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15% OF CONSUMERS ACCOUNT FOR 1.5 BILLION BRAND IMPRESSIONS PER DAY, ONE THIRD OF ALL WORD OF MOUTH IN AMERICA

– Women influencers more likely than men to act on word of mouth, study finds –

New York – November 30, 2006 –15% of consumers account for 1.5 billion brand impressions per day, according to the results of a new research report released today by the Keller Fay Group, a market research company specializing in word of mouth and sponsored by IMMS&L, the influencer marketing specialty of leading global public relations firm Manning Selvage & Lee (MS&L). The report, an in-depth look inside the conversations of top word of mouth (WOM) leaders, is the largest and most comprehensive study of the brand-related conversations of consumer influencers and is the first to provide estimates of the daily volume of word of mouth in America.

According to the survey, these 32 million WOM leaders – dubbed "Conversation Catalysts™" by Keller Fay – are involved in 184 word of mouth conversations a week, more than 1.5 times the average consumer. This 15% of consumers is responsible for one third of all word of mouth, clearly indicating the disproportionate impact of influencers on word of mouth. Interestingly, the study also found the impact of word of mouth more likely to prompt women to action than men. A full 58% of women Catalysts said they would be highly likely to pass along information to others they heard in word of mouth exchanges, versus 51% of men. Women Catalysts are also more likely to be spurred to buy products recommended to them (55% vs. 47%) and to find the recommendations more credible (55% versus 47%).

"These findings also tell us that companies that actively and effectively reach out to these talk leaders will have an impact that goes far beyond that of traditional

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marketing methods," said Renée Wilson, senior vice president and director, strategic services and innovation for MS&L's New York office. "They also indicate that companies relying heavily on traditional mass marketing campaigns aren't effectively maximizing their budgets, and are therefore failing to reach the consumers that can have the most impact on their brands."

The identification of Conversation Catalysts – and a deep probe into their conversational behavior – brings to light certain game-changing insights into how marketers should approach WOM programs. For example:

- *Baby boomers remain extremely relevant to word of mouth campaigns.*
More than a third (37%) of Conversation Catalysts are baby boomers ages 40 to 59. This finding is contrary to marketers' popular, long-held belief that WOM campaigns should be targeted to a younger, demographic.
- *People with influence are power listeners - not just power talkers.*
Catalysts' conversations are split between those in which the Catalyst gives the most advice (38%), those in which someone else does (25%) and those in which advice is shared from both directions (37%), but they are involved in more conversations about brands.
- *Internet acts as resource for WOM, more than a channel of conversation.*
Consistent with previous Keller Fay research, most WOM conversations by Conversation Catalysts (72%) happen in face to face conversations, rather than online. But results from this study indicate that Conversation Catalysts rely heavily on the Internet as a resource for the information they pass along to their friends and families. In fact, in several categories, the Web is the most cited marketing and media resource.

The study also found that Conversation Catalysts talk about a broad range of industries, products and services. Not surprisingly, entertainment and media brands are most talked about, with 16 brand mentions per week. But brands in seven other categories – including beverages, public affairs, food and dining, shopping and retail, travel, automotive and technology – are also talked about with high frequency (10 or more brand mentions per week).

"Major consumer marketers have awakened to the powerful influence of consumer word of mouth. This report provides compelling new evidence about the disproportionate impact that a select group of consumer influencers have in word of mouth, and highlights the ways these consumers spread information and insight beyond a narrow area of singular expertise," said Ed Keller, CEO of Keller Fay and co-author of *The Influentials*. "We now know more about the everyday conversations of these important influencers than we have ever known before. Armed with this new information, there is a real opportunity for marketers to engage this group and turn these findings into actionable, measurable word of mouth programs."

About IMMS&L

IMMS&L, MS&L's Influencer Marketing specialty, brings together the agency's substantial expertise in WOM marketing, digital communications, entertainment, research and media. The team includes:

- **Renée Wilson:** SVP and director, strategic services and innovation. Wilson has more than 16 years of experience in influencer marketing, marketing to women and launching new products. Wilson also plays a key role managing Procter & Gamble's portfolio of brands and provides strategic counsel to top clients such as Novartis (Keri Lotion), Cartier, Western Union and Philips.
- **Holly Jarrell:** SVP, director of insight creation. Prior to joining MS&L, Jarrell was with the Daniel Yankelovich Group, where she provided consulting services to leading companies by helping them apply current and emerging research trends to their business objectives.
- **Amanda Glasgow:** SVP, director of WOM marketing. Glasgow manages public relations programs for blue chip clients, including influencer marketing programs for clients such as Vonage, P&G and Philips Electronics.
- **Bruce MacKenzie:** SVP, senior director of entertainment marketing. MacKenzie has more than 20 years of experience in crafting holistic marketing partnerships and sponsorships, content integration and product placement, artist/endorser campaigns and celebrity/influencer marketing.

- **David Binkowski:** VP, director of digital marketing. Binkowski co-chairs the Blogger Relations Council for the Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA). He has led more than 60 campaigns representing 30 international and national brands for corporations including Philips, Best Buy, GM, P&G and General Mills.
- **Stephanie Smith:** VP and director of national media and services. Smith joined MS&L from ABC News, where she was a network news producer for 10 years, and provides media counsel to several key MS&L clients.

The 2006 Keller Fay/MS&L Conversation Catalysts study polled 7,200 Americans ages 13 to 69 between June and August 2006. Results are weighted to reflect the total U.S. population in terms of demographics. A subsegment of 1100 Conversation Catalysts is analyzed and reported on in the report.

About the Keller Fay Group

The Keller Fay Group is the first full-service market research company focused exclusively on word of mouth (WOM) marketing, using a full suite of best-in-class research techniques. The company measures word of mouth trends and campaign effectiveness; tests concepts, ads, and messages to maximize their WOM potential; and offers a complete array of custom research and advisory services related to WOM. In April 2006, Keller Fay launched TalkTrack™, a service that monitors all marketing-relevant conversations in America. The firm was founded by Ed Keller, former CEO of RoperASW and co-author of *The Influentials: One American in Ten Tells the other Nine How to Vote, Where to Eat, and What to Buy*, and Brad Fay, former managing director of Roper. For more information, visit www.Kellerfay.com.

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