



Woman Trends



SPRING
2007

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Tech Check

Presidential Hopefuls Work the 'Net. Gearing up for 2008, the Internet promises to play a big role in the campaigns of presidential hopefuls. Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) announced her candidacy for the Oval Office in an online video. Political spending on website development and Internet ads is expected to top \$80 million in 2008, double the \$40 million doled out on such pursuits in 2006 and more than triple the \$25 million spent in 2004.

Among the newest must-have in the online political toolbox are pages on social networking sites like *Facebook*, *MySpace*, and *MeetUp*. Sometimes considered the exclusive purview of teenagers and college students, these “post-and-share” sites are increasingly being utilized by candidates, and rabidly followed by their supporters. Candidates Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, John Edwards, John McCain, Mitt Romney, Rudy Giuliani, and Sam Brownback all have social networking sites that allow users to find out everything from the candidates’ age and hometown, to their stances on the issues and opportunities to donate .

Too overwhelmed by the seemingly endless list of candidates vying for the White House to seek out their websites individually? *techPresident.com* links them all in one convenient place, as well as tracking other important stats, like how many “friends” each candidate has on *MySpace* (so far, Obama is the hands-down leader with more than 61,000 as of mid-March). (*Wall Street Journal, PC World, Newsweek, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*)

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M.B.A

On Advertising’s Biggest Nights, Amateurs Take the Lead. A 30-second television spot aired during the 2007 Super Bowl cost advertisers as much as \$2.6 million. A half-minute commercial during this year’s Academy Awards – sometimes dubbed the “Super Bowl for Women” – went for \$1.7 million. Both are record high prices. Instead of hiring one of the slick ad agencies that make their homes in the skyscrapers of New York and Chicago, some brands decided to hand the controls over to everyday TV viewers.

The Super Bowl featured three user-created commercials. The National Football League (NFL) itself ran an *American Idol*-like competition in which amateurs pitched ideas for ads and the winning concept was professionally produced. Chevrolet had a similar contest in which college students submitted ideas. Doritos actually handed the whole commercial over to a “regular guy,” who shot the ad on his camcorder and edited it on his home computer. The Academy Awards featured a much hyped-ad from Dove that was also conceptualized and filmed by a non-professional.

Sometimes called the “YouTube Effect,” this *Every Man as Ad Man* trend certainly has its detractors. Some label it just another flash-in-the-pan gimmick to drum up buzz. But perhaps those are the grumblings of unemployed (or at least threatened) advertising execs. (*USA Today, Washington Post, Adweek, Boston Globe*)

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Kids & 'Tweens

Rockin’ the Music Industry. The ‘tween segment has been giving established “adult” musical artists serious competition on the Billboard charts, with Disney favorites “Hannah Montana,” “High School Musical,” and “The Cheetah Girls” (groups all based on hit TV shows) claiming top spots. Fictional pop star “Hannah Montana,” who stars in the Disney show by the same name (in reality Miley Cyrus, country crooner Billy Ray Cyrus’ daughter) has hit the top 10 of the Billboard Charts for 8 consecutive weeks. A second concert tour is planned for the ‘tween, and a movie may be in the works. Similarly, “High School Musical” sold the most copies of *any* album in 2006, 3.7 million copies.

The Recording Industry Association of America reported a small but significant increase in music purchased for or by 10-14 year olds in the last decade, (7.9% to 8.6% of all music sales) while sales from the 15-19 crowd fell nearly 6 points to just 11.9%. Industry experts speculate that younger children are more likely to need the physical CD as they use electronic media less than teens and are less likely to engage in Internet piracy. (*Wall Street Journal, New York Post, Chicago Sun Times, USA Today*)

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