

NEWS RELEASE**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****December 9, 2003**

The Key Phrase for 2003 Was “Toward a Freer Multidimensional Lifestyle—Six Different Moods Combine to Create a Free, Vibrant Consumerism”

— *Dentsu Announces 2003 Hit Products in Japan* —

Dentsu Inc. (President: Tateo Mataki; Head Office: Tokyo; Capital: ¥58,967.1 million) announced today its *2003 Hit Products in Japan*. This report is produced as part of a series that has been chronicling hit products since 1985, and examines and generalizes major trends that represented the “consumer mind-set” in 2003. Consumer selections for this year’s hit products are based on Internet surveys carried out by Dentsu’s Center for Consumer Studies (CCS) in September and November of this year, and the top 10 are listed below.

According to the report, consumer trends for 2003 can be summarized in the key phrase “Toward a Freer Multidimensional Lifestyle — Six Different Moods Combine to Create a Free, Vibrant Consumerism.” The analysis identifies three main currents of consumer activity, “anticipating renewed energy,” “anticipating changes in lifestyle,” and “anticipating increased free time and enjoyment,” and six specific “consumption zones” or “moods” expressed in the following phrases: “pursuing physical health and an active life,” “sharing in the thrill,” “change the way you feel by changing the way you look,” “enjoying unexpected diversions and new dimensions,” “trendy adult living,” and “relaxing with lighthearted leisure.”

While purse strings remain tight due to the prolonged recession, consumer activity is slowly improving as signs of a recovery in the Japanese economy become more apparent. The year 2003 was a time in which consumers sought to structure their lives more freely, and bring new energy and vitality into their lives by moving dynamically between several different consumption zones, depending on their mood at the time. This movement in pursuit of renewed energy was often expressed the following terms: “I’d like to become stronger, so I drink health tonics,” “I’d like to share in some of New York Yankees player Matsui’s energy and persistence,” “I’m looking forward to the start of a new audiovisual life with a stylish thin-screen TV monitor,” “I’m nourished by a wide variety of relaxing TV programs, storing up on energy for tomorrow,” and so on.

We could say that until now consumers have been characterized by a tendency to sit tight until the recession is over, like a bird that “burrows into its nest until the storm passes.” This year’s hit products, however, give the impression that “consumers are starting to come out in search of a new world or a renewed sense of vitality.” These signs that some consumers are beginning to move “out of their nests” and shift into a more energetic mode may well herald a full-scale recovery in individual consumption during the next year.

2003 Hit Products Top 10 List

- No. 1: Broadband Internet
- No. 2: Amino acid drinks
- No. 3: *Bayside Shakedown THE MOVIE 2* (film)
- No. 4: Compact digital cameras
- No. 5: Japanese baseball players in the U.S. Major League
- No. 6: (HDD and DVD) hybrid recorders
- No. 7: “Fountain of Trivia” (TV program and best-selling book)
- No. 8: Thin-screen (plasma/LCD) televisions
- No. 9: “Harry Potter”
- No. 10: Internet auctions

Note: The above products, chosen from approximately 200 hit products, all registered 90% or higher in terms of “recognition,” 50% or higher for “popularity,” and 40% or higher for “attraction and interest” in the Internet survey.

Outline of the “Hit Product Recognition Survey”

- Survey Period: September 1–4, 2003 (first survey), and November 7–10, 2003 (second survey)
- Survey Subjects: Men and women around the country over the age of 15.
- Sample Size: 700 (responses received)
- Survey Type: Closed Internet research

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