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## **THE EMAIL EXPERIENCE COUNCIL DEBUTS REFER A FRIEND BENCHMARK STUDY AS PART OF THE EEC WHITEPAPER FORUM**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

NEW YORK CITY (February 1, 2007) — The Email Experience Council (EEC), an organization of global professionals that define email marketing and communications, today announced the debut of its Refer-A-Friend Benchmark Study. The study, conducted by the EEC in conjunction with its newly integrated partner, RetailEmail.Blogspot, probes best practices, addresses some areas of concern, and presents cases studies of three retailers that use refer-a-friend (RAF) programs. The study marks the third installment of the EEC's original content Whitepaper and Research Forum, launched this month. The Whitepaper and Research Forum is an ongoing effort designed to educate marketers about powerful email marketing tools.

"Refer-a-friend programs are the less popular cousins of send-to-a-friend programs, which are another customer acquisition tool," said Chad White, the EEC's Director of Retail Insights, Editor-At-Large and founder of RetailEmail.Blogspot. "But unlike send to a friend, whose functionality can be largely replicated by using the forward button on your email client, refer a friend is a unique opportunity to have a satisfied subscriber share a retailer's brand with a friend."

The EEC reviewed several email newsletters each from 103 of the top online retailers tracked via RetailEmail.Blogspot to see which included a RAF links in their email. Only three did: jewelry retailer Blue Nile, pet supplies retailer and pharmacy Drs. Foster & Smith, and computer and electronics retailer TigerDirect. The study examines how each of these retailers use their RAF programs and also explores several areas of concerns with these programs – namely, a lack of attention to privacy issues, ease-of-use problems, limited integration into email campaigns, and concerns with adherence to the JumpStart ruling.

"The Refer-A-Friend Benchmark Study again demonstrates the broader applicability of retail email practices," says Jeannie Mullen, founder of the EEC and Partner, Senior Director of Email Marketing at OgilvyOne Worldwide, a global leader in customer relationship management. "This is just the beginning of an important series of whitepapers designed by the EEC to help our members better understand the powerful email marketing options available."

For more information on this study, EEC programs and membership, visit [www.emailexperience.org](http://www.emailexperience.org).

## **About The Email Experience Council**

The EEC is a new global professional organization that strives to enhance the image of email marketing and communications, while celebrating and actively advocating its critical importance in business and its great ROI proposition.

The EEC regularly conducts a broad series of email initiatives for a variety of organizations that highlight the positive impact and importance of email as a marketing tool, communications vehicle and branding device. Additionally, EEC members are setting the standards for email through our Marketing Roundtables. The EEC members who belong to our organization are representative of other trade organizations, agencies, advertisers, technology partners, clients and companies focused on the potential of email and digital marketing.

The EEC platform supports member-led Roundtable committees that work together to evolve insights, establish best practices and develop thought-leadership on a variety of issues. The EEC publishes these in multiple forms with full member/author credit and then promotes these leaders and their work across the industry. These truly are change agents.

The EEC was founded by Jeannie Mullen. Jeannie is a Partner, and the Senior Director of Email Marketing at OgilvyOne worldwide, a global leader in customer relationship management and interactive marketing. There she established and leads the global email practice across all clients.

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