

For Immediate Release:

Social Media Trumps Super Bowl Commercials in Pepsi's Latest Advertising Campaigns

The University of San Francisco's Online Advanced Social Media Training Program Is Leading the Way as Major Corporations Shift Advertising Gears

TAMPA, Fla., February 1, 2010 – When this year's Super Bowl commercials hit the airwaves, many familiar brands will return, but one will not. For the first time in 23 years, Pepsi opted to take a different approach with its annual advertising budget. The carbonated beverage company is moving from the TV to the Internet, by giving away over \$20 million “to move communities forward” in a social media advertising campaign called “The Pepsi Refresh Project.”

“Pepsi's decision to utilize social media certainly created a national buzz, but comes as no surprise,” said Jay Berkowitz, instructor and [interactive marketing expert](#) for the University of San Francisco (USF) [Internet marketing training](#) program. Although the Super Bowl attracts approximately 42% of all U.S. TV homes, over 85% currently use a form of social media¹.

The epicenter of Pepsi's Refresh Project is an interactive web community, which allows visitors to apply for their own grant, as well as vote for those who have already applied. Pepsi will fund six categories that will contribute to making a difference in the applicant's community.

Pepsi isn't the only major corporation taking to the Internet. Domino's has launched its “Pizza Turnaround” campaign which exploits its customers' complaints and showcases corporate members doing something about it in a viral video located on its Pizza Turnaround website. This dedicated website allows Domino's to have a greater level of public and customer interaction. All comments – good and bad – are on the website for all to see.

The Truth About Social Media

Over the next five years [social media marketing](#) is projected to grow at an annual rate of 34%, according to Forrester Research. Social networks have also proven to be an effective way to gauge – and achieve – Internet marketing success, offering unlimited opportunities for feedback, promotion, brand-building and monetization.

“If you aren't listening to and participating in the conversations that take place in the social media realm, you won't know when your brand is succeeding or faltering – and you won't be able to react quickly to customer comments or concerns,” explained USF instructor and social media expert Christopher S. Penn.

Social Media Helps

Social networking sites such as FaceBook and Twitter help a wide variety of businesses communicate with the public. They can also help in the face of disaster. After an earthquake rocked Haiti recently, musician Wycleff Jean took to Twitter (as did many of his celebrity friends) urging followers on the social network to donate \$5 to Jean's Yele Haiti Foundation. In a matter of days over \$1 million was raised, and it's still climbing. In another recent example, FaceBook spurred a viral campaign where members urged friends to donate to the Red Cross via text messages, raising over \$35 million in donations in just 48 hours². FaceBook also helped raise over \$100,000 for various charities with its Causes application, as well².

FaceBook's statistic page shows that it currently has over 350 million active users, which gives over 700,000 local businesses an outlet to interact with their public. Most people are not aware that ahead of personal email, visiting social sites is now the fourth most popular online activity³. With over two-thirds of the global Internet population visiting social networking sites³, it's no wonder that Internet marketing professionals come to USF for its 100% online Master Certificate in Internet Marketing and Advanced [Social Media training](#) programs.

For more details on these courses call 800-436-1713 or visit www.USanFranOnline.com. Agencies and marketing departments can learn about corporate training solutions, customization options and agency/group discounts at www.InteractiveMarketingTraining.com.

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References Cited:

¹Universal McCann's large-scale "Media in Mind" tracking study – via MarketingCharts.

²Information provided by Insidefacebook.com

³Nielson, Global Faces and Networked Places, 2009