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Marketing Executives Networking Group Survey Finds Social Media Practices Still in Infancy Stages

*MENG Members See Opportunity for Growth in Web 2.0 Practices;
Most Marketers Still on Learning Curve*

Old Saybrook, CT (November 6, 2008) – Despite the fact that many marketers feel like they are losing the race to adopt social media practices, the [Marketing Executives Networking Group](#) (MENG), today announced the findings of their social media membership survey which reveals most marketers are still in the early or experimental phases of adopting and measuring social media. The premier organization of executive-level marketing professionals conducted the survey last month and found that 67% of respondents consider themselves beginners at using social media for marketing purposes. Additionally, more than 87% of respondents are not regularly measuring the ROI of their social media marketing efforts.

“Our members are excited about the potential of social media, but most have not yet fully integrated social media practices into their traditional marketing efforts,” says Richard Guha, Chairman of MENG. “While many marketers are worried they’re missing the boat, in reality even the Fortune 500 companies don’t feel they’ve mastered social media just yet.”

The survey was conducted to gauge the role of social media in today’s marketing practices, and nearly 75% of respondents define social media as media that is based on conversations among users. While more than 67% report they will increase their social media advertising budget in 2009, nearly 80% say social media is not a fully integrated component of their marketing programs.

“Many marketers are unsure where to start with social media,” said MENG member Dwight Griesman, Chief Marketing Officer at [Forrester Research](#). “It’s important to make the decision on what to do based on your target audience and your strategy, not the technology. As noted in Forrester’s book [Groundswell](#):

Winning In A World Transformed By Social Technologies (Harvard Business Press, 2008) following the four step POST process provides marketers with a framework for leveraging social media to achieve their goals. The first three steps cover People, Objectives, and Strategy. Only then does Technology factor in. Focusing on the audience first is the right place to start as marketers formulate their approach to social media. ”

“An important thing to remember is the initial foray into social media should always begin with listening to your consumers,” said MENG member Bert DuMars, Vice President E-Business & Interactive Marketing at [Newell Rubbermaid](#). Newell Rubbermaid’s [Graco](#) brand implemented a social media strategy designed to humanize and increase positive perceptions of the brand. “Ask them how they would like to engage with your brand, find the communities where they are already active, and immerse yourself in the social networking environment. Also, always be transparent to your consumers, and remember it is a conversation not an interruption...and always start with listening.”

Earlier this year MENG launched Social Media University, a webinar series designed to help MENG members brush up on social media tools like RSS feeds and podcasts. The webinar series, designed to help members take advantage of current trends, was one of the highest-attended this year. In addition, local chapters are also seeing record attendance at meetings led by social media experts.

“It’s encouraging to see MENG members collaborating and participating in hands-on sessions that advance their knowledge of social media,” Guha said. “It’s this collaboration and sharing of best practices and campaigns that will show some members how to get started or take the next step and help us all to gain a better understanding of how to leverage the techniques and determine the results.”

The MENG Social Media Practices survey results are available to MENG members online at www.MENGOonline.com.

About Marketing Executives Networking Group

The Marketing Executives Networking Group (MENG) is the premiere international community of executive-level marketers who share their passion and expertise to ensure each member’s success. This not-for-profit organization of nearly 2,000 members fosters career and personal success across virtually all industries and marketing specialties by providing networking opportunities and the ability to share knowledge and best practices. Members must have reached at least the VP level in their organization. Eighty four percent of members have Fortune 500 experience and 70% have earned graduate degrees, the majority of which are from top-20 business schools. To learn more about MENG, post executive level marketing positions, or to access MENG’s database of marketing executives, speakers and consultants, visit www.MENGOonline.com.

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