

# Christmas spending set to boost retail sector figures

“Outside-the-box thinking and high creativity are key factors for generating success in times of uncertainty, and it’s important to remember resources often already exist within business, particularly in the form of people.”

Kelly Executive offered the following advice:

- Retain key people – focus on ensuring you retain key clients and employees. This sends a clear message of stability and maintains a strong base from which you can drive a growth strategy. It also makes sense to focus on growing existing clients first before going to market looking for new clients.
- Generate higher profit margins – it’s difficult to achieve higher margins by raising prices during down economies. Often, increasing cost controls and eliminating unnecessary expenses is key. Be wary of slashing headcount during these times, as this will lead to a rapid loss of corporate knowledge and customer relationships.
- Create new income streams – look to employees for new ideas, instead of relying on your usual methods of idea generation, and tap into the internal skills pool to see if you can use existing employees to extend the business’ reach. Innovative thinking can generate new income stream ideas. Think about complementary products and services, new ways to sell and promote current products and/or creative pricing that opens new incoming possibilities.
- Increase and improve performance – continue to motivate employees, provide feedback and, most importantly, lead by example. The right employees will be willing to ‘step-up’ and take on a little extra to help the business through tough times. ■

While the retail sector at large is still overcoming the low Consumer Spending Index results of the past quarters, some leading brands and retailers are making the most of the recent lift in consumer sentiment.

A recent survey by the Westpac-Melbourne Institute, released in mid-September, revealed a rise of 8.1 per cent in the Consumer Sentiment Index, taking it to 96.9 after it had fallen to some of the lowest levels in almost two decades.

Australia’s \$292 billion retail sector has welcomed the rise with hopes for a more prosperous end-of-year period to boost the retail sector figures for the year.

With an expected Christmas spending of around \$23 billion by Australian shoppers this year, many brands, marketing agencies and retailers are investing in shopper marketing strategies to win a greater share of the massive end-of-year spend.

TorchMedia, Australia’s only media network dedicated solely to the retail environment, has been experiencing substantial increases in demand from brand managers and retailers alike to design and implement powerful point-of-purchase shopper marketing programs in time for Christmas.

“Many retailers are planning to entice Christmas shoppers into spending from as early as October in order to beat their competitors for a greater slice of the expected Christmas retail pie,” Kirsty Dollisson, General Manager Marketing and Commercial at TorchMedia, said.

“Research tells us that Australians make a phenomenal

1.9 billion visits to shopping centres each year, spending 50 per cent of their household incomes there. Sixty-four per cent of these shoppers usually take a shopping list, with some 58 per cent of this group also making purchases that are not on their list. With another 29 per cent of these consumers always purchasing items that are not on their list, it is obvious why shopper marketing initiatives are so powerful.”

In the US, 45.3 per cent of

the big retailers have employed shopper marketing over the past few years. According to TorchMedia, a 2010 survey showed that 64.9 per cent of the big retailers were now allocating specific budgets toward shopper marketing – a massive jump from nearly zero only a decade ago.

With 70 per cent of brand decisions being made at the shelf, shopper marketing will undoubtedly transform the brand marketing landscape in Australia over the coming years. ■



## oOh!media throws support behind Australian Year of the Farmer

oOh!media will sponsor next year’s Australian Year of the Farmer with \$2 million worth of big billboard and retail media space over the 2011/2012 period.

The Australian Year of the Farmer 2012 is a year-long celebration of the vital role farmers play in feeding, clothing and providing

building materials to house us all.

The celebration was conceived by Australian Year of the Farmer Directors, Geoff Bell and Philip Bruem.

“Regional Australia plays an important part in the social and economic fabric of the country and we are pleased to be part of these communities and to be able to support them with initiatives like this,” oOh! Commercial Director Noel Cook said.

oOh! is one of four major category sponsors of the celebration, which aims to raise the profile of farming, highlight the importance of food security and dependence, sustainability, and encourage Australians to appreciate and purchase Australian produce.

Australian farms and the industries that support them generate more than \$405 billion each year – that’s 27 per cent of our GDP. ■