

[For Immediate Release]

**Hong Kong Association of Interactive Marketing Conducts Survey on the view of
Marketing Professionals on Social Media
Found local marketers lacks of knowledge over social media**

【Hong Kong – 24th September 2009】 Social networks are connecting half a billion people worldwide. From MSN, YouTube, Picasa, Facebook to Twitter, social media play a critical role in network community, posing a challenge against the monopoly of traditional print and electronic media.

In view of this, Hong Kong Association of Interactive Marketing (HKAIM) conducted a survey interviewing over 1,000 Marketing Professionals on their professional view of this uprising media and its direction of development.

The respondents aged between 26 and 35 (46%), and 36 or older (45%), and mostly work in marketing (43%), or are senior management in their organization (20%). 90% of respondents have engaged in social media in the past 6 months. In terms of time spent using social media, 46% of users spent on average between 1 to 3 hours a day. 56% of respondents have 3-5 social media accounts, while 25% have 1-2 accounts. The type of accounts they would register would be ranked by the following likelihood:

1. Social Network
2. Instant Messaging
3. Video sharing
4. Internet Forum
5. Blog network or Blogging

Out of social media people have used over the past 6 months, they choose Facebook and Xanga as their most favourite Social Networks, MSN and Yahoo! Messenger as the most popular Instant Messenger, and Youtube and Tudou as their most frequent video sharing platform. Interestingly 98% of those that visit blogs or use blogs themselves also use social networking sites like Facebook. Out of those that use business networking sites like LinkedIn, 93% of them use IM, with the ability to chat or make an instant connection with those in their business network being very important.

For the reason for engaging the social media, 94% of the respondents use it to stay in touch with friends and family, while 74% use it to gather information. The interesting fact is although 55% and 32% use it for business networking and promoting the company.

Social media has a positive perception among respondents in terms of its business application, with 90% that believe social media is a fast and convenient way for networking and sharing, part of that perception is supported by the fact that 75% of respondents thought social media was free or perceived to be an affordable media, and that 68% thought social media was viral and generates word-of-mouth effectively.

In support of social media as a business tool, 46% of respondents say they have already included social media as part of their media and marketing mix, with 21% intending to include social media in their media and marketing budget within the next 6 months. While 42% of respondents do not intend to change their marketing budget to include social media, more than half our respondents hold contrary view with intention to increase their budget to spend it on social media, with 30% planning on spending less than 10% of their budget on social media, and 21% intending to increase their budget by 10-20% to spend it on social media.

With an expected *increase* in demand for social media campaign planning, the positive outlook as indicated by our respondents should be good news for industry players, especially those with a low profile or those that specialized in social media. However, when asked if Hong Kong has enough digital agencies that know how to create effective social media campaigns, 39% of respondents thought Hong Kong does not have enough good digital agencies, while more than half our respondents were unsure the presence of such companies.

For future media planning, 57% of the respondents still regard TV as the most trustworthy and influential media due to its popularity and ability to generate word-of-mouth effectively, however, social media, the youngest media option came in a very close second (55%), leading 14% ahead of print media. When it comes to creating a relationship with target consumers, social media far outpaces any other media (71%), with its next closest competitor eDM trailing by 20%, whilst outdoor media and print media are ranked the lowest priority.

Mr. Francis Fong, Chairman of Hong Kong Association of Interactive Marketing comments the survey result, “generally speaking, the community has already accepted the social media, which is beyond personal application level and outreaching to commercial use.



Despite this fact, many companies still take a conservative approach when investing resources on this new media. I believe this survey can give some insights to marketing professionals, allowing them explore this uprising new media and its potential business opportunities.”

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Photo caption: (From left) Committee members of Hong Kong Association of Interactive Marketing, Miss Irene Cheung, Mr. Alan Fung, Mr. Ralph Szeto, their President Mr. Francis Fong and Vice-president Mr. Steve Lau announced the survey result of marketing professionals towards social media survey conducted by HKAIM.

About The Hong Kong Association of Interactive Marketing (HKAIM)

Hong Kong Association of Interactive Marketing was founded in 2007 as a non-profit, non-political trade association to provide a forum in which the marketing-related business in Hong Kong can work together for the benefit of the industry and to maintain a high level of business practice amongst the members. Over the years, HKAIM has developed into a dynamic and highly respected organization works closely with the government to promote the development of the local marketing industry. <http://www.hkaim.org>

This press release is issued by Talent Communications Limited on behalf of the Hong Kong Association of Interactive Marketing.

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