

**NEWS RELEASE****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****November 26, 2008**

## **Consumers' No. 1 Choice of Topical, Attention-Grabbing Products was Innovative Remote-Controlled TV Games**

**The Key Phrase for 2008 was “Reshuffling Negatives into Positives ~ Smart Consumption While Protecting One’s Lifestyle” —  
— *Dentsu Announces 2008 Hit Products in Japan* —**

Dentsu Inc. (President and COO: Tatsuyoshi Takashima; Head Office: Tokyo; Capital: 58,967.1 million yen) announced today the release of its *2008 Hit Products in Japan*. The report, produced as part of a series that has been chronicling hit products since 1985, examines and generalizes major trends that represented the “consumer mindset” in 2008. This year’s report is based on an Internet survey of Japanese consumers carried out in November 2008 by Dentsu’s Center for Consumer Studies (CCS). The products (including some popular content and social phenomena) selected by the respondents as the top 20 products of 2008 are listed below.

### **2008 Hit Products Top 10 List**

(The figures in parentheses are last year’s rankings)

- No. 1: Innovative remote-controlled TV games (2)
- No. 2: *Gake no Ue no Ponyo* (Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea) (-)
- No. 3: Digital broadcasting-equipped widescreen flat-panel televisions (5)
- No. 4: Bargain products (private brand products/outlet malls) (-)
- No. 5: Touch pen portable games (1)
- No. 6: 1-SEG compatible devices (6)
- No. 7: Electronic money (9)
- No. 8: TV personality’s ranch-produced soft caramels (-)
- No. 9: Compact digital cameras (4)
- No. 10: Eco goods (10)
  
- No. 11: Video-sharing sites (13)
- No. 12: Family discount services for mobile phones (12)

- No. 13: No sugar, no sweetener, zero-calorie products (-)
- No. 14: Beijing 2008 Olympic Games (-)
- No. 15: Stupid character TV personalities (-)
- No. 16: Blu-ray Disc recorders (-)
- No. 17: *Atsuhime* (“Princess Atsu”) (-)
- No. 18: Soy-based balanced-nutritional products (-)
- No. 19: Banana boom (-)
- No. 20: *Hōmuresu Chūgakusei* (“The Homeless Student”) (-)

Note: The above products were chosen from approximately 150 popular items included in the Internet survey. The total scores in three categories — “recognition,” “have/had interest” and “is/was popular” — were calculated to determine the top products of 2008.

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

- Survey period: November 1 – 3, 2008
- Survey subjects: Men and women nationwide aged over 15
- Sample size: 1,000 (responses received)
- Survey type: Closed Internet survey
- Subject selection: Subjects were randomly selected from a list of registered monitors.

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Last year’s report, “Fun Topic-Resonant Consumption ~ The Fun Topic as a Means of Connecting and Letting Loose,” suggested that consumers had raised their degree of participation as the mutual “bonds” among consumers expanded and deepened. They continued to enjoy their lives by “connecting and letting loose with each other, with fun topics as a bonding medium.”

This year, the report identifies the trends that are expected to continue into 2009 as “Reshuffling Negatives into Positives ~ Smart Consumption While Protecting One’s Lifestyle.” In 2008, consumers felt not only sense of confinement but also had a taste of an impending crisis. Beginning with global warming, consumers were faced with instability in the international financial markets, volatility in stock prices and the yen, problems involving the national pension plan system and medical services for seniors, and daily concern about the rising prices and safety of foodstuffs.

This year, society encouraged people to forge new participation and bonds, and was exposed to drastic changes. However, consumers didn't just try to protect their lifestyles. In 2008, we had a glimpse into the psychology of consumer intelligence and how they are induced into taking positive actions in the midst of uncertainty. They were not hesitant to consume products/services that they found worthy. CCS refers to this consumption trend as "Reshuffling Negatives into Positives ~ Smart Consumption While Protecting One's Lifestyle."

In 2009 it is predicted that the adjustment phase will continue and consumption styles will become more remarkable.

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### **"Reshuffling of Negative into Positives" and the Five Main Contributing Concepts**

Today's consumers, who face a multitude of worries including current financial conditions, are sharpening their stances to protect their lifestyles. Here are some basic concepts that help them to maintain their current lifestyles.

#### **Everyday Self-Defenses**

Price: Private brand products/outlet malls

Health: Zero-calorie products

Safety: Personal information safety stamps

Environment: Fluorescent light bulbs/hybrid or green diesel or fuel-efficient cars

While defending their lifestyles, they occasionally allowed themselves to have fun.

Following are five concepts which consumers are pursuing to add positive features to their lives.

#### **1. Stay-at-Homes**

Supported by today's Internet, products that enhance and are useful for the enjoyment of private time spent at home.

\*Digital broadcasting-equipped widescreen flat-panel televisions, Blu-ray Disc recorders, and 5.1 channel surround sound TV stands

- \*Variety bath powders
- \* Special delivery of premium ice creams

## **2. Addictive Five Senses Stimulation**

Products that through touching, hitting, smelling, chewing, drinking, etc., directly stimulate the five senses and become addictive.

- \*Tangible interface devices
- \**Ponzu* containing *yuzu* rinds and liquid-filled chewing gum

## **3. Take Me as I Am-ism**

Products that allow one to become positive about negative aspects that one once mocked or was cynical about.

- \**Ketsuekigata Jibun no Setsumeisho* (explanatory books about the human characteristic links to each blood type)
- \*Products and content directed at the *arafō* (women near or just over 40 years old)

## **4. Out-of-the-Ordinary Collaborations**

Product collaborations which are out-of-the-ordinary and that create new surprises and leave strong impressions.

- \*Foreign *enka* singer and *tekuno aidoru* (techno idols)
- \**Moffuru* (*mochi* waffles)
- \*Fashionable rain boots for daily use
- \**Shawā kurīn sūtsu* (shower clean suits)

## **5. “Eternally Yet-to-be-Completed”-type Values**

Products that lift consumers’ expectations with possibilities of new version developments, etc., and increase their value through user participation.

- \*VOCALOID software
- \*Multi-participant monster catching games

## **Products/Services Expected to Remain Popular in 2009 and Beyond**

No. 1: Digital broadcasting-equipped widescreen flat-panel televisions (50.6%)

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No. 2: Electronic money	(49.1%)
No. 3: Innovative remote-controlled TV games	(47.1%)
No. 4: Bargain products (private brand products/outlet malls)	(47.0%)
No. 5: Video-sharing sites	(45.4%)
No. 6: Touch pen portable games	(44.9%)
No. 7: Eco goods	(44.5%)
No. 8: 1-SEG compatible devices	(44.3%)
No. 9: Family discount services for mobile phones	(41.7%)
No. 10: No sugar, no sweetener, zero-calorie products and Blu-ray Disc recorders	(41.5%)

\*The figures denote the percentage of respondents who answered “will remain popular next year (and beyond)” in the Dentsu “2008 Hit Product Recognition Survey” defined above.

### **Magazine Editors’ Selections of Products/Services Likely to Emerge as New Trends in 2009**

- CDF (Contracts for Difference) (to speculate on share price movements without owning the actual share)
- *Freemium* products and services (a coined word for services that are a combination of free and fee-based)
- Price reductions on products benefiting from the rise in the value of the yen
- Eco point services
- Solar-powered products
- Star watching (total solar eclipses)
- A-level gourmet local production for local consumption
- Law-related books (following the introduction of the jury system in Japan)
- 3D movies
- Mobile phone games for women (games and content such as outfit-changing games aimed at women who use their mobile phones a lot but do not play games as often as men)
- Autumn “Golden Week” (September 19-23, 2009)
- Events commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the ports of Yokohama, Nagasaki and Hakodate

\* Participating magazines (in alphabetical order):

*AERA, COURRiER Japon, L25, mono magazine, Nikkei Kids+, Nikkei Otona no OFF, Orange Page, R25, Sotokoto, SPA!*, and others.

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