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WhartonNews

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Omnicom Partners with Wharton Interactive Media Initiative

Kick-Off Conference held on Modeling Social Network Data

New York, March 31, 2009 — Omnicom Group Inc. (“Omnicom”) (NYSE: OMC), a leading global advertising and marketing services group, recently announced that it has partnered with the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, in support of the [Wharton Interactive Media Initiative](#) and its efforts to derive value from the data sources arising from new media marketing.

“Our partnership combines the strength of the Wharton School’s leading academic research on digital media with our leading practice in advertising, marketing and media services across mediums,” Omnicom Group EVP and Chief Financial Officer Randall Weisenburger said. “Our agencies are at the forefront of the use of digital media, and our clients value the accountability, measurable results and data derived from digital marketing. By bringing together the leading talent from academic and the marketing services industry, WIMI looks to further accelerate the development of innovative digital marketing applications and expand the pool of digitally literate talent for the industry.” Weisenburger obtained his MBA from Wharton in 1987 and currently serves on the School’s Board of Overseers.

“We are proud to be associated with a truly global firm like Omnicom and look forward to using their pioneering work in the digital field as a basis for case studies — which will be useful to academics and the general public alike,” said [Thomas S. Robertson](#), dean of the Wharton School.

Professor [Eric Bradlow](#), co-director of the Wharton Interactive Media Initiative, said: “The interface between academia and practice lies at the heart of the mission of the Wharton School. Omnicom’s contribution to WIMI supports this interaction as we are now able to work with industry to integrate the skill sets they need into our courses, provide job opportunities for our students through unique partnerships, engage our network of WIMI academic scholars in projects with which companies need our assistance, and more generally enable the creation and dissemination of knowledge — all with the hope of raising interactive ‘literacy.’”

Industry experts and pundits have long debated the value and definition of new media, as the data generated from them can be incredibly rich but challenging to fully capture and understand. Professor [Peter Fader](#), co-director of the Wharton Interactive Media Initiative, explained: “Companies see the benefits that can arise from using customer-level data, but they often lack the analytic capabilities or bandwidth to do so. This is where WIMI steps in: by serving as a ‘matchmaker’ between these companies and leading academic researchers around the world, we will create genuine win-win research relationships.”

Dozens of companies within Omnicom’s global portfolio of subsidiaries stand to benefit from the relationship with WIMI. Many of them, such as Organic, BBDO and OMD, are known to be highly data-driven. But the influence of WIMI will be felt more broadly. Noted CEO Dave Senay of public relations firm Fleishman-Hillard, “Many enterprises — our clients included — are placing big bets that the creation of such data, and the insights that they can provide, are key factors that will power their businesses to new heights or, in certain cases, protect older businesses from extinction.”

As part of the program, the Wharton Interactive Media Initiative held its inaugural conference, [*Modeling Social Network Data*](#), January 28–29 on Penn’s campus in Philadelphia. Convening more than 100 leading experts from industry and academia, this first-of-its-kind gathering brought Wharton to the foreground of social media study. The event focused on the data-oriented challenges generated by social networks, with the goal of enhancing collaboration between academics and front-line practitioners and thus raising the level of quantitative literacy across all disciplines.

About Omnicom

Omnicom Group Inc. (NYSE:OMC) (www.omnicomgroup.com) is a leading global advertising, marketing and corporate communications company. Omnicom’s branded networks and numerous specialty firms provide advertising, strategic media planning and buying, digital and interactive marketing, direct and promotional marketing, public relations, and other specialty communications services to over 5,000 clients in more than 100 countries.

About the Wharton Interactive Media Initiative

Launched with a gift from Wharton alumnus Art Bilger and his wife, Dahlia, the [Wharton Interactive Media Initiative](#) strives to become the authoritative thought leader for issues related to interactive media and its impact on broader business matters. Working with world-class faculty and top business leaders, and under the leadership of marketing professors [Eric Bradlow](#) and [Peter Fader](#) and Managing Director [Steve Ennen](#), the initiative will provide an objective and rigorous focus on data-driven problems of significant managerial interest. In addition to Omnicom, WIMI’s corporate partners include [Office Arrow](#), [OTX](#) and [Online Marketing Summit](#). For more information, please contact Steve Ennen at ennen@wharton.upenn.edu.

About the Wharton School

The [Wharton School](#) of the University of Pennsylvania — founded in 1881 as the first collegiate business school — is recognized globally for intellectual leadership and ongoing innovation across every major discipline of business education. The most comprehensive source of business knowledge in the world, Wharton bridges research and practice through its broad engagement with the global business community. The School has more than 4,700 [undergraduate](#), [MBA](#), [executive MBA](#), and [doctoral](#) students; more than 12,000 annual participants in [executive education programs](#); and an [alumni network](#) of more than 84,000 graduates.

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