

**Moment-ous**

An auspicious moment for all this month when the clocks turned to 12.34:56 on 07.08.09. Or did anyone else fail to notice?

**Brick by Brick**

Retro remains a recession winner as Lego announces a 60% rise in net profit for the first half of 2009



**Armageddon Averted**

British scientists are designing a 'gravity tractor' spacecraft to destroy any orbiting rocks that could collide with Earth. Who needs Bruce Willis?

**Gimme a Fiver**

HSBC is restocking £5 notes in its machines in a new scheme to support cash-strapped Brits



**Know it All**

Google's Insights for Search now predicts the future by analysing past results, in order to 'overcome our basic limitation of not knowing what the future will entail'. Thank goodness for that.

**Bogof**

The first major changes to Scotland's alcohol legislation in 30 years signal an end to 2-for-1 promos



**So Long, Farewell**

A popular Inverness youth club is now playing songs from The Sound of Music to encourage youngsters to leave at the end of the night

**... Auf Wiedersehen, Goodbye**

We stopped watching, now so has Big Brother. The Express devoted just 3 paragraphs to the demise of the ground-breaking TV show, which somehow said it all.



**As Murdoch mouths off, Account Manager Neil Watson has to ask if he has a point**

Amongst Edinburgh's jugglers, buskers and comedians a storm was brewing this month and at its eye was The International TV Festival and James Murdoch.

20 years after Rupert Murdoch spoke out about the hegemony of the BBC and ITV in the TV marketplace, James Murdoch has started a new crusade. Addressing his audience with Churchillian fervour, he entered the battlefield of the online news sphere. The air has been heavy with Orwellian quotes and cries of perilous threats to democracy.

All very serious, but then so is his problem. The decline of the newspaper market and the migration of news consumers online is not exactly a secret, and Mr. Murdoch must be feeling it right to the bottom of his undoubtedly deep pockets.

As it looks increasingly likely that the monetization of online news content will be the only viable solution for the industry, Murdoch has questioned the fairness of the BBC's £150 million-plus website.

In a media landscape where even the most fervent user will head for pastures new at the merest threat of being charged for content, will monetization ever succeed if the BBC continues to provide high quality content for free?

Probably not. Although it is convenient that the Murdochs have chosen this moment to champion fair play, it is true that if the BBC remains in its current format, the playing field will never be level.

Unfortunately for the newspapers, the BBC isn't going to change. It's the (free) institution at the heart of British media landscape!

The only option for newspapers is to find an angle, be innovative, edgy, give people a product that is different/better and, most importantly, a product they are willing to pay for.

At least James shouldn't have to look much further for advice on how to achieve this than his old man, Rupert 'SKY' Murdoch!

## Leona Provan, Insight Analyst, is keeping it real...



As the country rides out a recessionary economy and pressure for proven returns on advertising investment increases, we need to be more strategic than ever. It's amazing that at a time when so much media content is delivered in a reality based format, to a large degree consumer insight still lives behind the one dimensional format of the computer screen, which more often than not leads to insight being lifted out of context. We know that whilst reliable figures are essential, really inspiring insight that leads to brilliant planning work comes from a deeper, richer place.

That is why MediaCom have built a picture of consumers' lives as they really are in the UK. MediaCom's unique Real World Street (based in Reading) has recently been joined by the Real World Street Scotland (RWSS); like its older sibling, RWSS is a qualitative research panel with a difference, consisting of 10 households recruited from one street and neighbouring cul-de-sacs in Livingston, West Lothian. The introduction of RWSS ensures that research findings are anchored firmly in the real world, allowing us to go beyond what the broad numbers suggest to find out what people are *really* doing.

The importance of having this living resource has been brought home in the current uncertain and fast-changing climate. Our 'Real World Streets' are an invaluable part of MediaCom's 'Real World Money' study which seeks to quantify and qualify how people are being affected by the credit crunch.

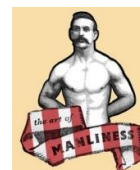
For example, the media has been reporting recently that consumer confidence levels are 'on the up' and consumers are, according to one national survey, 'spending as and when they feel like it'. It implies an almost immediate return to the 'everything on credit' mentality of pre-recession days, but this generalisation doesn't tell the whole story. What we have found is that consumers are indeed spending more on treats (lower priced items of clothing, accessories, trips to the hairdresser rather than home hair dying), but only because they've trained themselves to become better savers and more effective grocery shoppers.

By literally looking into consumers shopping bags, talking to them and most crucially, by listening, we have uncovered a wealth of insights that have shaped our planning across every market sector.

*For further information on this research please contact Leona directly, at [Leona.Provan@mediacom.com](mailto:Leona.Provan@mediacom.com)*

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

[www.artofmanliness.com](http://www.artofmanliness.com) A website devoted to the intangibles of being a manly sort of man, including such critical skills as mastering the perfect handshake and how to pick a barber.



**Nessie Hunt** Not quite sure how to cement your place in history? How about capturing a mythical beast?! Not as hard as it sounds given Google Earth's latest images from Loch Ness.



**Face Plate** Feeling uninspired by your lunch of late? Dinner lacking that certain, er, human quality? Look no further than Food Face plates, sure to liven up any mealtime.

**Cyborg Phones** If we call it 'Terminator Vision', you'll probably understand what we mean. Now available on mobile handsets for the first time, Augmented Reality (AR) gives you a view of the world tagged with rich, location-relevant information.



**I heart cucumbers** Liven up those last salads of summer with star and heart-shaped cucumbers, currently being grown in Japan using special moulds.