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MARKETERS MUST HARNESS THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA: STUDY

Multi-country study reveals huge growth potential for companies to leverage

TORONTO, February 28, 2008 – Senior marketing executives in Canada, France, the United Kingdom and the United States say that the use of social media for corporate, brand and product marketing is not a passing fad, according to research sponsored by TNS Media Intelligence/Cymfony.

In the first study of its kind, 71 senior marketers from global blue chips including Sony, Diageo, GlaxoSmithKline and Hewlett Packard shared their views on the untapped power of social media in a telephone survey conducted last fall.

Nearly half of those interviewed believe that leveraging social media Web sites, such as Facebook, MySpace and blogs, is a vital component of corporate communications that should be monitored at the executive level and allocated significant resources.

“Most marketers think that social media is another channel that companies can use to their advantage, but the reality is that most companies are taking a very cautious approach,” said Michael Ennamorato, senior vice-president of TNS Canadian Facts, whose firm conducted 11 interviews with Canadian marketing executives for the study.

Leading barriers for marketers to harness social media include a lack of senior management commitment and best practices, followed by the absence of controls, standardization, time and resources.

Jim Nail, chief strategy and marketing officer of TNS Media Intelligence/Cymfony points out that discussions about brands are already taking place on-line and that the influence of consumer-generated content will only increase in the future.

“If marketers use social media in the right way, they can build brand awareness, support product launches, increase customer loyalty and give businesses never-before-seen levels of consumer insight. Surprisingly, however, our study shows that many business executives are still new to social media, which points to a large gap between attitudes and action that must be addressed,” Nail said.

For a copy of the full research report, please visit www.SocialMediaInBusiness.com. At this site, one may register to attend a complimentary webinar about the study’s key findings. The webinar is being held today at 1 pm Eastern Time. The event will be recorded and archived on the site for later viewing.

About the research

In Autumn 2007, TNS Media Intelligence/Cymfony conducted a telephone survey entitled, *Harnessing Influence: how savvy brands are unleashing the new power of blogs and other social media*. TNS Media Intelligence/Cymfony polled 70+ senior marketers in Canada, France, the United Kingdom and the United States about their experiences incorporating all types of social media tools in their marketing strategies. Interviews with 11 Canadian marketing executives were conducted between October 17 and 26, 2007 by TNS Canadian Facts (www.tns-cf.com), one of Canada’s most prestigious full-service marketing, opinion and social research organizations.

About TNS Media Intelligence/Cymfony

TNS Media Intelligence/Cymfony tells brands and companies what people are saying about them - whether the people are bloggers, traditional journalists or even influential consumers. We are an innovator in the integration of social and traditional media, offering access to the greatest breadth of content sources and analytical expertise.

<http://www.cymfony.com/>

About TNS

TNS is a global market insight and information group.

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As industry thought leaders, our people deliver innovative thinking and excellent service to global organizations and local clients worldwide. We work in partnership with our clients, meeting their needs for high-quality information, analysis and foresight across our network of over 70 countries.

We are the world's foremost provider of custom research and analysis, combining in-depth industry sector understanding with world-class expertise in the areas of Retail and Shopper Insights, Stakeholder Management, New Product Development, and Brand and Communications. We are a major supplier of consumer panel, media intelligence and internet, TV and radio audience measurement services.

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