FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Jan. 10, 2011

CONTACT:
Nan Martin
Relevation Research
(847) 852-5078

DON'T GET DUMPED BY SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS IN THE NEW YEAR

As companies strive to make greater and deeper connections with customers using social media in the New Year, they must be cautious or will end up getting "dumped" by loyal followers.

A recent study on social media conducted by Relevation Research found that 52 percent of U.S. online consumers, 16 years old and older, have liked, followed or subscribed to a company/brand via social networking. However, close to a third of these consumers later actively dump the companies/brands with whom they initially forged a relationship. Many report they then view the brand more negatively, shop it less often or spend less.

Relevation Research, a Barrington, IL based marketing research company, surveyed 1,500 nationally representative online consumers in November and found that the single greatest reason for a break up is the brand coming on too strong. That is, the brand pushed too hard and got clingy with excessive posts, tweets or other communications. Other leading brand break-up catalyst behaviors include not delivering on a promise of deals, failing to engage, and disappointing with merchandise/services. Consumers also cite the old "it wasn't you, it was me" as a reason for dumping the brand– meaning consumers lost interest in the topic, were never interested and only signed up at a friend's request, or pruned their circle. Interestingly, males get turned off faster than females.

"Marketers need to be cautious and not abuse their relationship with consumers because social media is a powerful tool which can pay off but only if used thoughtfully," Nan Martin, principal at Relevation Research, said. "It's a very thin line between courting and annoying. Right now some brands are effectively drawing people in, but then undermining their equity by what happens next."

But companies and brands should not swear off social media commitment completely. Once a social relationship is formed, consumers *really connect.* In fact, 45 percent of surveyed consumers were positively influenced based on the brand's social activity. The consumers reported shopping more, genuinely liking the company or brand more, and spending more time with the brand.

Relevation Research, a management-owned, custom-marketing research firm, helps clients achieve greater competitive advantage through a better understanding of the relationships between products, services and brands and their markets. For more information on Relevation Research or this survey, visit www.RelevationResearch.com or call (847) 852-5078.

# # #