



### Overview

At Cone, we continuously keep our finger on the pulse of our industry, scouring hundreds of sources for the latest trends. Our Knowledge Leadership and Insights team keeps us on-trend with the latest and greatest campaigns making headlines, all to give us creative inspiration to provide our clients with the most innovative and relevant solutions.

During the last few months of scanning and analysis, we've identified five trends that keep popping up in the marketplace. It's a sign of the times that three of the trends leverage new media vehicles – a new media presence is fast becoming standard operating procedure for any brand looking to stay competitive and relevant. The other two trends are also about staying relevant, whether in the face of competitors or among new audiences. These trends are only a tiny snapshot of the industry, but pay attention, as they might reveal what lies ahead.

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# fierce competition

In tough economic times, staying ahead of your competitors could be the difference between business as usual and out-of-business. The following brands know this better than anyone as they go head-to-head in heated rivalries.



## Microsoft vs. Apple

Ever since actor Justin Long debuted as the “Mac” computer, loyalists across the globe have taken sides. **Microsoft** is getting back at rival **Apple** with its latest “I’m a PC” ads.

## McDonald’s vs. Starbucks

Emerging as a surprise coffee retailer,

**McDonald’s** took on **Starbucks** in the coffee giant’s own backyard by erecting billboards outside Starbucks’ Seattle headquarters which read, “four bucks is dumb.”



## Verizon FiOS vs. Comcast

**Verizon FiOS** is moving into more residential neighborhoods and is looking to kick cable to the curb with its fiber optics promising a better picture quality. In local markets, **Comcast** is feeling the pinch and fighting back with commercials that parody Verizon’s latest ad campaign.

Microblogging service Twitter has become a media darling and brands are realizing they need to get in the game. But, rather than tweet the daily HQ happenings, the following companies have leveraged the marketing possibilities of Twitter in clever ways.

# all at Twitter



## Pizza Hut Hires a “Twintern”

**Pizza Hut** executives didn’t really know what to do with Twitter, so they hired a digital native. The QSR launched a nationwide search for a paid “Twintern,” a new media-savvy college student who would be the voice of Pizza Hut on Twitter.

## Choice Hotels Twitter Crisis

Much to their surprise, and sometimes disgrace, companies are finding that Twitter is a great tool for customer service. When a



guest complained of her hotel accommodations on Twitter, **Choice Hotels’** Twitter team, seeing the tweet, quickly addressed the situation.



## Bing Introduces “Live Search”

Microsoft’s new search engine, **Bing**, is trying to one-up Google by offering a “live search” feature, which integrates real-time data into its search results. Twitterers can now find their own content coming up in Bing, and the search engine has a slight edge on Google in the live search department.

# mobile mania

It's not enough to be on your TVs, in your magazines and popping up on your computer screens. Marketers want their brands to be everywhere you want to be. So why not put the brand in the palm of your hand? The iPhone is making it possible.

## Absolute "Drinkspiration"

Vodka maker, **Absolut**, introduced a new iPhone application that provides an encyclopedia of drink recipes and offers drink suggestions based on a user's mood, time of day, weather, liquor type, drink color, shape of glass or bar type. It can also show you what types of drinks are being ordered around the world.



## Dockers Shakes it Up

Taking advantage of the iPhone's shakability, **Dockers** created an iPhone-exclusive interactive advertisement that lets users shake their phones to make a man dance in his Dockers.

## MasterCard "Priceless Picks"

The world is full of priceless things, says **MasterCard**. Its new iPhone application, "Priceless Picks," operates as a social network. Users can tag things they find priceless and share them with their friends. The application uses GPS to let users easily find priceless picks.



Did video really kill the radio star? It sure looks like it for some brands. As more consumers are turning to their computers to watch video, these brands are eschewing the TV – or radio – to put their live action on the Web.

# Video Stars



## AirTran Airways "Internetiquette"

As the first airline to offer in-flight Wi-Fi, **AirTran Airways** created a tongue-in-cheek video series, "Internetiquette," to teach passengers the proper way to go about using the Internet on a plane. It features 1980's "Airplane!" star Peter Graves.

## Taco Bell "It's All About the Roosevelts"

In an homage to the Puff Daddy song "It's all about the Benjamins," **Taco Bell** created "It's all about the Roosevelts" to promote its low-priced menu with many options available for only a few Roosevelts, or dimes. The video debuted during the 2009 MLB All-Star Game.



## Tampax "Zack16.com"

**Tampax** demonstrated that the medium truly is the message when it created a Web-video series about a 16-year-old boy named Zack who woke up one morning to find he had "girl parts." Now Zack is learning all about "that time of the month."

# revitalizations

Feeling dowdy and old? Is it time for a makeover? The following companies sure thought so, as they decided their brands needed a new lease on life. Some want to grow their customer base, and others just needed a face lift.

## Denny's Goes After Millennials

**Denny's**, looking to broaden its appeal beyond Boomers who yearn for its Grand Slam breakfast, went right after Millennials with its Rockstar Allnighter menu and Adopt a Band program. The fast-casual chain supports its campaign with a blog and social media presence.



## Sci Fi Channel Becomes Syfy

To rid itself of its self-proclaimed "nerdy" image, the Sci Fi Channel changed its name to **Syfy** with the tagline "Imagine Greater." This has more than a few people scratching their heads.

## Snapple Found Better Ingredients

When **Snapple** reformulated its drink offerings, it dumped the "Snapple Lady" and decided to update its visual image instead. The new look is supposed to be cleaner and more modern.



## The Retailer Formerly Known as RadioShack

**RadioShack** will now be known as simply "The Shack." The long-time retailer says most of its customers and employees already call it by the shortened moniker making it an easy transition. Ask its CMO, and he'll say the new name, only used in advertising, contemporizes the way people think about the brand.

## For more trends, news and insights:

- Read the Brand Channeler blog ([www.coneinc.com/brandchanneler](http://www.coneinc.com/brandchanneler)).
- Follow the Knowledge Leadership and Insights team on Twitter:

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## About Cone

Cone ([www.coneinc.com](http://www.coneinc.com)) is a strategy and communications agency engaged in building brand trust. Cone creates stakeholder loyalty and long-term relationships through the development and execution of Cause Branding<sup>SM</sup>, Brand Marketing, Corporate Responsibility and Crisis Prevention and Management initiatives. Cone is a part of the Omnicom Group (NYSE: OMC) ([www.omnicomgroup.com](http://www.omnicomgroup.com)).