 24, were more likely than those ages 45 to 65.

"Our survey results demonstrate that causes matter to consumers. This holiday season, marketers should remember that shoppers, especially women and young people, gravitate toward gifts that contribute to a cause that is meaningful to them," said Costopulos.

- Forty percent of women versus 30 percent of men were more likely to buy a product or service if they knew that a certain amount of the purchase price was being donated directly to a cause or campaign.
- Forty-six percent of respondents ages 18 to 24 versus 31 percent of respondents 45 to 64 were more likely to buy a product or service if they knew that a certain amount of the purchase price was being donated directly to a cause or campaign.

Full Survey Results

For an executive summary of the data, please contact Christine Heath at christine.heath@fleishman.com or call 312-932-2804.

Survey Methodology

AMA, the largest marketing association in North America for individuals and organizations involved in the practice, teaching and study of marketing worldwide, partnered with Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) to conduct the research. Between September 20-21, 2007, ORC

conducted online interviews with 1,174 Internet-representative consumers 18 years of age or older in the continental United States. The sample was comprised of 528 men and 646 women.

The sampling error associated with a sample size of 1,174 is plus/minus two to three percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level.

About the American Marketing Association

The American Marketing Association (AMA) is the largest marketing association in North America. It is a professional association for individuals and organizations involved in the practice, teaching and study of marketing worldwide. It is also the source that marketers turn to every day to deepen their marketing expertise, elevate their careers, and, ultimately, achieve better results. AMA members are connected to a network of experienced marketers nearly 40,000 strong.

AMA offers highly acclaimed Training Series, professional conferences and Hot Topic events focused on the immediate needs of marketers, as well as trends shaping the future. AMA's website, MarketingPower.com, is the everyday connection to marketing data, articles, case studies, best practices and a robust job bank. Additionally, the AMA is the source for the field's top magazines and journals, including *Marketing News*. Through local and collegiate chapters, AMA members are connected with the best people and the best practices.

AMA is also the creator of Mplanet, the unparalleled industry event that brings together the world's most creative thinkers, including senior marketing executives, top academicians and other thought leaders, to share fresh insights, new concepts, the latest research and solutions for the most pressing marketing challenges and opportunities. Mplanet 2009 will take place in Orlando, Florida, January 26-28, 2009.

For more information on the AMA or Mplanet 2009, please visit www.MarketingPower.com.

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