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# NEWSLETTER™

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## Marketing Tips

- Know your target audience - inside & out. What do they read, listen to, watch and buy? What motivates them?
- Incorporate identifying consumer trends into your ongoing scan of the external environment. Understand what lies behind the trends and identify potential business opportunities.

**Congratulations to Amy Neary on her promotion to NSM Vice President!**



## Trend Watching

For some, following trends means flipping through fashion magazines each season to determine whether hemlines are going up or down and which colors are in. But for those in marketing it's essential to ensuring that we always deliver relevant and effective marketing solutions to our clients.

Identifying and understanding trends is something we find fascinating at North Star. For example, the explosion of consumer generated content on the web over the last few years has spawned generation C (the C stands for content). This trend is driven by the creative urges in each of us. The business world has responded in a big way. It's Apple's suite of creativity software iLife, or bloggers posting their thoughts on the web, or posting your photographic essays on Hewlett Packard's web site.

So pay attention to the symphony of custom cell phone ring tones. If you understand why they are so popular, you may see other untapped opportunities!

Happy Marketing,

April Williams McCrory

Forty-four percent of U.S. adult internet users (53 million people aged 18+) have created content for the online world by contributing to web sites, creating blogs, and sharing files.

-Pew Internet & American Life Project

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Trends are always with us. Understanding the drivers and motivations behind trends is key to satisfying the needs and desires of consumers and businesses. You have to watch for those that have staying power. One trend that has been around for about five years is the notion of *customer-made*. This started as a way for corporations and consumers to have a conversation, but it has evolved into companies creating goods and services in close cooperation with consumers.

Amazon.com started this phenomenon with their recommendation and customer book reviews. Now brands like Mercedes-Benz have invited customers to co-create advertising campaigns, and much more. And North Star's Friday Afternoon Email Survey (FAES) has evolved thanks to our readers! It was feedback from our subscribers which led us to include tips.

So talk to your customers - they have some of the best ideas!

Until next time -  
The North Star Team

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