



**Moustaches**

Make like a porn star and grow yourself a manly 'tache. And do your bit for men's charity Movember while you're at it.



**Virtual cheating**



"I looked at the screen and saw his character having sex. It's cheating as far as I'm concerned." So speaks a woman scorned in *Second Life*. Cheating 21<sup>st</sup> century-style *still* counts.

**Toilet texting**

The favoured pastime of some 20% of Britons, according to a survey conducted for World Toilet Day. Nice.



**Hagging**



In these lean times, everything has its price. Swallow your pride, pretend you're in a souk and get hagging on the high street this Christmas.

**Goat**

The new ostrich, apparently. Billy is surprisingly mild as well as being lower in fat and calories than chicken, lamb, pork, and beef.



**Prince "I'm not ginger; I'm auburn" Harry**

Off with his (definitely not ginger head).

**Peak time telly**

'Special Needs Pets'? Give us a break, C4. There's a credit crunch on, everyone's glued to the sofa - surely you can do better than that?



**Woolworths**

Is anyone else feeling guilty for defecting to iTunes and [www.aquarterof.com](http://www.aquarterof.com)?

**Sarah Grove, Account Manager, tells us all we need to know about the latest innovation in TV advertising from Sky...**



Sky has set itself a target of 2011 to introduce targeted advertising, swapping traditional commercials scheduled in ad breaks for ads tailored to individual households.

Sky is developing what it terms 'targeted substitutional advertising', dubbed internally as 'Smart TV'. The service will allow the broadcaster to serve highly targeted ads to Sky+ homes, based on subscribers' personal and demographic characteristics.

Targeted ads are currently served around various TV and PC-based on-demand services in the UK, but the Sky service would be the first time targeted ads can be served around linear TV content in the UK.

The service will use personal data gathered by Sky's research department and SkyView, its 20,000-strong audience panel, to target commercials to users' Sky+ boxes. The ads will then be dropped into ad breaks surrounding linear TV content. This means that Sky would be able to push toy ads to families, or beauty products to young women, for example.

Terrestrial broadcasters such as ITV or Channel 4, would be offered the option of targeted ad functionality on Sky. However, targeted ads would not be effective in a peak time ad break with mass appeal such as during ITV's X Factor.

The real challenge will be to make the triggers instantaneous so consumers don't realise the difference between a targeted ad and a general one, so it has to be seamless.

Nick Milligan, managing director of Sky Media, said: ". . . over the next couple of years, we intend to build a detailed database so we can drop targeted ads into regular TV ad breaks and develop a relationship with consumers."

The Sky is indeed the limit, it would seem. Watch this space for more details...

**Nikki Gilmour, Communications Strategist, looks at the impact of the credit crunch on consumers...**



The International Monetary Fund has predicted that 2009 will be Britain's first full year of recession. The economy is set to shrink by as much as 0.1%. House prices – our national obsession for the last decade – have recorded a 13.3% annual drop. Two million people are expected to be unemployed by Christmas. And, just to top it all off, the Treasury is entering the downturn with public finances in a weaker state than at the time of the dotcom collapse. In short, it's not looking good.

Unsurprisingly, consumer confidence has plummeted. Although the latest data is showing a tentative lift, we're still at levels not seen since the 90's recession. Although some (mostly younger) consumers are adopting an 'ostrich mentality' and continuing to spend like there's no tomorrow, the majority are starting to make small but significant changes to their spending habits. Own-label now accounts for half of all supermarket sales. People who previously wouldn't be seen dead at Lidl are going there in their droves (albeit under cover of darkness). Baked beans are also flavour of the month as some of us cope by regressing to our student days. Library lending is on the up, as are rentals of comedy dvds as we try to lighten the collective gloom.

This small but concerted shift in the consumer paradigm has big implications for media. TV viewing and internet usage are likely to increase as we forego expensive Saturday nights out on the lash for 'fakeaways' and home entertainment. Radio listening, the majority of which takes place in car, may take a hit as we try to limit how much we are spending on petrol.

What does all of this mean for advertisers? Well, the good news is that it's not all doom and gloom. Some markets are certainly feeling the heat more than others, namely finance and motoring. Fast food and coffee, on the other hand, are about as close to recession-proof as you can get. Small treats are what keep us going, which is why a sudden increase in sales of lipsticks is often seen as recession bellwether.

Received wisdom from past recessions suggests that smart advertisers should adopt the following coping strategies: look for new creative, media or targeting opportunities; strengthen your market position against weaker rivals and hold firm to a long-term direction.

The other option for advertisers is to follow the example of Sam Walton, the founder of Walmart: "I was asked what I thought about the recession. I thought about it and decided not to take part." Our kind of guy.

### Five ways to spend your time or money this month:

- **Obamawear.** America is proudly wearing its politics on its sleeve this month, with Obama's fizog adorning everyone from SJP to P Diddy. Get yours from [www.zazzle.com](http://www.zazzle.com)
- **Putting your friends in their place.** Started by a group of very competitive friends, [www.ibeatyou.com](http://www.ibeatyou.com) is an online platform for competitive spirits around the world to connect and challenge each other. All under the modest tagline of 'Challenge the World'. Try to keep it clean, kids.
- **Giving yourself a superhero makeover.** Kodak Gallery's 'Make Me Super' application lets users paste their faces on to the body of a superhero. Once the picture has been uploaded, the superhero is given a custom name, after which it dances, karate chops and poses fiercely in front of a suburban backdrop. Check out the promo vid here: <http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=q4A1n5JLhew>
- **Vlingo.** For those suffering from 'text thumb'. This new mobile phone service enables users to send text messages without typing. Just say the message, confirm it's correct upon Vlingo's receipt, and send away. The height of laziness. (But we love it.)
- **Get mashed with Martha Stewart.** Original domestic goddess Martha Stewart's recent time in the Pen has done wonders for her street cred. Check out her guide to the perfect mash, ably assisted by none other than Snoop Dogg. <http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=-Ocre0kXgvg>

