

Christmas On A Budget

Retailers looking to Christmas to make up for the rest of 2009 risk being sorely disappointed. The latest US data (*Nielsen Panel Survey November 2009*), whilst not necessarily conclusive for New Zealand, suggests that we need to be particularly proactive if we want to pry open those wallets and purses:

- 53% of consumers plan to wait for sales
- 46% aim to buy lower-priced goods
- 43% will be exchanging gifts with less people
- 42% intend to do more extensive bargain-hunting
- 41% will only buy stuff that's wanted or needed
- 39% plan to use coupons
- 37% will shop at less expensive retailers
- 37% will shop more online
- 28% will buy gift cards
- 23% will opt for homemade gifts
- 22% are planning to make fewer shopping trips
- 19% will buy practical gifts like clothes or shoes
- 13% will share the cost of a gift with others
- 7% will wait to buy gifts until after Christmas
- 5% will buy used products

If you want to improve your Christmas yield, may we recommend you adjust your offerings in line with the key insights we've highlighted above (hint: they're marked with Rudolph's most prominent feature). Kiwi consumers, like their US counterparts, will be slower to spend this year – but they will spend something.

The Queen is Dead, Long Live the Queen

Oprah last week announced that The Oprah Winfrey Show would be ending next year after its 25th season. Oprah won't be vanishing from the airwaves, of course -- she'll simply be migrating to her long-delayed Oprah Winfrey Network (OWN), on American cable television.

OWN is a joint venture between Winfrey and Discovery Communications, and reportedly Discovery Chief David Zaslav recently told the daytime diva that she needs to "move it or lose it," meaning she either migrates her talk show to the cable venture or the whole OWN ship goes down.

In making the move, Oprah loses her voice in broadcast television, at least in the US -- the Oprah Winfrey Show was syndicated on free-to-air channels across America. Inevitably, that means her influence will wane -- cable television is only available in around 60% of US homes.

Still, it would be premature to count Oprah out -- she has a knack for getting noticed, through stunts such as the nineteenth season premiere (in 2004), when Winfrey gave her entire audience a Pontiac G6. And let's not forget Tom Cruise, who jumped around the set, hopped onto a couch, fell to one knee and repeatedly professed his love for his then-new girlfriend Katie Holmes.

Snippets

OUT OF TIME

TIME Inc has announced that Time magazine's Sydney and Auckland offices will be closed and run out of its regional office in Hong Kong from January 2010, as part of a restructure. TIME plans to maintain its separate advertising editions in Australia and New Zealand, at least for now. Another victim of the global recession - advertising page counts are well down in the local edition, with no relief in sight.

PLUS, ON OUR BLOG LAST WEEK

TVNZ Optimistically Raises 2010 Rates

TVNZ unveiled its Q1 2010 ratecard, with increases across almost all zones.

TVNZ New Season 2010

All the details on the new season programming for One and 2, including video clips.

The Herald Sees Red (Bull)

Coming in early January 2010 to the pages of the NZ Herald: The Red Bulletin, a lifestyle magazine powered by Red Bull.

Vodafone and MySky HDi: The Details

Getg MySky HDi for free if you're on the Vodafone Ideal or Ultimate home phone and broadband pack.

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