

CATEGORY WARS

GPS Makers Gas Up for Christmas Battle Royale

Decreasing prices, increasing technology make for merry GPS sales. BY STEVE MILLER

NO DIRECTIONS ARE NECESSARY when it comes to explaining navigational devices anymore. That's why, beginning this month, marketers within the exploding GPS category are scrapping stodgy educational campaigns in favor of holiday efforts designed to differentiate their brands.

Garmin, TomTom, JVC and the newly launched Navigon are rolling out everything from yuletide ads to tie-ins with metal bands. The goal: To navigate their brand under every consumer's Christmas tree.

GPS systems rank second only to high-definition televisions in terms of which consumer electronics category will have the fiercest competition, said Josh Martin, analyst at Yankee Group, Boston.

And that's because prices are dipping, new players are entering the field and the technology is improving, said Martin.

Sales of mobile navigation units already have more than tripled for the first eight months of the year, making it a \$1.7 billion category compared to \$486 million during the same period in 2006, per NPD Group, Port Washington, NY.

Ad spending in the category leapt to \$84.6 million last year, up from \$60.6 million in 2005, per Nielsen Monitor-Plus. For the first eight months of this year, spending was \$33.2 million.

Navigon will break its first U.S. campaign this week, which centers around its "reality view" technology that shows a 3-D version of the road. A TV ad, via 2x4, Chicago, will run on cable stations including CNN, CNBC and others that reach the "technical trailblazer," said Ralf Hug, vp of marketing for Navigon, Hamburg, Germany.

"We are now able to bring something to the U.S. market that isn't there," Hug said of Navigon's 3-D view. "And we know that in this category, 45% of products are sold in the last two months of the year. This is the right time and we

have the right technology."

Garmin, which is No. 1 in both U.S. category ad spending and sales, will run an updated version of last year's holiday spot during this week's NFL games on CBS. Ads show many reasons to give a Garmin during the holidays. Fallon, Minneapolis, handles.

No. 2 TomTom expects to hit 95% of its target audience more than 20 times this quarter, said Tom Murray, vp-marketing.

Its five broadcast spots, which broke earlier this month, focus on TomTom's unique attributes like its map share technology. It allows TomTom users to get

maps of new roads quicker. Boathouse, Waltham, Mass., handles.

"With the penetration of navigation devices, people are pretty familiar now with the technology," said Chad Vogelsong, JVC Mobile's general manager of marketing. "And the capabilities have grown as well, so it would take 20 pages to describe those."

JVC is taking more of a grassroots approach for its KD-NX5000 unit. It's partnering with rock band Drowning Pool, Spike TV's *Bull Run* reality show, and sports car maker Lotus in an online campaign that will break incrementally over the next couple of weeks.

A two-minute Web video, backed by a song from Drowning Pool, chronicles the Lotus team readying for media events following its completion of the annual *Bull Run* event, a trek that this year went from Montreal to Key West, Fla.

The campaign, via E2Amp, Burbank, Calif., is part of JVC's mobile's plan to dedicate half—or roughly \$1 million—from its print budget to the Web.

Vogelsong is shooting for 77 million impressions and hopes the video will take off virally. "By doing this online, I can see every day how well the campaign is doing. I can track it and adjust our strategy to how many hits we are getting."

smiller@brandweek.com

(For more technology marketing news, see Brandweek.com/tech.)



Peddle to the metal: Rock band Drowning Pool sings JVC's praises.

Newswire

SINGER CROW, WESTERN GLOVE TO INTRO BOOTHEEL DENIM

LOS ANGELES—Singer/songwriter and nine-time Grammy award winner Sheryl Crow plans to collaborate with **WESTERN GLOVE WORKS** on a collection of denim-based apparel under the singer's newly formed lifestyle brand, **BOOTHEEL TRADING CO.** Western Glove Works is one of the largest designers of denim products in North America, making the **SILVER JEANS, 1921** and **JAG JEANS** brands. The debut collection, which bows for fall 2008, will comprise a selective offering of mid-priced jeans, denim jackets and tops evoking a vintage Americana aesthetic.

HSBC, PATHMARK OFFERING PAYMENT, LOYALTY CARD

PROSPECT HEIGHTS, ILL.—**HSBC's** card and retail services unit and **PATHMARK STORES** have joined to offer a multipurpose rewards and payment card for supermarket customers. The new **PATHMARK ADVANTAGE PAYMENT CARD** enhances the current Pathmark Advantage Club card by providing a one-swipe payment process that also generates loyalty rewards. A pilot launch is planned in the next two months in New York. According to the grocer, the Pathmark Advantage Payment Card program is the first of its kind for a major supermarket chain in the U.S. that combines loyalty and rewards for customers with decoupled debit functionality all on one card.

NIelsen, GOOGLE PARTNER ON SET-TOP DEMO DATA

NEW YORK AND MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIF.—**THE NIELSEN CO.** (parent of *Brandweek*) and **GOOGLE** have established a multiyear, strategic relationship. As a first step, the deal leverages Nielsen's experience in TV audience measurement to bring demographic data to the Google TV Ads advertising platform. By combining Nielsen demographic data with aggregated set-top box data, Google can provide advertisers and agencies with comprehensive information to help them create better ads for viewers and maximize the return on their ad spending. (For more details, please see Brandweek.com.)

ETC.

ASSIGNMENTS: OMD won global media planning and buying chores for Italy-based pasta and sauce maker **BARILLA**. Estimated ad spending is \$275-300 million a year, according to sources. Mediaedge:cia had handled. The U.S. account makes up a small portion of the overall budget. Domestic spending by Barilla totaled \$18 million in 2006, per Nielsen Monitor-Plus. In the U.S., the account will be handled by OMD's Chicago office.