

**NEWS RELEASE****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****December 13, 2004**

## **The Key Phrase for 2004 Was “A New Psychology — Transformation of the Essence Captured the Consumer Mind”**

— *Dentsu Announces 2004 Hit Products in Japan* —

Dentsu Inc. (President: Tateo Mataki; Head Office: Tokyo; Capital: 58,967.1 million yen) announced today the release of its *2004 Hit Products in Japan*. The 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 2004. This year’s report is based on Internet surveys of Japanese consumers carried out in November 2004 by Dentsu’s Center for Consumer Studies (CCS). The products (including some popular individuals and social phenomena) selected by the respondents as the top 10 products of 2004 are listed below.

The report identified eight significant consumer trends in 2004: “new directions for old products,” “seeking emotional catharsis,” “the return of gorgeous,” “Japan-Asian styles,” “LOHAS (Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability),” “wary emergence,” “adult self-expression,” and “vibrant nostalgia.” The overall trend was summarized by the key phrase “A New Psychology — Transformation of the Essence Captured the Consumer Mind.”

The Japanese economy finally began to show signs of recovery in 2004 after a long period of stagnation. This renewed economic vitality was accompanied by a positive, upward turn in social currents as well, and the effects of these developments extended beyond the superficial to include essential transformations of the consumer psychology. It is against this backdrop that this year’s hit products and consumer trends were examined.

One trend of particular note in 2004 was the conversion of a number of products that had been considered completely mature into attractive new products through the dynamic application of a good idea. Others included “attraction to movies and novels about true love,” “increased interest in healthful, environmentally friendly products,” and “reliving past emotions through reruns of popular TV dramas.” As these trends suggest, consumers were on the lookout during the year for essential values with the power to touch their deepest emotions.

In a switch from 2003, when Dentsu found that the consumer mind had “finally started to achieve a vibrant, positive consumerism,” a look at the hit products of 2004 shows an active movement toward “pursuit of mainstream, essential values.” This shift in the consumer consciousness from “vibrancy” to “essence” bodes well for a significant increase in consumer spending in 2005 and beyond.

## **2004 Hit Products Top 10 List**

- No. 1: Widescreen flat panel televisions
- No. 2: Japanese baseball players in the U.S. Major League
- No. 3: *Crying Out for Love, from the Center of the World* (*Sekai no Chushin de, Ai wo Sakebu*, novel, movie, and TV drama)
- No. 4: HDD-equipped DVD recorders
- No. 5: Black vinegar
- No. 6: Bittern (brine) products
- No. 7: The *tonyu* (soymilk) boom
- No. 8: Bae Yong Joon (South Korean actor)
- No. 9: *The Last Samurai*
- No.10: Packet fixed-rate communications fees for mobile phones

Note 1: The above products were chosen from approximately 140 popular products included in the Internet survey. Total scores in the categories of “recognition,” “attraction and interest,” “topicality” and “nationwide popularity” were calculated and indexed to determine the top 10 products of 2004.

### **“Hit Product Recognition Survey” Overview**

Survey period: November 2 to 8, 2004  
Survey subjects: Men and women nationwide aged over 15  
Sample size: 1,000 (responses received)  
Survey type: Closed Internet study

Note 2: The full report of *2004 Hit Products in Japan* will be posted on Dentsu’s website, [www.dentsu.com](http://www.dentsu.com), in January.

Contact: Takafumi Hotta  
Senior Manager  
Corporate Communications Division  
Telephone: (813) 6216-8042  
E-mail: [t.hotta@dentsu.co.jp](mailto:t.hotta@dentsu.co.jp)

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