

ATME ANNUAL CONFERENCE JUNE 6-7, 2007
Las Vegas

Notes Compiled by

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**Meet The New Boss: How to Survive and Thrive When Your Customers are
Calling the Shots**

Joel Chusid, General Manager, NA, Hainan Airline Corporation and ATME Chairman welcomed the group at Red Rock Resort, Casino & Spa.

Conference co-chairs **Henry Harteveltdt**, vice president, Forrester Research and **Susan Black**, principal, Susan Black Associates, Inc. also welcome the group to ATME's first "green" conference and Harteveltdt began his keynote presentation.

JUNE 6, DAY ONE

Keynote: Henry Harteveltdt, vice president, Forrester Research

Forrester is an independent research company that surveys consumers about travel and how it affects their lives.

Harteveltdt discussed "operating in interesting times" because options and challenges have never been greater. As consumers have so many choices these days, the challenges to reach them are greater.

For example, there are 347 hotel brands globally, and 25 new hotel brands were introduced in 2005 and 2006.

Harteveltdt also noted that travel advertising spending is shrinking – down 8 percent last year.

A May 16, 2007 headline in *USA Today* stated that “Airlines Score Lower than IRS in Customer Satisfaction.” (http://www.usatoday.com/travel/news/2007-05-15-airline-survey-usat_n.htm)

In today’s world, consumers have platforms to complain – travel blogs, hotelchatter.com, the Internet, You Tube, etc., and an overabundance of travel options allows consumers to shop around. This is true for both business and leisure travelers as fewer consumers express brand loyalty.

When it comes to advertising, seven out of 10 consumers say advertising annoys them – advertising is turning off customers, and has less influence (according to 13 percent of consumers). The positive news is that good advertising can influence what people buy.

According to Harteveldt, “The New Boss has travel marketers on a constant performance improvement plan.”

The “New Boss” continues to migrate online.

- 81 percent of U.S. leisure travelers and 90 percent of business travelers are now online
- In-home broadband usage is now common
- How online travel looks:
 - Average traveler age is 46.5 years
 - 51 percent are women
 - 23 percent have college degrees
 - Average household income is \$75,241

The “New Boss” primary travel motivation (based on online U.S. travel):

- 30 percent entertainment (impulsive)
- 34 percent family (doing things for other people)
- 36 percent career

Travel marketers and companies have to create an experience for their customers. For example, Hawaiian airlines’ Web site allows customers to discover what they want and value.

The “New Boss” spends more time online at the expense of other media

- So far this year, online time has risen 2 hours per week versus 2006
- Online travelers don’t live by one medium alone

The “New Boss” relies more on individuals for guidance and advice

- 46 percent of online U.S. leisure travelers routinely offer recommendations on products /services to people they know
- 30 percent seek advice from friends and family when making any purchase

“Social Technographics” groups consumers by social network activity in participation ladder

- Creators: 10-12 percent
- Critics: 10 percent
- Collectors: 8 percent
- Joiners: 15 percent
- Spectators: 12 percent
- Inactive: 68-72 percent

More and more travel companies, such as Southwest Airlines, Delta, Las Vegas' Official Web Site, seek consumer generated media (CGM).

The "New Boss" wants control (to accomplish goals through most convenient channel); relevancy (relevant offers and upgrades); and consistency (to deal with one company).

The "New Boss" can use desktop widgets to connect with you beyond your Web site, such as Southwest Airlines' "DING" function.

The "New Boss" can use tagging to take something available to everyone and make it meaningful, such as Yahoo Travel's TripPlanner.

The "New Boss" will connect with you in new ways:

- 47 percent of online U.S. business travelers and 38 percent of leisure travelers subscribe to mobile data services
- 15 percent of U.S. business travelers access the Internet from their mobile phone, as do 12 percent of leisure travelers
- Mobile gives travel companies a new way to serve and engage travelers and distribute your product
 - At the Luxor in Las Vegas, guests can check in via mobile phone, and the Luxor sends guests ads promoting hotel spa, shows, etc. during their stay

The "New Boss" uses new tools to collaborate with friends on trip planning, such as Carnival Connections and I'm in (imin.com). These new tools allow the "New Boss" to take control of their travel experience.

In order to make the "New Boss" happy, Harteveltdt says marketers and companies must "shift from push to pull," meaning stop pushing ads at consumers. Travelers use the Web for ideas, inspiration, information, and despite travelers' stated emphasis on price, many will trade up for better quality or to reduce hassle. It is about finding what is right for individual customers.

To win over the "New Boss," Harteveltdt suggests:

- Taking advantage of higher broadband penetration with rich Internet applications
- Buying media to create 360 degree customer engagement

- Applying social computing applications that are relevant to your customer, your technology infrastructure, and your corporate culture and not because competition is doing it
- Making your personalization efforts personal by making relevant offers and tailoring messages
- Developing and refining your mobile strategies.

When asked who should make decisions about blogs, Harteveltdt encouraged people to explore other blogging options, such as having surveys asking “What was your favorite thing about...,” instead of having people post comments.

It is important to break through the clutter by remaining relevant because 20-25 percent of travelers say they are overwhelmed by ways to purchase travel. Many companies have planted fake reviews on blogs, but Harteveltdt believes the industry is past that now. He says consumers are smart and will see through that.

PANEL: *Marketing Executives*

Moderator: Henry Harteveltdt, vice president & principal analyst travel research, Forrester Research

Panelists:

Jeff Senior, chief marketing officer, Fairmont Hotel and Resorts

Vicki Freed, senior vice president sales and marketing, Carnival Cruise Lines

Terry Jicinsky, senior vice president marketing, Las Vegas CVA

Andrea Spiegel, vice president sales & marketing, JetBlue Airways

Introductory statements by panelists, followed by answers to questions

Question: Is marketing getting the respect it deserves?

- Jeff: More so now than ever before; discovering that the business is more about equity associated with brands and tangible financial returns
- Andrea: It is getting tougher to justify marketing budget
- Vicki: Marketing is being viewed as a challenge with so many media options and challenges with money

Question: What skill sets are needed for people you’re hiring and how is that part of your company’s structure?

- Vicki: Looking for new ideas, new talent
- Terry: Looking for generalists who know about various disciplines (advertising, marketing, sales, etc.)
- Jeff: Fairmont builds organization around specialists and finds someone who then integrates all areas

Question: What metrics are being used to measure success?

- Andrea: Word of mouth, how people learn about them, traditional media, online exposure

- How do you measure word of mouth?
 - 80 percent of customers recommend them
 - Customer recommendation surveys
- Vicki: Bottom line
- Jeff: Traditional sense – awareness, data warehouse to compare hotels across the brand
- Terry: Companies have a lot of information, but it is the correct information? More focused on brand identification. Program: Vegas IQ – comparing what consumers think they know about Vegas and rate the various areas; helps them know where to focus efforts

Question: Do you use customer reviews / feedback; do you take it seriously?

- Andrea: Yes, a lot of people take it seriously
- Vicki: Yes, take every consumer seriously; also pay attention to online third party sites

Question: Do you have a program for brand advocates?

- Jeff: Conducted online panel with 2,000 volunteers asking various questions every six to eight weeks; asked the 2,000 volunteers to reach out to their contacts to expand feedback; used a third party operator to control
- Terry: Traditional viral marketing program; 75 percent of Las Vegas visitors are repeat visitors and lots of people bring new people with them. Want e-mail to come to consumers from a friend's name, a name they know

Question: What are your formalized programs?

- Terry: Recent example – Vegas Alibi
 - Anonymous profile they can send to friends from alias
- Andrea: Sincerely JetBlue
 - Included messages in on-flight programming
- Vicki: Carnival Connections (E-vite meets Groople)
 - Asking for help with naming of new cruise spa
 - Had 13,000 suggestions in two weeks

Question: Are you policing / managing the Internet?

- Terry: No
- Andrea: A little; another branch (communications) handles that
- Vicki: Has blog (<http://vickilovestravelagents.com/>); says fans come to rescue and back you up when people say bad things about your company

Question: What are marketing and public policy partnership issues?

- Andrea: Corporate communication works with public policy; working more closely now
- Jeff: IR / public policy are closely related and set agenda
- Vicki: Work closely so they're prepared when there's a crisis on board
- Terry: Made funny videos with Vegas personalities for viewing while in TSA lines at airport

Question: What's the importance of green initiatives?

- Jeff: It's a matter of social responsibility; Some organizations are saying they can't afford to be green; can be done through operations (getting staff responsible), purchasing-oriented decisions (recyclable plastic keys), and product-oriented decisions (using best practices)
- Vicki: Heavily regulated by government; can't afford to have waste; recycle almost everything on board
- Andrea: Ask customers what is important to them; program will be a response to that
- Jeff: Companies / consumers are already making decisions based on green policies; will become more of a case in the future
- Terry: They have a recycling program, probably not green

Question: What factors are important in building a new brand?

- Jeff: Respect
- Vicki: Trust
- Terry: Honesty
- Andrea: Sincerity

PANEL: *Social Networking*

Moderator: Sarah Rotman Epps, Analyst, Forrester Research

Panelists:

John Moser, chief marketing officer, Affinia Hotels and the Benjamin Hotel

Ken Leeder, president, RealTravel.com

Richard Pulliam, chief executive officer, myAmphi, Ltd

Pablo O'Brien, director, Product Development, Yahoo!

Mims Wright, principal, NorthStar Travel Group

Introductory statements by panelists, followed by answers to questions

Mims said he does not buy anything without reading consumers' reviews.

Question: How do you handle social computing initiatives for non-tech savvy consumers?

- Richard: Making things easy for consumers is vital
- Pablo: Yahoo Travel initiative
 - Two things help:
 1. People not having to do a lot of work; building site that will show them what they want to see
 2. How can people tag things? Use that data to make recommendations in the future
- Richard: Provide different tools for range of consumers

- John: Trip advisor on site with comments (“Don’t believe us, listen to what our customers have to say”), next page is booking page; take what you do well as a company and market on the Internet
- John: Focus on customer service and attention
- Ken: Customers have always had conversations, you’re just now in the room; it’s an opportunity to fix problems / offer solutions / give feedback and really engage. The key is to participate in the conversation
- Pablo: Pushing reviews is invasive; try to give control to consumers
- Mims: Pressure from marketers; this is where you get associated with more people.
 - Twitter Web site (<http://twitter.com/>) – Add friends and what you do gets sent out to them
- Richard: Think about what you’re doing and why

Question: What’s your advice on generating content on blogs?

- Ken: Offers like staying in touch with family and friends during your trip by allowing a blog that looks like a professional travel magazine with good quality layouts
- Richard: People have to have ownership of the site, launching a blog will cause explosion and then drop off drastically or completely
- Ken: Encourage community
- Pablo: People value opinions of people like themselves and blogs allow the community to select experts. People have an ego and want to be known as experts

During the panel, it was stated that what doesn’t work for blogging is to pay people to write reviews. A positive characteristic of blogs, however, is that it’s free research from customers about a product or service. According to the panelists, if you have a blog, it is very important to have a culture that embraces blogs.

When asked what will be hot in the next 18 months, the panelists said they are trying to figure that out right now. They’re seeing a general trend of how people want to associate with what’s relevant to them and that it must be structured and organized properly.

JUNE 7, DAY TWO

PANEL: *Reaching Two Completely Diverse Customer Segments (Boomers and Gen Y’ers)*

Moderator: Dennis Marzella, EVP & Partner, YPB&R

Panelists:

Bob Adams, Industry Strategist, Acxiom
Gayle Davey, Partner, Yankelovich, Inc.

Introductory statements by panelists, followed by answers to questions

Gayle discussed the social values and lifestyles of generations.

- Generations
 - Matures: 62+ (1909-45)
 - Boomers: 43-61 (1946-64)
 - Xers: 29-42 (1965-78)
 - Echoes: 17-28 (1979-1990)

According to Gayle, all generations alive at any given point in time face same set of social conditions, but each cohort brings a different perspective.

Boomers will continue to define new ways to live, new social values, leisure activities, and 67 percent of Boomers believe they will live longer than their parents.

Xers were raised in worse conditions than Boomers, who were raised during unprecedented time of prosperity. Xers usually spend leisure time equally with people of other races and are very practical. They are less likely to pick career based on happiness, but instead for monetary reasons. Xers want control that reflects their interests.

- “Age nullification”
 - Belief that age is just a number
 - Chronological constraints do not bind
 - Influence in believing company has more to do with realizing people in a generation do think differently
 - No place for stereotype

Dennis discussed characteristics of leisure travelers in generations.

- Xers want to know more about “hot” and “in”
- Xers more accustomed to mass production
- Xers work hard at coming out on top in every situation
- Xers want simplified measure
- Xers more likely to travel, take kids out of school and travel with other generations, extended family and friends
- Xers – 74 percent use Internet only to book travel
- Xers less responsive to ratings on travel
- Xers more interested in physical activities during leisure travel
- Both generations (Boomers and Xers) equally interested in online customized travel packages
- Both generations (Boomers and Xers) concerned about health

When asked about advertising, 54 percent of Xers and 58 percent of Boomers said the amount of marketing and advertising is out of control.

Bob stated that marketers must understand there is greater diversity within each generation, and sub-segments have been identified among the generations.

Question: How can company's improve productivity?

- Gayle: Make sure to have a clear picture of who the market or customer is for the business; Tools can allow you to apply tests and controls to figure out what works for you
- Bob: Understand sub-segments and make message relevant to them

Keynote: Kevin Krone, vice president, marketing, sales & distribution, Southwest Airlines: *Profiting from Customer Control*

- Evolution
 - Model T – one car color
 - AT&T – one phone company
 - CDs / albums – now mp3 players, etc.
 - Led shopping – online now
 - Expert advice – one size doesn't fit all
- Implications
 - Customers are empowered
 - Provides incentives to embrace
 - If company and channel executes, you thrive
 - A strong, true brand shines as customers become advocates
 - Customers who spread opinions
 - Word-of-mouth (social networking, etc.)
 - Advocates have at least 2:1 rate of converting a referral to buy same product or brand they promote
 - DING! – free, stand-alone soft application delivers live updates directly to desktop
 - Corporate blog about employees, customers, airplanes, airports, etc.
 - Wanna get away – video contest encouraged customers to send in their moments with winning video made into commercial
- Listening to customers
 - Developing customer-centric site
 - Home page redesign – let customers have choices
 - Home page redesign – to make less confusing
 - Customers participated in development of look of site
- DING!
 - Customer can customize to their preference
 - Aligns brand with characteristics of fun and exciting
 - Easy to use

- Exclusive deals
- Brand loyalty
- Direct channel to customer
- Refer a friend – let customer be the advocate
- Corporate blog – “Nuts About Southwest!”
 - Goal is to give customers a behind-the-scenes look at Southwest
 - Respond to customer comments
- Wanna Get Away
 - 300+ entries
 - Overall great engagement with customers
 - Customers embraced commercials and had fun
 - Winner: “I love you / I’m engaged” commercial

Question: How does Southwest operate the blog in terms of staff? Is it anyone’s full-time job?

- Kevin: Bloggers are not full-time and they rotate among staff that volunteered.

Question: Southwest relies a lot on TV; Does Southwest foresee a shift in budget?

- Kevin: Marketing and advertising has stayed relatively flat as percent. There has been a shift from less print to more online.

Question: How does Southwest know what events to participate in or sponsor?

- Kevin: They get feedback from customers on event participation, but it’s mainly done by their own team.

Question: Does Southwest have any numbers for DING! supporting its success?

- Kevin: There were over 1 million downloaded and Southwest has had \$150 million in sales from DING!.

Question: Which generation(s) – Boomers versus Gen Xers – does Southwest target?

- Kevin: Southwest tries to appeal to both - looking for the right combination.

Question: When has Southwest not changed anything from customer comments on its blog?

- Kevin: Southwest has gotten an enormous range of comments, such as a complaint about the toilet paper in the airplane bathroom being upside down. If it’s something Southwest can’t change, they are transparent with the customer and explain why. It is critical that customers know they were heard.

Question: What kind of feedback has Southwest received about the A&E documentary “Airline?”

- Kevin: Overall, Southwest received positive feedback.

Question: What’s the next big thing coming from Southwest?

- Kevin: Look for a lot of exciting things coming out later in the year.

PANEL: *Leveraging Other People's Relationships to Increase Your Marketing Reach and Budget*

Moderator: Susan Black, Principal, Susan Black Associates, Inc.

Panelists:

Roxanne Housley, vice president strategic alliances, Canyon Ranch

Shirley Tafoya, senior vice president sales & marketing, Travelzoo

Jackie Brown Saunders, director, promotions and partnerships, Canadian Tourism Commission

Deb Italiano, vice president marketing, Travelocity

Introductory statements by panelists, followed by comments about leveraging relationships and answers to questions

- Deb: Travelocity wanted to research competitors, other strong brands and found Orbitz, Starbucks, Volkswagen and Pier One were considered strong brands
 - Took Gap as example and convinced them they could get exposure by matching beach clothes with beach getaways
 - Matched non-travel company with Travelocity from research on what brands consumers match
 - Less than \$5,000 of research
- Jackie: How do you choose your partners?
 - Canadian Tourism and OPI nail polish developed partnership
 - Leverage media exposure at events by having both beauty and travel media there
 - Influence sales people as well
- Roxanne: Canyon Ranch's core market is luxury female boomers but they reach out to other markets as well
 - Looked for partner to help reach other demographics
 - Approached LPGA for partnership; now have four year agreement and are official wellness partner for LPGA
 - Health tips on Web site
 - Work one-on-one with players
 - Provide winner of each tournament with stay at Canyon Ranch
 - Spend time with LPGA volunteers
 - Shared media partners are important
 - Blend brands
- Shirley: How can media partners help?
 - Looking for company that is affluent and can help them reach demographic
 - Cross-promotions, online promotions, receipt promotions

- They looked to travel because it has affluent leisure audience to put together eye-popping deals
- They constructed partnership campaign around promotion
- Deal-oriented

Question: How did Travelzoo's promotion do?

- Shirley: They got good feedback from both partners

Question: Do you recommend it?

- Shirley: It's about the value of the offer, not just low prices. Travelzoo also worked closely with air, cruise, etc. partners to get best deals
 - Add-ins add more value

Question: How do name-brand companies find partners, especially niche brands? What are suggestions for not well-known brands?

- Deb: Find brands that share commonalities
- Roxanne: When approaching someone about opportunity, presentation needs to be well-articulated and thought-out; do your homework

During the panel, it was suggested that media can be a conduit to match brands they already work with.

- Jackie: Canadian Tourism's current partnership is with Bryant Park in New York
 - Approached about sponsorship and turned it into partnership
 - CTC activated lounge under Canadian umbrella to reach New Yorkers offering Canada's unique attributes
 - Looked to leverage opportunities

Question: Who owns the creative?

- Deb: There has to be an agreement about who is the driver and who has the veto power; Travelocity now has a budget for a partnership opportunity team that's looking for exposure elsewhere

Question: What are the metrics that matter?

- Shirley: Looking beyond money to value and permeating brand to value
- Deb: Impressions
 - Engagement with the other brand
- Roxanne: Did the message portray the brand?
- Jackie: Media impressions

Question: What are some trends around branding?

- Jackie: As part of new relationship marketing, companies have to be more than just a logo; brand perception has to be portrayed

Question: What doesn't work? What to look out for?

- Roxanne: Chemistry among people is important
 - You have to be careful how you say no to people; say no with good explanation
- Deb: Deals that broke apart did so because the deal was not well-defined; needed more clarity earlier

Question: Does planning or opportunity lead to partnerships?

- Deb: 80 percent opportunity
- Roxanne: Both but opportunity leads
- Shirley: problems arise when it is too complicated

Question: How important are alliances with green efforts?

- Deb: They're growing more important, which is why Travelocity launched Go Zero
- Roxanne: Philanthropy partnerships are important; Cookbook from LPGA recipes to benefit Shape America

Question: Who drove Travelocity to Go Zero?

- Deb: Internal surveys with consumers, media, other corporations; Started with corporate saying they want to do something to help

Key points during the panel included act on opportunities quickly; be opportunistic; don't make it too complicated; and be clear.

Keynote: Cindy Commander, analyst, CMO Group, Forrester Research: *Transforming Employees into Brand Advocates*

Why are employee brand engagement and advocacy important?

- Brand promise and reality of customer experience don't always match and in an era of social computing, bad experiences with a brand don't go away quickly
- Companies often have misperception of customer service
- 80 percent of companies believe they are delivering good customer service, while 8 percent of consumers say companies have good customer service
- Only 29 percent of companies agree that employees across company recognize for customer service

Key steps toward employee brand advocacy

- What's wrong?
 - Employees are not part of process in shaping brand message
 - Employees receive no guidelines / tools to help deliver customer experience
 - Employees not given context about who the customer is, brand direction, or brand message
 - Employees left to link between brand and their responsibilities

Commander stressed an important lesson is that what happens in marketing or brand meetings can't just stay among those employees, and what happens with other employees can't just stay among them.

Key steps in achieving employee brand engagement

- Conduct initial assessment of employee knowledge, attitudes, behavior
- Encourage employee participation in building brand, customer experience
- Partner with human resources
- Personalize brand message
- Empower employees
- Recognize and reward
- Measure

Best practices – Five Key Areas

1. Share – target communications for internal stakeholders, lead by example to get employees on board
2. Involve – gain alignments through employee participation; treat employees as partners in maintaining brand mission, use fun to generate brand excitement
3. Personalize – emphasize each employee's impact on the brand; allow for personal interpretation of brand
4. Enable – provide tools for customer-centric behavior, invest in training and brand-inspiring activities, empower employees to put the customer first
5. Reinforce – recognize and reward brand-advocating behavior

What does that mean?

- Share – multimedia, constant reminder, noteworthy news, customer stories
- Involve – senior management, feedback, task forces, customer shoes
- Personalize – discussion, behavior link (between results and specific behavior), personality stamp, feature employees
- Enable – guidelines, training employees (hiring the right people), tools, empowerment
- Reinforce – peer recognition, awards, role-modeling, performance incentives

To take action, Cindy said marketers need to understand employee knowledge, attitude and behavior

PANEL: *Tailoring Mass-Market Products – Brands that are empowering customers with choices that allow the customer to create the “experience they want.”*

Moderator: Joel Chusid, principal, Joel Chusid and Associates

Panelists:

Frank Camacho, staff vice president marketing, The Hertz Corporation

Mike Stacy, chief executive officer, Groopie, Inc.

Gary Sain, president & chief executive officer, Orlando CVB

Kevin Jackson, managing director, Consumer & Partnership Marketing, USAirways

Kevin Rupert, vice president marketing, Wyndham Worldwide

Introductory statements by panelists, followed by answers to questions

- Mike: The Internet has put so much choice in front of consumers
- Frank: The Internet has changed a lot of things; people want to see pictures of everything even now with rental cars where people can select make and model of what they want
- Kevin J: Consumers are looking for ease and comfort, as well as a good price
- Kevin R: Internet gives people opportunities to shop across brands and compare

Question: How do people use the Web to personalize?

- Mike: At Groopie, it comes down to finding the right option for a group (different hotel for sports team U.S. versus corporation)
 - Only offer them relevant information for their group – don't show them everything
 - Right now Groopie's business is 50/50 between Internet and offline
- Kevin R: Heart of the Wyndham brand is built into Web site
 - Personalization not always personal (example: Amazon book order as gift – may order someone a cookbook that you're personally not interested in, and you will forever receive e-mails about cookbook offers)
 - Make shopping experience relevant
- Frank: There's a rising expectation from consumers
 - Business vs. leisure profiles, custom banner ads

Question: What differences do you see between business and leisure travelers?

- Kevin R: Business travelers don't normally shop around; they know what they need; leisure travelers shop around more
- Kevin J: Many travel companies don't know what else customers are doing, whether it's for business or leisure, and that is a struggle; try to meet needs without knowing a lot about them
- Kevin R: Hotels have difficult time personalizing when travelers book on third party sites

Additional comments

- Kevin J: A la cart type of environment now; can look at different segments of customers
- Frank: Can be true to essence of brand and still offer customization; customization has to be appropriate to what you stand for
- Mike: Letting the customer shape brand and play a part
 - So many decisions in group travel

- About providing tools to make it quick

ATLAS Banquet Reception and ATLAS Awards Banquet

2007 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

ROSSI RALENKOTTER

CEO, Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority

2007 INSPIRATION AWARD

TRAVELOCITY - TRAVEL FOR GOOD

2007 GREEN INNOVATION AWARD

FAIRMONT HOTEL & RESORTS

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