

Euro RSCG Worldwide Study Unveils How Consumers Define 'Value' in 2009 and Beyond

Global Consumer Survey and Semiotics Analysis Reveal that Recession Consumers Prioritize Quality and Service Over Slashed Prices

NEW YORK, May 5 -- Euro RSCG Worldwide, the world's largest marketing communications agency network, today unveiled the findings of a comprehensive, global study on value -- a critical topic in this challenging economy -- at an event at its global headquarters in New York City. Bob Liodice, President and CEO, the Association of National Advertisers; Rony Zibara, Partner & Director of Innovation, Fahrenheit 212; Sendhil Mullainathan, Professor of Economics, Harvard University; and Eldar Shafir, Professor of Psychology and Public Affairs, Princeton University all participated in a panel discussion on the findings and shared their unique perspectives on how consumers define value.

The Value Study is based on a quantitative survey of hundreds of consumers in the United States, United Kingdom and France, a semiotic analysis of marketing codes, and shop-a-long ethnographies to uncover true emerging codes and trends shaping how value is being defined today and tomorrow. The report also outlines practical tactics marketers can use to communicate modern value in today's cluttered recession economy.

The global survey of recession shoppers found that quality and service are the driving forces behind consumer purchase decisions in the current economy. In fact, compared to February 2008, nearly 25% more consumers polled reported that they buy based on quality, not price.

"In the current economic climate anxious consumers are focusing more than ever on value," said David Jones, Global CEO of Euro RSCG Worldwide. "Value, however, is much more complex than simply price alone; it's about both value and values. And that presents a major opportunity for the marketers who can unlock the new value code now and in the future."

"Despite what many marketers and retailers may think, it's not all about price -- consumers find value in feeling smart about purchase decisions and investing in brands they trust," said Andrew Benett, Co-CEO of Euro RSCG New York and Global Chief Strategy Officer of Euro RSCG Worldwide. "There is a tremendous opportunity for marketers to resonate with consumers by communicating brand value as a core commitment to quality, tradition and customer service. The key is to break through consumer anxiety and reassure customers that they are making intelligent purchase decisions for themselves, their families and the community at large."

The quantitative study found that consumers believe real value is discovered, and 70% of respondents reported being "consumed" with getting the best value for their purchases. This means more consumers are looking online or shopping during off-peak hours more often to find quality goods and services for a better price.

Customer service also plays a larger role in the current economy. According to the study, more than 80% of those polled want companies to show a human face. Going beyond price, a majority of consumers reported that top-notch customer service (67%) and trust in a company (58%) factor into their purchase decisions, while fewer



consumers emphasized the importance of a company's commitment to making a difference (38%).

The study also found consumers are increasingly interested in researching brands, and sharing opinions and information online. The survey found 78% of respondents think the Internet is a very important part of the shopping experience, even when purchases are not made online.

"Now more than ever, digital marketing offers a platform to create unique brand value, especially as consumers hunt online for an exclusive 'insider' advantage that makes them feel savvy and like they have earned a deal," added Benett.

The survey revealed almost three-fourths of consumers feel anxious in the current economy, and more than half believe the crisis will get worse. Most consumer anxiety is future-focused, with financial pressure built around the desire to have money to retire, keep up with the cost of living, reduce debt and provide children with college educations.

About Euro RSCG Worldwide

Euro RSCG Worldwide, a leading integrated marketing communications agency and Advertising Age's and Campaign's 2006 Global Agency of the Year, is made up of 233 offices located in 75 countries throughout Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia-Pacific and Middle East. Euro RSCG provides advertising, marketing services, corporate communications and interactive solutions to global, regional and local clients. The agency's client roster includes Air France, BNP Paribas, Charles Schwab, Citigroup, Danone Group, Heineken USA, IBM, Jaguar, Kraft Foods, Lacoste, L'Oreal, Pernod Ricard, PSA Peugeot Citroen, Reckitt Benckiser, sanofi-aventis, and Schering-Plough. Headquartered in New York, Euro RSCG Worldwide is the largest unit of Havas, a world leader in communications (Euronext: HAV.PA) (Paris: HAV.PA) .