

# Marketing Insights

By AK Insights Ltd.



## 'Tis The Season To Be Jolly!

### Season's Greetings!

Welcome to our final issue for 2005. As the new year approaches we wish each of you, your families and your businesses all the best wishes for 2006. We look forward to bringing you more "marketing insights" together with some new features and benefits.

We thought we'd show you the lighter side of direct marketing to close off the year and together with some marketing tips for 2006.

Enjoy!

*The Team at AK Insights* 

## Christmas Greetings! Give Yourself Up!

By: Don Peppers "Inside 1to1" -February 17, 2000

British law-enforcement officers and Colombian army officials have put a new spin on building relationships with constituents: Just before Christmas, they mined their "databases" for their top-tier arch-enemies and then targeted them with Christmas cards!

Police in Norwich, England know that some criminals often confuse the "season for giving" as the "season for taking." So they singled out about 70 burglars and car thieves most likely to strike over the holidays and sent them Christmas cards that read: "Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Norwich Police will be actively targeting known burglars and car thieves this Christmas -- but we are thinking of you throughout the year." On the back of each card was a handy offer for a cash reward in return for useful criminal information.

Police Superintendent Les Parrett said the community embraced his idea, but that some criminals weren't amused: One sent an anonymous greeting in return, and "it wasn't very nice, to say the least," he said. (Perhaps Les should have asked the criminals for permission to send them cards!) Official crime statistics for the 1999 holiday season aren't yet available, but Les says he thinks there already is some ROI for the department: It looks as though burglaries were down from 1998 for the same period. The department is so pleased with the initial results of its direct-mail campaign that it is contemplating mailing the MVCs (Most Villainous Criminals) birthday cards, as well. (Sounds like a criminal reminder service: "It's your jailed cousin's birthday next week. Would you like to send him the same cake and chisel you did last year?")

The holiday spirit also warmed the hearts of the Colombian army. For the first time, the Army reached out to FARC guerrilla communist rebels it has been fighting for decades, by dropping about 100,000 Christmas cards in areas frequented by the guerillas. The card depicted a peasant outside his shack tending to his cattle under a radiant star and read: "Feliz Navidad, Prospero Año, Guerrillero! ("Merry Christmas, Prosperous New Year, Guerrilla!") Make your family happy and share the season's joys with them. Desert your unit and enjoy your freedom!" According to Colombia's Press Secretary Adrienne Foglia, the few recent defections can't be directly tied to the holiday greetings because the army hasn't asked the defectors whether they were influenced by the cards. But soon after receiving the greetings, the FARC announced a temporary cease-fire in the 30-year-old conflict with the Colombian army -- the first in a decade.

Obviously, these initiatives show that a little one-to-one treatment can go a long way, even for your worst enemies. ❖

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Insights!*

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*Season's  
Greetings!*

**Merry  
Christmas  
and An  
Insightful  
New  
Year!**

## The 5 Keys To Branding Success in 2006

By: Dr. Robert Passikoff - "Chief Marketer"



Here are five key trends that I predict will determine the difference between success and failure for brands and marketers for 2006:

### 1) An emphasis on "engagement."

Inserting itself between traditional marketing activities and an increasing demand for return on investment assessments, engagement will become the Holy Grail for marketers and advertisers. Defined as the outcome of ad and marketing activities that substantively increases a brand's strength in the eyes of the consumers (and actually predicts sales and profitability), engagement will be used more and more to allocate marketing budgets.

### 2) Using technology to better meet consumer expectations.

Consumer expectations in all categories will continue to grow. Expectations have increased more than 26% in the past five years while brands have kept up with these expectations by only 8%! Watch for smart marketers to take advantage of unfulfilled expectations via such values as "convenience" and "customization." More and more marketers will rely upon Web sites and high-tech capabilities to accommodate these values and differentiate themselves from the competition. Likewise, watch for more tailored products and electronic interface kiosks at places beyond airports and banks. Think "Jetson"-like hotel check-in capabilities.

### 3) Expanding the potential of Websites and blogs.

Engagement concerns and attempts to meet or exceed customer expectations will fuse and be most observed online, particularly on blogs. Watch for increased development of blogs and Websites in general beyond propaganda, information, and use as an electronic cash register toward the creation of "communities of ones."

### 4) "Recombinant" experiences.

Disney and Vegas: Oil and water? Consumer values indicate a bipolar continuum for recombinant experiences. Watch for this to reveal itself in more online gaming, especially for adults. Interactive gaming with more and more players being able to compete at once will become table stakes for online games. Also, look for mah-jjong to replace poker as the most popular game, especially in Asia-Pacific. Marketers concerned with engagement will close their eyes to "appropriateness" and leverage online gaming as a more acceptable venue for virtually every brand.

### 5) More branded entertainment.

Popular culture, with its rabid consumption of music and technology, will see market and brand leaders leverage plugging-in as a method for customizing entertainment and selling products. For instance, music-related paraphernalia such as T-shirts, posters, and artist-related merchandise will infringe more and more on the dominance of traditional retail outlets. ❖

Dr. Robert Passikoff is president/founder of Brand Keys, which has published the Customer Loyalty Index of leading companies in 26 product and service categories since 1996.

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