



**“We sometimes forget that ‘word-of-mouth’ remains the most powerful marketing medium of all.”**

## Psst - marketing works, pass it on...

In an age of mass media, ubiquitous internet and mobile communications we sometimes forget that ‘word-of-mouth’ remains the most powerful marketing medium of all. Regular advertising tracking research by Amárach shows just how powerful WOM (yet another marketing TLA) can actually be. We have found that:

- across most markets referral or advice from friends and family is either the first or second most important influence on choosing a service or product
- younger consumers are even more likely to rely on the trusted advice of friends or family than older consumers
- a negative opinion from a friend or relative about a product or service almost always results in first time buyers deciding not to buy that product or service.

Most of us know this intuitively from own personal experiences as consumers - yet as marketers we struggle to grasp the importance of WOM in the marketing mix. Some brands are now tackling the WOM challenge - using ‘beat on the street’ type experiential marketing and promotional activities to create a real buzz that is ‘below the radar’ of conventional marketing media.

The advent of a Web 2.0 world in which co-creating web content on destination sites like Bebo and MySpace becomes the norm is one harbinger of the future for WOM. We already have [ratemyteachers.com](http://ratemyteachers.com) - how long before we have [ratemybrand.com](http://ratemybrand.com), [ratemybank.com](http://ratemybank.com) or [ratemyad.com](http://ratemyad.com)?

## The Time of Our Lives?

Amárach was recently commissioned to carry a national survey on behalf of RTE’s Primetime current affairs programme. The findings were broadcast as part of RTE’s ‘The

Time of Our Lives 1986-2006’ retrospective. The survey provided an intriguing guide to changes and trends in Irish social values (including comparisons with a European values survey from the early 1980s), as well as insights into the concerns of Irish people in relation to others and the future. One finding is that we in Ireland are now more optimistic about the long-term future than are Americans - suggesting perhaps that the mantle of carrying forward the ‘American Dream’ has been passed to the Irish:

The picture that emerges from the Primetime survey is generally a positive and encouraging one. The majority of people are happy with their lives, satisfied with their financial situation and accepting of many of the changes that have occurred in a positive manner.

Nevertheless, Irish people are concerned about some changes that they see both in Ireland and abroad- immigration is an issue that currently most Irish have adopted to and welcomed, but they have concerns about future immigration trends. Similarly, though at ease with Ireland’s place in the world, the world itself is seen as harbouring some significant threats - including nuclear, political and terrorist threats.

A more detailed briefing on the findings will be published shortly by Amárach - but in the meantime, further details about RTE’s retrospective are available here: [www.rte.ie/thetimeofourlives/](http://www.rte.ie/thetimeofourlives/)

## Calling All MBAs

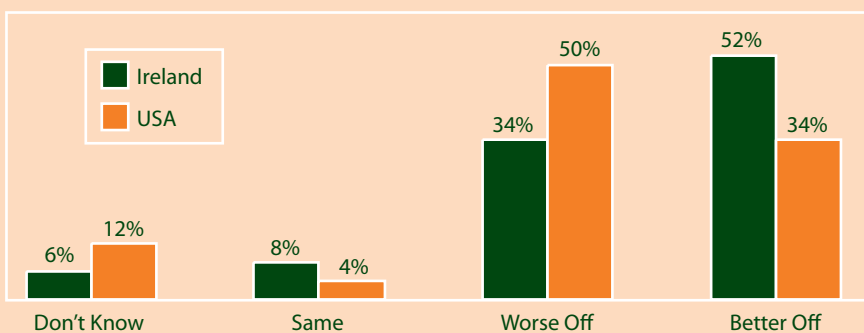
Amárach is delighted to announce an agreement on a new PR, Marketing and Communications relationship with the MBA Association of Ireland. Amárach will undertake a number of focused market research projects on behalf of the MBAAI, each designed to solicit from the Association’s 2,000+ members opinion in relation to key management and business issues. This link-up will add to the profile of the MBAAI in the business community in Ireland, north and south, and help in positioning the Association as a voice in debates on issues of strategic importance to economic development in Ireland.

More about the MBA Association of Ireland at: [www.mbaassociation.ie/](http://www.mbaassociation.ie/)

## Ask Amárach

If you require any further details about the studies reported in this or previous issues of The Irish Consumer just contact us with your questions. Also, if you have any suggestions on themes and trends you would like us to explore, then please send your suggestions to [adrian.fernandes@amarach.com](mailto:adrian.fernandes@amarach.com)

## Will our children be better off or worse off when they grow up compared to today?



Source: © Amárach survey for RTE/Primetime & Pew Research Centre, 2006