



Friday, January 8, 2010

## Trend watch: Consumer behavior sets pace for new decade

Pittsburgh Business Times

As the new year dawned, we asked some Pittsburgh-area business leaders what trends they expect to shape the consumer climate in 2010.

Check out what they had to say and then tell us what you think. Join the conversation online or send an e-mail to [pittsburgh@bizjournals.com](mailto:pittsburgh@bizjournals.com).

### **Andrea F. Fitting, president & CEO, [Fitting Group](#)**

Because we spend so much time online, there seems to be a need to have physical contact in new and exciting ways. For leisure time, people will be looking for activities and places to hang out, and they'll be armed with more "word of mouth" recommendations because of social networking. Those who work from home will be feeling the tug for human contact. Look for more self-employed or freelance workers seeking gathering places to work, chat, meet and eat.

### **Alan Veeck, principal, [Meakem Becker Venture Capital](#)**

Smartphones will show accelerated growth into the general consumer market, with the addition of several new phones based on the Android (**Google**) operating system. Apple's iPhone will continue to dominate the market, with the most handsets and most apps, but in the news, the growth curve of the Android OS and its App Market will overshadow Apple's growth. Blackberry (RIM) will continue to be a sizeable chunk of market share for smartphones but will have significantly waning influence; Palm, Windows Mobile and Symbian will almost disappear.

### **Audrey J. Murrell, director, University of Pittsburgh's David Berg Center for Ethics & Leadership**

As a result of the economic challenges faced in 2009, we should continue to see value being a key driver for choices and actions in 2010. Whether it's professionals making a choice of employment, individuals making selections of products and services or people making investment decisions — value will continue to be center stage. However in 2010, I expect changes in how people define value that include greater focus on human factors such as integrity, ethics and social responsibility.

### **Lou DePaoli, executive vice president and chief marketing officer, [Pittsburgh Pirates](#)**

The financial downturn last fall forced many consumers into becoming more financially responsible than they had been in the recent past, which, in turn, led to more people looking for deals, without sacrificing value, in an effort to receive "more bang for their buck." Thus, I would expect retailers to continue their aggressive approach to couponing, while also creating more value-added offers to meet the consumer's needs.

### **R. Yvonne Campos, CEO, [Campos Inc.](#)**

Advertising as we know it "pushing a message out there" is crumbling. Real-time reviews are the new advertising — more credible and impactful, with people sharing in real time everything they do, buy, listen to, watch, attend, wear, etc. Interactions with the reviewers is next: conversations about products and brands online.

### **Robert Fragasso, chairman and CEO, [Fragasso Financial Advisors](#)**

2010 likely will follow historical patterns in recovery and show continued gains in economic activity. Consumers have made a fundamental shift in their spending and saving patterns that reflect their fright during the 2008-09 economic meltdown. This must be understood by those companies looking to capture the consumers' spending and savings dollars. The public has reawakened to old-fashioned principles of financial prudence and self-reliance. This will be reflected in 2010 and beyond.