



# Auto-ID Center Communications

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# AUTO-ID CENTER: COMMUNICATIONS

- Overview
  - Objectives and Strategy
  - PR Action Group
- Field Test
  - Message Testing
  - Media Results
- Looking ahead ...



# COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

- *Build* consensus for technology
  - Technology suppliers
  - Packaging companies
  - End users (manufacturers, retailers)
  - Consumers and consumer influencers

## Strategy:

- *Identify and outreach* to influential media

## Results to date:

- *New York Times, Boston Globe, Christian Science Monitor, Information Week, et. al*



## COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

- *Unify and align* the voices of the Center's staff, sponsors, and partners

### Strategy:

- *Educate* Center's staff, sponsors, and partners in messages and policies for public communication

### Results to date:

- Consistent and contained message delivery to media



## COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

- *Persuade* key audiences that the Center's vision will not compromise consumer privacy

### Strategy:

- *Open* dialogue with selected influencers and organizations in consumer privacy

### Results to date:

- Developed position paper with input from NCL
- Seeking reviews with eight additional privacy issue influencers in U.S. and UK



## AUTO-ID CENTER: PR ACTION GROUP

- Communications professionals from sponsoring companies technology/trade partners
- Play critical role as:
  - Partners and planners
  - Reviewers
  - Co-Educators
  - Amplifiers
  - Co-Implementers



## FIELD TEST: COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

- Formed Field Test PR Action Group
  - Determined near-term key audiences
  - Established PR guidelines for communicating to internal audiences and media
  - Mapped out media strategy
- Conducted consumer message testing research



# CONSUMER MESSAGE TESTING

- Methodology
  - Internet-based consumer study conducted with Procter & Gamble
- Objective
  - Measure consumer reaction about technology and field test



## MESSAGE TESTING: METHODOLOGY

- 317 consumers participated
  - Panelists evenly skewed male/female, 18+
  - Geographically diverse
- Responded to an article as if reading for first time in a newspaper
- Message points tested
  - Acceptance of technology
  - Privacy
  - Health and Safety
  - Credibility of spokespeople/attributions



## ACCEPTANCE OF TECHNOLOGY

- 83% grasped the idea and thought technology was beneficial
- 35% responded neutral or had negative feelings about technology
  - Advantages for manufacturers were obvious, but less so for consumers
  - Commercial benefits seen having adverse effect for consumers, i.e. no more sales



## PRIVACY

- 78% reacted negatively
  - More than half claimed to be extremely or very concerned
  - “Big Brother” used in 15 separate cases to describe technology
  - Consumers did not want “smart tags” in their homes
  - Reassurance that “tags” could be turned off and privacy guaranteed was not compelling



## PRIVACY: COMMENTS FROM BOTH SIDES

### Negative

- “I DO NOT want any tags on articles in my home.”
- “I don’t think corporations can be trusted with that information.”
- “This is a nightmare scenario – where money is to be made the privacy of the individual will be compromised.”

### Positive

- “Some would sacrifice gains by stifling progress in the name of privacy ... it’s time to move ahead.”
- “Give me something to improve my life at price of demographic data, I’m all for it.”
- “Privacy can be handled with personal firewall software.”



## HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 61% expressed some negative reactions
  - 21% extremely or very concerned
  - Consumers already aware and receptive of safety issues, i.e. wireless technology
  - Interested in more testing/research to prove that health is not an issue



## CREDIBILITY OF SPOKESPEOPLE

- Reactions were neutral
  - 48% thought Center spokespersons was extremely or very credible
  - Less than 9% felt they were not credible
  - Organizations quoted: National Consumers League, Privacy Foundation, National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements



## MESSAGE TESTING: SUMMARY

- Near-term
  - Field Test communications plan on strategy and commercial-facing messages validated
- Long-term
  - Privacy is *the* key issue
    - Broader strategic approach needs to be developed – inclusive of Center, sponsors, technology/trade partners
  - Health and Safety
    - Messages can and should be strengthened
  - Identify credible consumer ‘voices’



## FIELD TEST: MEDIA RESULTS

- Media's response was immediate and positive
- Phase I media outreach included substantive articles in:
  - *Supermarket News*
  - *Mass Marketing Review*
  - *Frontline Solutions*
  - *Chain Store Review*
  - *Internet Week*
  - *Context*
- Opportunity for sponsors to share corporate message



## FIELD TEST: MEDIA RESULTS

- Consistent commercial-facing headlines and messages:
  - “Smart Tags Come to Retailing”
  - “Auto-ID Center tests RFID's ability to track inventory”
  - “New supply chain pilot includes well-known retailers”
  - “Technology revolution under way”
  - “Wal-Mart Begins ID Tag Tests at Sam’s”





## COMMUNICATIONS: LOOKING AHEAD

- Design next wave that would broaden number and scope of audience as Field Test progresses
- Leverage global opportunities to further build excitement for Center's vision
  - Sister labs: Asia (Q1'02), Latin America (Q2'02)
- Privacy: Anticipatory Issues Management
  - Expand efforts to include policy makers



# Questions & Answers

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