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Spotlight on San Francisco

Featuring a fully updated summary of GLBT life in San Francisco, from a business perspective.

Focusing on the ever-growing number of companies now scoring a perfect 100 on the HRC Corporate Equality Index, as well as the variety of resources available in this region supporting both the smaller GLBT business community and those corporations wishing to target the GLBT consumer.



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NGLCC Conference

June 5 - 7, 2008: Minneapolis, MN
www.NGLCC.org

NLGJA Conference

August 21 - 24, 2008: Washington, DC
www.NLGJA.org

Out & Equal Conference

September 10 - 13, 2008: Austin, TX
www.OutAndEqual.org

IGLCC Summit

September 19-21, 2008: London, UK
www.IGLCC.org

Community Marketing Conference

October 5 - 8, 2008: Vancouver, BC
www.CommunityMarketing.com

NGLCC Dinner

November 7, 2008: Washington, DC
www.NGLCC.org

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Buying Power of Gay Men and Lesbians in 2008

by Witeck-Combs Communications

Marketers, economists and journalists often puzzle over guesstimating the purchasing power of America's gay and lesbian households. Some tend to ballyhoo the gay market as a dream market precisely because of its presumed affluence. But is it really true?

Over the past several years, we've given this question considerable thought and research. We conclude that projections of gay wealth are likely overstated or simply a flat misconception, and therefore we come to rely most often on the excellent analysis conducted by economist and academic Dr. Lee Badgett and the work of the Williams Institute at UCLA.

Dr. Badgett and others have shown that it appears likely that gay men earn slightly less than their heterosexual counterparts, while lesbians appear to earn a bit more than other women. Over time, we will continue to examine these studies and to analyze their implications for public policy as well as for market strategies.

But let's step back a moment. It stands to reason that a certain portion of America's gay population enjoys wealth or merely higher than average earnings. But the real questions that marketers and journalists raise should go beyond earnings and household income, and instead focus on key lesbian and gay consumer traits such as brand loyalty and early adopting behaviors.

So how should we understand buying power, and attempt to measure the economic clout of gays and lesbians in today's market? When any company decides to pursue the gay dollar and to reach out to gay households, they're smart to understand their customers and to determine what market share they hope to achieve.

Since 2000, we have worked with an expert research team at Packaged Facts to evaluate the economic clout of gay households - in contrast with other households. For this purpose, we therefore use the term "buying power" (or "purchasing power") to measure the size of the gay and lesbian market in the United States based on its estimated population. Buying power is another term for "disposable personal income (DPI)," which is defined by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Affairs as the total after-tax income available to an individual to spend on personal consumption, personal interest payments, and savings.

America's Gay and Lesbian Population

Social scientists and market researchers alike grapple with the likely dimensions of the gay, lesbian and bisexual population. These estimates today range between 4 percent and 10 percent of American adults. In a nation with more than 300 million people, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates today that we have roughly 225 million adults (over the age of 18.)

Therefore, the most reliable projections of the GLB population may be as low as nine million or as high as 22 million adults. Demographers such as Dr. Gary Gates at the Williams Institute tend to estimate at the lower end of this range based largely on social science data and Census household data; while marketers forecast a higher percentage.

We tend to rely on a reasonably conservative estimate of 6.8% of adults, based on nearly a hundred general surveys conducted online over the

past eight years by our research partner, Harris Interactive, which frequently invites respondents to anonymously self-identify online by sexual orientation. We believe this is a reasonable benchmark, and this therefore suggests the U.S. population may be as high as 15 to 16 million. [Interestingly, in 2005, the United Kingdom (with a total population one fifth of the United States, roughly 60 million residents) officially estimated a combined population of 3.6 million gay men, lesbians and bisexuals - which approaches 8% of that nation's adult population.]

Buying Power Methodology

The methodology we chose to apply is similar to the approach taken by the Selig Center for Economic Growth at the University of Georgia in calculating the purchasing power of other multicultural consumer segments such as Hispanics and African Americans. This methodology uses aggregate disposable income data compiled by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce, a data source that provides the most comprehensive view of overall purchasing power in the United States.

Gay and lesbian purchasing power is calculated by allocating a proportion of aggregate disposable personal income to gay and lesbian consumers that is equivalent to their percentage of the overall population aged 18 years old and over. The most basic premise underlying this estimate of gay and lesbian buying power is that the income-generating power of the gay and lesbian population essentially mirrors that of the adult population as a whole. [Note: Although for the purposes of this article, we stipulate "gay and lesbian," we intend for it to mean individuals who self-identify as lesbian, gay and bisexual.

[Note: We do not customarily include transgender people in this analysis for two simple reasons. First, transgender people may be either heterosexual or homosexual in their orientation, and therefore do not necessarily and uniformly have same-sex relationships or attractions. Second, and as important, their true number in the total population has been very difficult to gauge given the scarcity of credible data. Until we have better data sources and understanding, we assume the number of transgender people may be as few as one-tenth of one percent to one percent of the adult population. That proportion also makes projections about their economic contributions difficult if not impossible to analyze.]

Reliable estimates of buying power for each multicultural population segment in the nation- including African-Americans, Hispanics and Asian-Americans-are reported widely by the University of Georgia's Selig Center and by others. Of course, gays, lesbians and bisexuals come from all walks of life, all ethnicities and all races. Thus, the projected buying power for gay adults includes individuals who will be part of buying power projections for other groups as well, including African Americans, Hispanics and Asian Americans.

Consequently, it is difficult to accurately compare gay and lesbian buying power to that of other populations without mischaracterizing the relative strengths of each.

Another key consideration in assessing the relative buying power of major multicultural consumer groups is that the buying power calculation for

gay Americans is based only on adults over the age of 18, while ethnic and racial buying power calculations include all members of all ages within each target household. It stands to reason one may easily identify a person's ethnicity or racial composition at birth, while sexual orientation is a naturally occurring characteristic that only becomes apparent in later adolescence or adult life. Thus, our estimates are based more appropriately and somewhat more conservatively on gay, lesbian and bisexual adults over the age of 18.

"Disposable Income" Not the Same as "Discretionary"

Although "disposable income" often is equated with "discretionary income," the two terms have different meanings. As mentioned above, disposable income refers to the total amount an individual has available after taxes for saving, making interest payments on loans, and spending of all kinds. Discretionary income refers to the amount that an individual has available to spend for non-essentials after taking care of necessities and fixed payments such as rent, car payments, and basic food costs.

Gay and Lesbian Buying Power Reached \$690 Billion in 2007 and Likely Will Top \$712 Billion in 2008

Gay and lesbian buying power has been calculated as follows:

- Based on the latest available data from BEA, it is expected that aggregate DPI totaled \$10,006 billion (or put another way, \$10 trillion) in 2007.
- The gay and lesbian population is assumed to account for 6.8% of aggregate disposable personal income in the population 18 years old and over, a proportion consistent with the percentage of gay men and lesbians in the adult population as a whole.
- Thus, the buying power of gay men and lesbians totaled an estimated \$690 billion in 2000 (.068 X \$10,006 billion).

Gay and Lesbian Buying Power Expected to Reach \$835 Billion by 2011

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has projected that aggregate disposable personal income will increase at an average annual rate of 4.9% during the period from 2004 through 2014. However, various U.S. government and private-sector sources have forecast that the economy now is growing at a relatively slower rate during late 2007 and 2008. As a result, we estimate that aggregate disposable personal income will grow at a rate of 4.5% between 2007 and 2008 and is then likely to grow at an average rate of 4.9% thereafter through 2011.

Based on these assumptions, the buying power of gay and lesbian consumers is expected to total \$835.3 billion by three years from now. This represents cumulative growth of 26.5% during the forecast period.

Table 9-1
Projected Growth in Total Gay and Lesbian Buying Power, 2007-2011

Year	Population (thousands)	Per Capita Buying Power	Aggregate Buying Power (millions)	Cumulative Growth
2011	16,314	\$51,204	\$835,337	26.5%
2010	16,115	49,415	796,317	20.6
2009	15,919	47,686	759,120	15.0
2008	15,726	45,298	712,368	9.4
2007	15,535	44,407	689,858	4.5

Source: *Packaged Facts, Witeck-Combs Communications.*

Featured Book:

Business Inside Out: Capturing Millions of Brand Loyal Gay Consumers

In this book, marketing experts Robert Witeck and Wesley Combs share more than thirteen years of real-life, research-based lessons that provide a complete approach to successfully targeting this emerging market. Harris Interactive® and Witeck and Combs have long partnered on learning the estimated size, strength, spending habits and brand loyalty factors of gay consumers.

In *Business Inside Out*, Witeck and Combs apply this knowledge to provide insights into how best to approach this valuable market segment, including:

- Why gay consumers have such high potential for brand loyalty
- Determining if a targeted or .gay-vague approach is best for your business
- What strengths and weaknesses within a company have an impact on brand loyalty
- How to strike a balance between addressing this specialized audience and maintaining the interest of other customers

- How to manage negative consumer response and respond to tactics such as the threat of backlash
- Understanding how to leverage the emerging trends within the GLBT market, such as the increase of same-sex parents as well as retirement communities

Business Inside Out also profiles campaigns from major Fortune 500 brands that target gay consumers and includes an extensive list of resources for marketers interested in reaching this audience. It is the first book to provide a complete overview of the GLBT market from a business perspective.

LINK: www.WiteckCombs.com



Feature Story by PressPassQ.com

The year of the lesbian: Female journalists welcome findings in Lesbian Consumer Index, but wonder where to go from here

by Chuck Colbert

Is 2008 the year of the lesbian? San Francisco-based Community Marketing Inc. seems to think so - and the firm has published a study to prove it. In fact, many women working for GLBT media have witnessed first-hand - and often played a role in themselves - the increased power lesbians have in terms of media presence and purchasing power.

What is particularly important about the "Lesbian Consumer Index" is that market research to date has focused on the collective gay and lesbian community. The new index is the first of its kind to differentiate lesbian purchasing power and preferences from those of gay men.

Why is separating the women from the men so critical? "The word 'gay' infers men and not lesbians," explained Frances Stevens, publisher of the San Francisco-based Curve magazine. "To reach the affluent lesbian market, you need to target lesbians specifically through lesbian-specific publications, events, and websites."

Among the survey's findings: The top three most-read national mainstream publications by lesbian consumers are People, AARP, and O Magazine. Among lesbians, 79 percent used a Visa card in the last month, more than MasterCard (56 percent) and American Express (24 percent). In the 2004 presidential election, 91 percent of lesbians voted, with 78 percent voting in the 2006 midterm election.

The CMI survey gathered data from more than 10,000 lesbians over a 34-day period from April 13 through May 16, 2007. In doing so, the San Francisco-based firm used its own survey pool and partnered with 75 GLBT media publications, websites, and events to solicit responses. The report was produced by CMI in collaboration with Rivendell Media (co-publisher of Press Pass Q) and sponsored by Absolut.

Altogether, the recent research has been "long anticipated" and "a much needed tool," said Robbin Burr, partner at Rapport Marketing, LLC, a lesbian-specific consulting firm. "While those of us who've worked with lesbians have made some fairly accurate assumptions over the years, we've also allowed guesswork to steer us incorrectly at times. Now we have some solid information from which to build strategies and marketing plans. This report deepens our ability to match companies and their messages with this important growing market."



Tracy Baim, publisher of Chicago-based Windy City Times, welcomed the new information. "It's a more sophisticated approach to market strategy, one needed for a long time."

"It's amazing it took this long to do," added Sue O'Connell, co-publisher of Boston-based Bay Windows.

Both Baim and O'Connell said the findings help to dispel a stereotype of lesbians as a "downtrodden" group.

Sure enough, CMI hopes to create a buzz, calling 2008 "The Year of the Lesbian."

But is that really the case for GLBT media?

"Every year at Curve is the year of the lesbian," said editor Diane Anderson-Minshall. "But I think a strong argument can be made for 2008 getting that title."

Cathy Renna, managing partner of New York City-based Renna Communications, agreed. "What has happened this year is a higher level of visibility," she explained, pointing to the five-year success of Showtime's hit TV series "The L Word," as well as the rise in popularity of Ellen Degeneres' daytime talk show, which has overtaken Oprah among television viewers.

Added Renna, "Within our community there is an increasing understanding that sisters have to do it for themselves."

A case in point: For the first time, this year's annual Queer Media and Entertainment Conference (May 9-11 in New York City) focuses exclusively on women's issues (see last month's story, "Queer media confab to focus on women"). For three full days, seminars and workshops examine how to finance, pitch, market, and distribute content specifically for queer women.

Still, "Advertising to lesbians is always challenging because lesbians tend to be invisible," said Amy Lesser, publisher and editor in chief of New York City-based GO magazine.

She offered an example: "Two well-dressed men check into a hotel. The reaction: Oh, two gay men are staying with us. If two well-heeled women register at the front desk, what's the reaction? The ladies are here for a wedding. And for lesbians with children, the lesbian label gives way to the mom category."

Another challenge, said Curve publisher Stevens, is that "most GLBT publications skew highly male and are less effective at reaching a women's demographic." To reach lesbians, she adds, "Use lesbian-specific images - images of lesbian women together or lesbian concepts and graphics. You need to go beyond the rainbow flag."

Interesting Stories on the Web

Invisibility and advertising oversight go hand in hand. Take the travel and tourism industry, for instance. "Lesbians are definitely an overlooked market," said Alison Zawacki, co-publisher of 2-year-old Jane and Jane magazine, based in Sacramento, Calif.

Part of the problem, she explained, is that "there are not a lot of lesbian magazines, which hurts the community because companies won't invest in a lesbian-specific advertising campaign. It's not worth it to them."

One exception is American Airlines. This year the carrier launches a new multi-media ad exclusively targeting lesbians. The retro-illustrated print ad recalls a time when travel was glamorous, but with a contemporary twist. The 1950s-style ad features two fashionable women departing the plane together. The tag line reads: "ACCEPTANCE: Never goes out of style."

Several years ago, the company introduced a similarly illustrated, retro-looking poster ad for gay men. Its tag line: FLY FORWARD.

Both ads tout the company's perfect 100 percent score from the Human Rights Campaign's Corporate Equality Index and reference booking reservations at AA.com/rainbow.

"I do appreciate American Airlines' ad campaign specifically tailored to the lesbian community," said Zawacki. "It's fantastic."

Where do lesbians travel? A follow up report to CMI's new index provides some answers. Las Vegas is the most-visited U.S. destination for lesbian baby boomers (born 1948-1963) and Gen X-ers (1964-1975). Lesbian seniors prefer Provincetown, Mass. The lesbian Gen-Y group (post-1975) picks San Francisco.

Want another venue to reach lesbians? "Events, events, events," added Ella Matthes, publisher of Southern California-based Lesbian News magazine. Don't just publicize events, she says, offer a free glass of wine or champagne, or feature a performance artist or celebrity. "The ladies will show up," she explains.

Despite the positive signs, not everybody is entirely sold on the idea of 2008 as the year of the lesbian.

"Print publications - GLBT and straight - are all suffering in this economy, especially with the intensified shift to the Internet for news, information, and products," says Karen Ocamb, news editor at IN Los Angeles magazine. "So I don't buy the assertion that 2008 is the year of the lesbian simply because a marketing group finally did a study and declared it so.

"That said, and quite separate from the study, IN Los Angeles magazine launched a new lesbian-targeted section this March as part of our 10th anniversary. It's called 'L IN LA,' and it's spearheaded ... by a pair of young lesbians who are giving lesbian society a spirited, fresh look."

(Editor's note: Community Marketing Inc. and Rivendell Media are currently developing questions for the 2008 Gay & Lesbian Consumer Index. Last year's Gay & Lesbian Consumer Index was the largest GLBT consumer study ever conducted. Look for more information regarding how to participate in the 2008 Gay & Lesbian Consumer Index in next month's issue of Press Pass Q.)

Gay Bars Adjusting to New Reality

Fortune Magazine's recent list of 10 businesses facing extinction includes record stores, crop dusting, telemarketing and . . . gay bars? That one caught our eye because gay business in general is booming. Stacey Vanek-Smith checked it out.

http://marketplace.publicradio.org/display/web/2008/04/25/gay_bars

The Truth About Marketing To Women

Author Yvonne DiVita is the author of Dick*less Marketing: Smart Marketing to Women Online, a book about getting those baby boomer icons Dick and Jane to buy at your website.

<http://www.adotas.com/2008/05/the-truth-about-marketing-to-women/>

... from our blog



<http://gaybizreport.blogspot.com/>

News Highlights

Gay and Lesbian Adults are Reading and Responding to More Blogs than Heterosexuals

New online study also shows gay and lesbian adults are more active within blog channels than heterosexuals and more receptive to blog advertising

Washington, DC - April 21, 2008 - According to a recent national survey conducted by Harris Interactive®, gay and lesbian adults online are reading more blogs than their heterosexual counterparts. When asked, just over half (51 percent) of the gay and lesbian respondents reported reading some type of blog, compared to 36 percent of heterosexual adults. A similar question on blog readership also was asked in November 2006, and at that time 32 percent of gay and lesbian adults then reported reading blogs.

The new nationwide survey of 2,733 U.S. adults, (ages 18 and over), of whom more than 13 percent, or 362, self identified as gay or lesbian (which includes an oversample of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender adults), was conducted online between March 11 and 19, 2008, by Harris Interactive, a global market research and consulting firm, in conjunction with Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc., a strategic public relations and marketing communications firm with special expertise in the GLBT market.

Gay and lesbian adults are also more active in and connected to the blog medium. When asked to choose from a list of online activities, 27 percent of gay and lesbian adults reported posting a comment on a blog in the last month, compared to 13 percent of heterosexuals. Also, more than one out of five (21%) gay and lesbian respondents said they had written a personal blog in the last month, compared to 7 percent of heterosexuals.

Regarding the varied interests of blogs, the survey found 28 percent of gay and lesbian adults reported reading news and current issue blogs, compared to 19 percent of heterosexuals. More than a quarter (26%) of gay and lesbian adults also read entertainment and pop culture blogs, compared to 11 percent of heterosexuals. Given the heightened interest in this year's electoral contests, a significant number, nearly one-quarter (23%), of gay and lesbian adults also read political blogs. In comparison, only 14 percent of heterosexual adults reported reading political blogs.

Gay and lesbian adults also feel more positive towards advertisements found on blogs. Nearly one in five (19%) reported that they felt positive towards advertisements, compared to 8 percent of heterosexual adults. And in a similar study conducted two years ago, roughly the same proportion (21%) of gays and lesbians reported feeling positively towards blog ads.

"Studies consistently show that gays and lesbians are leaders in online usage, are very keen to find relevant and timely information, and feel more strongly about staying on top of latest trends," said Wes Combs, President of Witeck-Combs Communications. "Blogs are fast shaping the media landscape, and it is one medium that marketers and advertisers can't afford to ignore, especially when it comes to reaching gay and lesbian influencers, voters and consumers."

Apart from blogs, gay and lesbian adults also participate in other online activities more than heterosexuals. Half (50%) of gay and lesbian adults say they have sent instant messages (IMs) in the last month, compared to just one third (34%) of heterosexual adults. When asked overall, in a typical month, how often they send instant messages to friends or other people, for reasons other than work-related tasks, 25 percent of gay adult men responded that they send instant messages at least once a day. In comparison, only 15 percent of heterosexual adult men said they did.



A similar trend can also be seen in online communities and dating websites. A majority (57%) of gay adult men online declare they are a member of a social networking web site, compared to 37 percent of heterosexual men. Also, two out of five (42 %) gay and lesbian adults have visited an online social community or network in the last month, compared with roughly a third (32%) of heterosexuals. Just over one-quarter (26%) of gay adult men reported visiting a dating or match-up site in the last month, compared to 9 percent of heterosexual male adults.

To see the data tables, please visit: www.witeck-combs.com/news/releases/20080418_harris.pdf or call 202-887-0500x19.

Methodology

Harris Interactive conducted the study online within the United States between March 11 and 19, 2008, among 2,733 adults (ages 18 and over), of whom 2,302 indicated they are heterosexual and 326 self-identified as gay or lesbian (this includes an over-sample of GLBT adults). No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated; a full methodology is available.

A little excerpt about blogging...

...the big conspiracy here I think is one among people who like a good conversation, and have discovered a consistent set of conversation partners whose content and style best compare and contrast with their own. Professional bloggers are paid conversationalists — or should be, at least. And the good social art of collegiality well understood is an essential part of good conversation — especially good public conversation. People sometimes fear that the blogosphere will close itself off to new talent, but, based on the dynamic I've just outlined, that strikes me as impossible. The 'gold rush' is probably over, but blogging will probably take on the generational tempo of the music world, with big acts retiring for a while to pursue real lives and then making comeback tours after a suitable hiatus — and with lots and lots of new acts competing for attention. Sometimes attention is won by mere novelty, but more often it's won by talent.

Gay marriage attracts out-of-state workforce

Massachusetts native Jeffrey Webb loved the Los Angeles lifestyle. He had a great job as a law partner in the L.A. office of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP, and his life partner, Mark Schuster, was equally happy with his work as chief of general pediatrics and professor at UCLA. "We both had positions that were hard to replicate," said Webb, 43.

Even so, Webb and Schuster left the California sunshine in December and moved to Brookline with their twin sons. It wasn't the promise of

enduring a gloomy Massachusetts winter that beckoned them – it was the ability to live in Massachusetts as a legally married couple.

"That was something that was really important to us," said Webb, who married Schuster in Massachusetts soon after the couple bought a vacation home in Truro in 2004. Webb has since joined the law firm McDermott, Will & Emery LLP as a partner in the trial department, and Schuster is now the chief of general pediatrics and vice chair for health policy research at Children's Hospital Boston.

Massachusetts has a dubious reputation for losing talented workers to less pricey markets. But a trend that runs counter to the talent drain has emerged in the form of the state's controversial same-sex marriage law, a powerful lure for same-sex couples who want to live in a place where they can get married, gain legal rights and have access to spousal health benefits. In fact, some observers see the influx of same-sex couples as a boon for the state's economy.

"Since the marriage law passed, we see a lot more (gay) professionals moving into the Boston area," said Henry Hoey, a board member of the Greater Boston Business Council, a chamber of commerce for gay professionals. The organization's membership has increased 5 percent to 1,100 members since last year. "The effects of this law are starting to take hold."

In 2003, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court legalized same-sex marriage in a landmark ruling. The decision sparked an intense effort by same-sex marriage opponents to amend the state Constitution; but that effort died in the Legislature last year. Since 2004, 10,168 same-sex couples have said their "I-Do's" in Massachusetts. And while same-sex nuptials have tapered off since the initial rush in 2004 when 6,121 couples tied the knot – last year 550 same-sex couples got married in the state – that likely reflects an expected leveling off since the law was passed, according to the Massachusetts Registry of Vital Records and Statistics. The number of same-sex couples who have moved here since 2004 is not tracked by any organization.

Martha Livingston, founder and CEO of Inclusive Recruitment LLC, a Boston-based staffing firm that places gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender professionals in welcoming workplaces, has noticed an increase in gay and lesbian couples who have moved or are planning to move to the state.

"There's a woman that I'm working with right now because she came to Massachusetts so her marriage would be recognized," said Livingston.

Massachusetts's population could use some fresh faces. From 2003 to 2005, the population fell to 6,429,137 from 6,438,510, according to estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau. While the population crept back up to 6,449,755 in 2007, according to census estimates, the population grew a mere 1.5 percent from 2000 to 2006.

Not everyone agrees that same-sex marriage will ultimately prove beneficial to the state's economy.

"We view same-sex marriage as a radical social experiment and to promote it on behalf of the economy is akin to promoting casinos on behalf of the economy," said Kris Mineau, president of the Massachusetts Family Institute in Woburn. "There's anecdotal evidence that (there has been) an exodus of families from Massachusetts because of the same-sex marriage law. So there's two sides to the story."

How's Your Inclusiveness Rating?

The Corporate Equality Index has emerged as the scorecard of choice for measuring GLBT-friendliness.

Software engineer Paula Easton spent years at Raytheon deeply closeted about her sexual orientation. Then one day she heard then-senior executive Bill Swanson deliver an inspiring talk.

"He talked about respecting and accepting the different ERGs [employee resource groups], including the gay and lesbian community," says Easton, a 25-year employee. Swanson, CEO since 2000, "talked about [how being gay] was not a choice, but a way of life. The hairs stood up on my skin and my mouth fell open."

"It changed my whole outlook on Raytheon," the Waltham, Mass.-based, \$20.3 billion firm in the traditionally conservative defense industry, says Easton. Indeed, she added, "It changed my whole life." Shortly afterward, she came out at work. Easton is now president of the company's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Allies group.

It's that welcoming environment, underpinned by GLBT-inclusive policies and practices, that enabled the 73,000-employee Raytheon to chart 100 percent on the Corporate Equality Index. This scorecard, fashioned by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, has emerged as the national barometer for gauging large firms' GLBT-friendly workplace measures.

The Washington-based foundation awarded 195 companies a 100-percent score (on a scale of 0 to 100) on the 2008 CEI, a whopping 41-percent gain over 2006. Just 13 firms achieved a perfect score in 2002, the index's first year.

At a time of escalating boomer retirements and white-hot competition for talented employees, many say the 100-percent CEI rating and accompanying inclusion on the HRC foundation's "Best Places to Work for GLBT Equality" is a critical recruiting and retention advantage. These firms also benefit from featured treatment in the foundation's popular national buyers' guide distributed to GLBT consumers.

"Companies don't want to have a CEI score beneath their competitors," says foundation spokesman Eric Bloem. "Given the very competitive nature of the job market now, companies don't want to give employees or potential employees any reason not to work there. They need to produce an inclusive environment so that all employees feel comfortable and safe in the workplace. And companies recognize that the [CEI] scores speak very loudly to GLBT people purchasing their products and services."

Rush to Inclusiveness

One indicator of the CEI's popularity: Five of the top 10 Fortune 500 companies scored 100 percent. Another indicator is how the 519 CEI-rated mostly Fortune 1000 and large law firms are striving to improve their ratings. Kate Karasmeighan, chief of staff at the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, which represents about 1.4 million GLBT-owned U.S. businesses, calls the index the "standard" for judging how companies treat GLBT employees.

"The CEI process is filled with integrity and that's a big reason why it has so much respect within the LGBT [some transpose the "L" and "G"] community," says Karasmeighan. "And that's why it's so important for companies to pay attention to their CEI score."

The index consists of five scoring criteria that examine a host of GLBT-inclusiveness measures: Does the company prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and/or expression? Does it pro-

vide at least one transgender wellness benefit? Does it offer a range of benefits for domestic partners, including health and dental insurance and several "soft" benefits? Does it have an employer-supported employee resource group or a companywide diversity council? Does it engage in respectful advertising, marketing or philanthropy involving the GLBT community?

If companies earn all possible points in these five scoring criteria, they receive a perfect score of 100 points. However, points can be deducted if companies take actions undermining GLBT equality.

The company making the biggest jump to 100 percent was Newell Rubbermaid Inc., the \$6.2-billion Atlanta-based marketer of consumer and commercial products. The 22,500-employee firm recorded a 15 percent CEI rating in early 2006.

When Jackie Parker, Newell Rubbermaid's inclusion and diversity vice president, first shared the company's plan to boost its CEI score, an HRC foundation official was pleased but skeptical. The foundation also counsels firms and provides resources for increasing those scores.

"[The foundation] thought I was crazy [proposing such a fast pace to achieve a perfect CEI score]," says Parker.

But the mirror-the-marketplace business case Parker and the compensation and benefits committee crafted for NR's senior leaders was compelling. It was also advantageous for competitive reasons for the company to quickly post a 100-percent score, even with significant room for improvement in its GLBT-inclusive policies.

"There's a war for talent out there," says Parker. Hiring and retaining GLBT workers is important, since many are educated and, thus, especially coveted.

Moreover, she says, a perfect CEI score signified "best in class" and featured NR in the foundation's 2008 Buying for Equality Guide. The purchasing power of the GLBT community is enormous; it is estimated the community will spend \$723 billion in 2008.

"The GLBT population is a big and loyal consumer segment for us," says Parker, who launched and oversaw the index's initiative. "We want to connect our products to every demographic."

Perhaps the biggest hurdle for corporations remains just getting comfortable enough to discuss GLBT issues. In NR's case, an initial challenge was adopting domestic-partner benefits, which were proposed by the company's compensation and benefits committee with research provided by Parker.

Once educated about the case for equality, senior leadership quickly signed on – a necessity, consultants say, for any workable diversity and inclusion strategies. It helped that benefit costs weren't excessive. Domestic-partner benefits vaulted the company's score from 15 percent to 55 percent.

With those benefits secured, "you take advantage of the momentum" for pursuing other GLBT-inclusive policies, says Parker. She shepherded several other initiatives – among them, offering diversity training on sexual orientation, adding to the EEO policy a ban on discrimination based on gender identity and/or expression, and company participation in a nationally prominent GLBT dinner and a conference – that enabled the company's CEI rating to jump from 55 percent to 100 percent.

Significantly, she says, the five CEI scoring criteria (see sidebar) provide an easy-to-grasp and comprehensive road map for NR senior executives to follow. "We were starting out of the gate [relatively] clean, so we had

an opportunity to create a program the way it should be," she says.

But not everyone counsels a rapid run-up in scoring. Some suggest GLBT-friendly practices and policies should be steadily woven into the fabric of the corporate culture. Otherwise, they warn, backsliding may occur. For example, Bentonville, Ark.-based Wal-Mart Stores Inc., the nation's largest private employer, witnessed its 65-percent score drop to 40 percent in 2008.

"It's possible to make huge jumps [in the CEI score] from one year to the next," says Andres Tapia, chief diversity officer at Hewitt Associates, a Lincolnshire, Ill.-based 100-percent CEI firm that provides HR consulting and outsourcing. "But it takes an incredible amount of heavy lifting and focused commitment. The question I'd ask is whether [a 100-percent CEI score] is sustainable." Tapia also believes it's difficult for corporations to "fake" their way to perfect scores because adopting GLBT-inclusive policies prompts real change in workplace cultures.

At General Mills, the Minneapolis-based \$13.4 billion manufacturer and marketer of Betty Crocker, Pillsbury and many other consumer food products, the company's GLBT-inclusiveness isn't CEI-driven, says Kelly Baker, vice president of diversity. The company's 100-percent score, she says, is the result of long-standing GLBT-friendly internal and external efforts.

"If firms are doing continuous work on diversity," says Pete Bye, president of MDB Group, a Livingston, N.J., diversity consultant, "the awards will come."

Nonetheless, Baker is "very proud" of General Mills' perfect CEI score, attained in 2005 with input from Betty's Family, the company's GLBT affinity group. Baker calls Betty's Family a "wonderful partner" that assigned priority status to the CEI and helped pinpoint other GLBT leadership initiatives. For example, General Mills contributes to the HRC Foundation and co-sponsors the Twin Cities Pride Festival.

General Mills' CEI score is highlighted during the 28,000-employee company's campus recruiting. "We know this is the kind of thing candidates are looking for," says Baker. Many GLBT and straight job seekers consider the CEI score a proxy for the kind of progressive workplace culture they favor.

"Having differences in our organization makes a difference for us, a consumer products company," says Baker. "We live and die off of innovation and we fundamentally believe you get better innovation when you have different points of view and different people around the table . . . That's why we focus on this and why it continues to be a strategic priority and imperative for us."

Taking on a Taboo

Not surprisingly, firms pursuing index ratings are more aggressive than most large companies in offering GLBT-inclusive policies and practices. For instance, nine in 10 CEI-rated firms offer domestic-partner health insurance; by comparison, a 2007 Society for Human Resource Management survey of 500-plus employee firms showed 43 percent offering that benefit.

Still, the number of rated companies that adopted policies and benefits involving gender identity and transgender issues might surprise many.

"If you look at the trend lines for that [gender identity and transgender] category, the jump is really remarkable," says the foundation's Bloem. "It is happening a lot quicker than with [acceptance of] sexual orientation."

These advances are especially significant when put in context: In at least 30 states, gays and transgenders can still be fired simply for their sexual

orientation. In other words, no protection has been written into law in those places.

Furthermore, say industry experts, conservative activist groups sometimes target companies that demonstrate GLBT-friendliness. For instance, Ford Motor Co. endured a short-lived boycott in response to the automaker's GLBT-inclusive practices.

In part, Bloem credits the groundwork that firms, with foundation assistance, have already established on gay, lesbian and bisexual issues. It also helps that transgender issues are becoming more mainstream, cropping up on TV shows and in movies.

Yet gender identity and training policies, and transgender wellness benefits, are often the last GLBT category companies address. That was the case at Raytheon, which boosted its score from 86 percent to 100 percent in 2005.

Hayward Bell, Raytheon's chief diversity officer, characterized the company's incorporation of those measures as part of its ongoing "Journey" involving diversity and inclusion. After it became the first aerospace company to achieve a 100-percent index score, several others quickly followed suit.

"We're competing for everything, customers and talent," says Bell. "We need to hire 10,000 engineers in the next five to 10 years just to sustain our level of growth. So we need to be as appealing as possible to attract talent."

The company's efforts are working.

"I know that the CEI score helps with [GLBT] recruiting," says Paula Easton, president of Raytheon's GLBT affinity group. She points to an affinity-group colleague, among others, who selected Raytheon because of the 100-percent rating. "The rating really does make a difference," she says. "People want to work here."

The flawless CEI score also contributed to a public-relations bonanza and the company winning the U.S. government's top contractor honor for demonstrating exemplary workplace diversity, saving Raytheon "hundreds of thousands of dollars" in otherwise mandatory audits, says Bell.

The rating also factors in exceptionally high morale among both GLBT and straight employees. In 1999, an employee survey ranked Raytheon's commitment to diversity in the 50th percentile of companies across a broad range of industries; it leapt to the 94th percentile in 2007.

Confronting Opposition

While companies typically trumpet their perfect CEI scores, many are mum while they're pursuing them. But at Hewitt Associates, a 23,000-employee, \$2.9 billion concern, striving for a perfect score was broadcast to employees. Hewitt's Tapia says that approach may not suit every firm.

"As strategists, diversity leaders have to weigh the level of resistance in the environment and how you would go about [achieving it]," says Tapia. "You may want to move toward 100 percent, but if you declare it, there could be so much [internal] resistance before momentum is built that it could be killed."

Lake many companies, Raytheon touted its CEI rating on its Web site as well as through press releases and other forums. But Raytheon stopped short of holding a celebration.

"We were appreciative of getting it, but we didn't want to make a party or

celebration out of it," says Bell. To overemphasize the award might unintentionally slight other diversity groups. "GLBT is one of many groups we're looking to enfranchise and include."

MDB Group's Bye says the 100-percent CEI achievement doesn't mean all employees must suddenly accept and value GLBT orientations. But the status underscores a corporate value: We welcome input from everyone, which contributes toward increased productivity and innovation. For those struggling to embrace that philosophy, Bye says, coaching might help.

Bell couldn't recall receiving negative feedback after Raytheon's CEI announcement, nor had he heard of anyone quitting in protest. Yet he knows some employees oppose GLBT-friendly practices.

"People don't change their opinions when they show their badge and come inside the gate," he says. "But our point is clear: As an employee of this company, you are going to be respected, no matter what your sexual orientation is If people don't show that respect, there will be consequences, or they can choose not to work here. That goes all the way to the top."

CEI's Future

Despite some misgivings about the index – for instance, some argue a CEI criterion requiring firms to "engage in appropriate and respectful advertising, marketing and philanthropy" is too vague – the HRC Foundation scorecard appears firmly rooted and will likely continue influencing corporate behavior.

Many 100-percent CEI firms, including General Mills, have taken steps beyond their workplaces to support GLBT concerns. The 48-member Business Coalition for Non-Discrimination Fairness favors a federal law providing employment protection on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. Baker recently testified before a U.S. House subcommittee on behalf of the bill.

The House passed a version providing protection for sexual orientation but not gender identity. As of December, the bill was awaiting movement in the Senate.

That progress encourages the HRC Foundation's Bloem. It convinces him that such measures, combined with escalating competition for skilled employees, means more large companies will pursue 100-percent CEI scores.

"We've had outstanding success since we started the CEI scoring [in 2002]," he says. "I see no reason to believe that number of [100-percent CEI-scoring] firms won't continue growing."

LINKS:

http://www.hrc.org/issues/best_places_to_work_2008.asp

First Ever Forum of Openly LGBT Executives Highlights Corporate Closet in Today's Workplace Culture

Key issues discussed included lack of representation in top business roles as well as importance of LGBT role models

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people remain under-represented in top corporate executive positions based on the small number of openly LGBT C-suite executives at Fortune 500 companies.

The first annual Out & Equal Executive Forum, gathering 24 high-ranking

corporate executives from diverse industries, discussed this challenge and the potential to continue increasing LGBT representation at the top levels of leading companies.

Participants discussed the unique challenges of being openly lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender in management positions, the barriers to more equitable representation, the competing demands of business interests and personal interests and ways to build a network and support one another despite coming from different industrial or service sectors of the marketplace. Over the course of the program, the executives dedicated themselves to being more visible as LGBT people and role models for other executives or potential executives who may fear that coming out will cost them opportunities for success.

"This is the first step toward our goal of all executives being free to live and work authentically," said Out & Equal Executive Director Selisse Berry. "Our hope is that we have created a space and a network that will ripple outward from this event, allowing more and more LGBT executives to be open about who they are, as well as the hundreds of thousands of employees worldwide who look to them as an example of how to be successful while being true to oneself."

"Being with other openly LGBT executives was a rare and unique opportunity," said Donna Griffin, Managing Director at Chubb.

"Seeing other executives who are facing the same challenges, and have the same kinds of intimidation, the same kinds of excitement, and the same kinds of opportunity was very exciting for me," said Ken McNeely, President of AT&T California. "It was very rewarding to see my peer group around the country and very encouraging."

"It felt as if something special has begun," said Melinda Haag, an Executive with Crowe Chizek and Company, LLC. "We have all committed—to each other and to the people who are not here and those people who may come after us—to keep this going."

The event was held at Hotel Vitale and featured keynote speakers Rayona Sharpnack, founder of the Institute for Women's Leadership; Chip Conley, founder and CEO of Joie de Vivre; Maggie Stumpp, Chief Investment Officer of Prudential; Kenneth McNeely, President of AT&T California; and Donna Griffin, Managing Director of Chubb. Christie Hardwick served as moderator.

Executives who participated include:

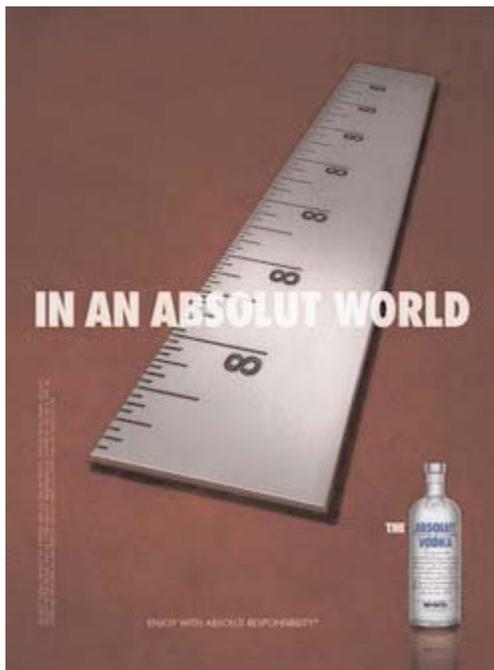
* Ed Baklor, Senior Vice President, Adventures by Disney (Burbank, CA) * Selisse Berry, Executive Director, Out & Equal Workplace Advocates (San Francisco, CA) * Scott Beth, Vice President of Procurement and Order Management, Intuit (Mountain View, CA) * Tara Bunch, Vice President Global Consumer Support and Service, Hewlett-Packard Company (Fort Collins, CO) * Jim Freeman, Vice President, IBM Global Services, IBM (San Francisco, CA) * Michael Garrison, Director of Marketing, Global Services, Dell Inc. (Austin, TX) * Donna Griffin, Managing Director, Chubb (Warren, NJ) * Melinda Haag, Executive, Crowe Chizek and Company, LLC (Chicago, IL) * Jane Harper, Director, Collaborative Innovation, IBM (Half Moon Bay, CA) * Julie A. Hogan, Vice President, Xerox Services, Pacific Region, Xerox Corporation (Pleasanton, CA) * Michael Jungen, Director/ Ticketing & Gift Card Services, Walt Disney Parks & Resorts (Celebration, FL) * George A Kalogridis, Chief Operating Officer, Disneyland Resort Paris (Paris, France) * Judy Lively, MD, Physician-in-Chief, Diablo Service Area, The Permanente Medical Group (Sebastopol, CA) * Uxio Malvido, EMEAC Diversity and Work

Environment Leader, Merck & Co (Madrid, Spain) * Pat Martel, City Manager, City of Daly City (Daly City, CA) * Cynthia Martin, retired Vice President Blue Shield of California and Eastman Kodak (Berkeley, CA) * Kenneth McNeely, President, AT&T California, AT&T (San Francisco, CA) * Tom Moore, Partner, Ernst & Young LLP (San Francisco, CA) * Steve Sears, Vice President Marketing, Stacy's Pita Chip Co. (Randolph, MA) * Rayona Sharpnack, Founder, Institute for Women's Leadership (Redwood City, CA) * Kayla Shell, Legal Director, Dell Inc. (Round Rock, TX) * Michael Welch, Partner & Chief Financial Officer, Stephan Pyles Concepts (Dallas, TX) * Gary Wright, Distinguished Engineer, IBM (Tacoma, WA)

In addition to the Executive Forum, Out & Equal offers a wide array of programs and services to promote LGBT workplace equality. Upcoming activities from Out & Equal include the First Annual Out & Equal Dinner and Gala, June 12, 2008, Hotel Nikko, San Francisco; and the 2008 Out & Equal Workplace Summit—the world's premier conference on LGBT workplace equality—September 10-13, 2008, Austin Convention Center, Austin, Texas.

Out & Equal Workplace Advocates(tm) is a national nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Out & Equal champions safe and equitable workplaces for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. The organization advocates building and strengthening successful organizations that value all employees, customers, and communities. See our website, www.outandequal.org, for more details.

Absolut measures up with new ad



As one of the first major brands to advertise in GLBT media, Absolut Vodka remains one of the most recognizable commodities to gay and lesbian consumers. And the popular potable has launched the first-ever GLBT-specific ad to compliment its current campaign.

The "In An ABSOLUT World" advertisements began to appear in local and national GLBT publications across the country in late March. They include "Ruler," an ad described by an Absolut press release as a "humorous look at gay men and their fascination with perfect, eight-inch 'member' measurements," and "Stadium," which examines marriage for same-sex couples by depicting a gay man who "pops" the question to his partner.

Absolut commissioned New York-based SPI Marketing and Moon City Productions to design the ads. John Nash of Moon City Productions said that he feels the new ads engage gay and lesbian consumers in a new and exciting way. "It changes the humor of the bottle campaign," he said, and "allows ... much more depth and imagery."

Scott Seitz, founder and chief executive officer of SPI Marketing, agreed. He described the campaign as a monumental shift for the brand because the Absolut bottle campaign has been something of an iconic

image for roughly two decades. They designed the "Ruler" ad to entertain, and Seitz added he feels it has more than accomplished this goal.

Absolut spokesperson Jeffrey Moran stressed he feels the brand remains loyal to its GLBT consumers. "As a long-time supporter of the gay and lesbian community, we acknowledge that you can't simply speak to gay men and lesbians as consumers, but instead need to make real connections to their lives, which we believe we are achieving with our new creative executions," he said. "As a company, we respect gay men and lesbians not simply in advertising messages, but behind the scenes as well. We're not gay-washing here."

Nash noted that the response of people who see the "Ruler" ad continues to amuse him.

"There's nothing sexual – no bare chest, no multiple people," Nash said. "It's literally a ruler on a background, but the trepidation of what it's presented in is what I'm so amused by. It's about how people interpret it."

— Michael K. Lavers
<http://www.presspassq.com>

2009 Gay Market Report

Coming August 2008

Designed to both educate and guide you through the many opportunities available in the gay & lesbian marketplace today, this guide includes information and resources on the following topics:

- Gay Market Highlights, including a summary on market research and statistics
- Gay & Lesbian Internet, including Social Networking
- Gay & Lesbian National and Regional Print
- Gay & Lesbian E-Mail
- Gay & Lesbian Direct Mail
- Gay & Lesbian Event Marketing
- Gay & Lesbian Contextual, Text-based advertising
- Gay & Lesbian Radio
- Gay & Lesbian Online Video / Cable / Satellite

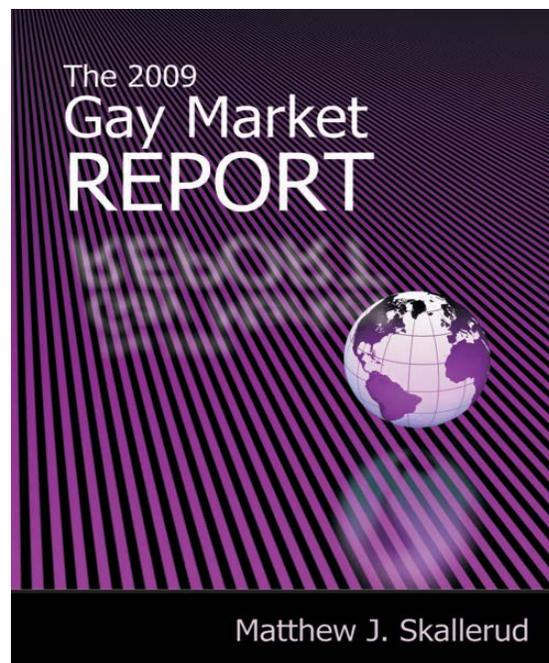
In addition, we have information about media and marketing opportunities within specific gay & lesbian niches you may wish to learn more about, including:

- Categories such as Travel, Sports, Marriage and Business
- Themes such as Lesbian, Gay Men and Adult
- Ethnic Groups such as Latino, African-American, and Asian
- Age Groups such as Youth and Seniors
- Specialty Groups such as Bears, Circuit Parties and Country Western/Rural
- Regional opportunities in print and online

New in this edition is more detailed coverage on the following industries and regions:

- Automotive, Travel and Technology
- Dallas, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Toronto
- Canadian Market, UK Market

When online, find more information at www.PinkBananaMedia.com/MarketReport/



Spotlight On San Francisco

In terms of gay friendly U.S. cities San Francisco is most likely to rank at the top of anyone's list. The city, however, is more than just an ally to the gay community, rather, its politics and culture have been drastically shaped by a long history of GLBT community involvement. With nearly 500,000 in attendance at last year's Pride Parade and an average local age of 31, San Francisco's gay and lesbian community is large, predominantly young, and very political, establishing the city as a virtual "Gay Mecca."

Though the entire city is considered a home to the gay community, the heart of GLBT life and history really begins in the **Castro**. Having been first settled by gay men back in the 1970's, this 14-square-block area, named for its location along the famed **Castro St.** thoroughfare, has come to be seen as a symbol of gay American culture. Numerous annual events take place there and a variety of gay historical landmarks attract visitors from all around the world. The **Castro Street Fair**, now in its 32nd year, takes place in September and is one of the community's largest annual events. Outdoor dancing, live performances, arts and crafts, food and beverages, and a variety of Bay Area vendors are a few of the fair's highlights. Another important September event is the Folsom Street Fair. An unparalleled event catering specifically to the leather and bear communities, the **Folsom Street Fair** has been raising community awareness and funding for charities for over 22 years. It has an attendance of 300,000 yearly and is known as the premiere leather event in the US. In addition, the **Dore Ally Street Fair**, considered smaller sibling to the Folsom Street Fair and produced by the same volunteer nonprofit corporation, SMMILE, has become an increasingly popular event among leather enthusiasts. It is located in the **South of Market (SoMa)** district off of Folsom St. between 9th and 10th, and occurs every year in the last weekend of July. A relatively recent event to hit San Francisco, also in September, is the **Love Parade**. Having originated and been hugely popular in Berlin, Germany, this US version of the street parade is a youthful and eclectic mix of GLBT and heterosexual dance music/rave scene enthusiasts. Moreover, while it has only been in the US for two years, attendance and awareness, as well as the number of major sponsors, have been increasing.

Hands down, however, the largest gay event in the city, and one of the largest in the world for that matter, is **San Francisco Pride**. Bringing together over half a million gays and lesbians, Pride lasts the entire month of June, while the main attractions, the parade and festival, take place typically in the last weekend of the month. What's more is that outside of being a charitable event which raises over \$130,000 for GLBT causes, Pride is also a significant economic resource for city tourism. In just visiting the **San Francisco Convention and Visitor's Bureau** website, it is evident that gay tourism and travel are crucial to the city's businesses and economic life. As the only niche targeted group on the site, the gay community is considered a key consumer of city resources.

Also an important player in the economic life of San Francisco is the **Golden Gate Business Association (GGBA)**. The GGBA began as the nation's first business organization founded by gay and lesbian entre-

SAN FRANCISCO RANKINGS

Gay Index Rank: **479**
Gay Male Index Rank: **696**
Lesbian Index Rank: **257**
National Norm: **100**
Median Household Income: **\$55,221**

preneurs and for over thirty years has built a community of excellent LGBT businesses with significant value for the economy. Aside from providing members with networking and mentoring opportunities, informal business advice, and business leads and referrals, the GGBA has also had an influential voice in both the Office of the Mayor and the members of the Board of Supervisors. Additionally, the GGBA's latest venture has been the launch of their new **Tourism Advisory Program (TAP)**, a coordinated cooperative campaign designed to attract GLBT tourists to the city. Furthermore, some other notable business groups operating in or close to the San Francisco region include the **Bay Area Community of Women (BACW)**, the **Russian River Chamber of Commerce**, and the **Rainbow Chamber of Commerce** in San Jose.

Larger Fortune 500 companies with strong diversity initiatives for gay & lesbian employees include:

Company	CEI Rating*	Fortune 500 Rating
- AAA Northern California	100	
- Adobe Systems	100	727
- Advanced Micro Devices	80	407
- Agilent Technologies	100	387
- Apple Computer	100	121
- Applied Materials	93	274
- Calpine Corp.	48	344
- Charles Schwab Corp.	100	389
- Chevron Corp.	100	4
- Cisco Systems	100	77
- Clorox	100	475
- Electronic Arts Inc.	100	658
- Gap Inc.	100	144
- Genentech	100	
- Google	100	241
- Hewlett Packard	100	14
- Intel Corp	100	62
- Intuit	100	776
- Kaiser Permanente	100	
- Kimpton Hotels	100	
- Levi Strauss & Co.	100	510
- Olivia	95	
- Oracle Corp	100	167
- PG&E	100	196
- Safeway Inc.	75	56
- Southern California Edison	95	
- Sun Microsystems	100	187
- Symantec	85	515
- Visa International	100	
- Wells Fargo	100	41
- Yahoo	100	357

CEI Rating: HRC Corporate Equality Index is a tool to measure how equitably companies are treating their gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender employees, consumers and investors.

In terms of print, San Francisco has five strong GLBT publications. The **Bay Area Reporter** is the city's oldest and largest local newspaper of record serving the GLBT communities. It began in 1971 and is published every Thursday by Benro Enterprises, Inc. and is distributed in

San Francisco and surrounding cities of the Bay Area, as well as 20 other US cities. The **East Bay Voice** and the **San Francisco Bay Times** are two other popular local papers geared specifically towards gay and lesbian news and entertainment. The **San Francisco Bay Guardian**, though not a gay paper, is an independent and locally owned news and entertainment source with a heavy slant towards alternative and gay lifestyles. For something more light and focused on the local nightlife or bar scene, **Gloss Magazine** is an excellent resource. It is printed every other Friday, 26 times a year, and is delivered to bars, restaurants, nightclubs, hotels, bookstores, health clubs, coffee houses, retail outlets, and youth centers in over 250 different locations including San Francisco, San Jose, the East Bay, Sacramento, the Russian River, and West Hollywood. Also, though operating out of San Jose, **Out Now** magazine is a popular gay community guide to entertainment. Finally, it should also be noted that a few other important national media companies and publications, such as **PlanetOut Partners** and **Curve Magazine**, are all operated out of San Francisco.

As for San Francisco's nightlife and gay social scene there are a number of different hot spots. Of course many of the staples can be found on the Castro, off either Castro or Market St., such as **Badlands**, **Daddy's**, **Midnight Sun**, **Harvey's**, **The Cafe**, and **The Bar**. Others, such as **Martini's**, a piano bar, **Metro**, with its more casual atmosphere, and **Mecca**, an upscale trendy lounge, can also be found in the area. Off of Folsom St. and the area surrounding are a mix of some of San Francisco's most famous bear and leather bars as well as popular dance clubs and college bars. Between 7th and 10th on Folsom or Bryant St. is where most of the bear/leather bars can be found, such as **Powerhouse**. Other Folsom bars though include the **Eagle Tavern**, whose clientele are part bear, part edgy queer punks, **The Stud**, where all the college kids come to dance, and the **End Up**, whose name implies it all as this dance spot opens Friday and doesn't close its doors till Monday morning!

On the other side of town, however, near **Polk Street**, is one of the other founding gay regions of the city. Here, many of the hotels catering to the gay and lesbian community can be found, as there are mostly small B&Bs in the Castro area such as the **24 Henry Guest House** and the **Parker House**. In San Francisco overall, there are several larger hotels catering strongly to the gay & lesbian community, including the **Renoir Hotel**, the **Handlery Union Square Hotel**, *Pan Pacific Hotel*, **Cartwright Hotel** on Union Square and the entire chain of **Kimpton Hotels** based in San Francisco.

Again, since San Francisco has such a large and diverse gay population, it is impossible to examine all or most of the ways in which the gay community interacts with its local businesses and organizations, however, there are a few more important aspects to note. First of all, San Francisco's art scene has always been something which separates it from most other cities. The **National Queer Arts Festival** in June is a month long celebration of the community's contribution to the arts and American culture. Another event, The **San Francisco International LGBT Film Festival**, presented by **Frameline**, is a huge production now in its 30th year. Even still, there is a strong local theater culture where companies such as **SteinBeck Presents** perform shows that directly express the lives and art of the gay community. Finally, the San Francisco LGBT Community Center has been a newer yet welcomed addition to the gay community using its resources to help bring together the community and aid those in need. In all, San Francisco is a city with a strong gay history and tradition whose unique blend of urban gay men and women both appreciate and respect their roots while continually staying at the forefront of an ever evolving culture.

PRINT

Bay Area Reporter: www.ebar.com
 East Bay Voice: www.eastbayvoice.com
 San Francisco Bay Times: www.sfbaytimes.com
 San Francisco Bay Guardian: www.sfbayguardian.com
 Gloss Magazine: www.sfgloss.com
 Out Now: www.outnowmag.com (San Jose)

INTERNET

www.CastroOnline.com
www.gaysonoma.com
www.sfgay.org
www.onlyinsanfrancisco.com/gaytravel/
www.gaysf.net

RADIO

Energy 92.7: www.energy927fm.com

EVENTS

Castro Street Fair: www.castrostreetfair.org
 Folsom Street Fair: www.folsomstreetfair.com
 San Francisco Pride: www.sfpride.org
 San Jose Pride: www.sjgaypride.com
 Dyke March: www.dykemarch.org
 National Queer Arts Festival: www.queerculturalcenter.org
 Frameline Film Festival: www.Frameline.org

BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS

Golden Gate Business Association: www.ggba.com
 Rainbow Chamber of Commerce: www.rainbowchamber.org
 Russian River Chamber of Commerce: www.GayRussianRiver.com

ORGANIZATIONS

San Francisco LGBT Community Center: www.SFCenter.org
 Different Light Books: www.adlbooks.com





Gay and Lesbian
...: Social Networking ...
...|...
...: Marketing ...
...|...
...: Advertising ...
...|...
...: Community ...

... including the site *PinkBananaWorld.com*

- #1 GLBT Content News Source (Aggregating from hundreds of sources)
- Profile Integration with MySpace, Facebook, Youtube and more.
- Profile sharing with friends, including personal GLBT Facebook-style feed

GLBT Marketing Services

Specialized Web 2.0 Marketing: Our company specializes in the more unique aspects of online marketing in 2008. Working closely with your product or service, we can help promote your company to the online GLBT community utilizing such services as **Facebook Pages**, **IgoUgo.com** and **TripAdvisor.com Marketing**, **MySpace Pages**, **Blog Creation**, **YouTube Video** and **Flickr Photos**, just to name a few.



Traditional Online Advertising: In addition, we can offer you the more traditional **Banner Advertising** and **E-Mail Marketing** opportunities to help promote your business to the online GLBT community. Working with our own web sites, as well as other web sites targeting the GLBT community, we can help **Match** your product or service to the online GLBT community that is right for you, targeting by **regions of the world** as well as **themes including travel, sports and more**.

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About The Editor:

Matthew Skallerud, President of Pink Banana Media and author of the Gay Market Guide, began his career in the gay & lesbian marketplace when he founded GayWired.com in May of 1995. He successfully led GayWired.com into one of the premiere and dominant gay websites worldwide, translating that success to LesbiaNation.com and QTMagazine.com (gay travel site). In 2001, he expanded this online reach by launching a company focused on both developing niche-oriented websites for the gay & lesbian community and helping companies large and small reach these gay & lesbian consumers through this expanded network of web-sites, which included GayMonkey.com, GaySports.com, Navigaytion.com, PrideParenting.com and GayBusinessWorld.com, just to name a few.

Having sold these sites, his focus is now on the latest in advertising and marketing utilizing social networks and tailoring their opportunities to the GLBT community.

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