

Rebooting the American Economy A “Must-Do” for Wireless Innovation Brands in Today’s Environment

As the spotlight turns to how federal policymakers will distribute \$8 billion in broadband stimulus funds, wireless carriers, device makers and equipment-providers have a truly unique opportunity to present their companies as indispensable drivers of 21st century economic growth and value (the key word in today’s crisis).

Relatively speaking, the roughly \$8 billion for broadband projects is a small part of the overall stimulus package, but neither the size of the fund nor a company’s intention to draw dollars from it should be a central concern. All that matters is that broadband is on the stage right now and companies and trade groups who are in the business of providing and promoting broadband access have an out-sized opportunity to position themselves as the erectors of the new American economy.

- **Chaos Breeds Innovation**

“Job Losses Hint at Vast Remaking of Economy.” This was the page one headline in the New York Times on Saturday, March 7, 2009. While deep recessions relentlessly and dispassionately destroy jobs, brands, entire business sectors and overall asset values, they also frequently give birth to the Fortune 500’s of tomorrow. Reid Hoffman, founder of the business social-media site LinkedIn, recently pointed-out that brands such as Microsoft, MTV, CNN, Intel, FedEx, Burger King and Hewlett-Packard all opened their doors during an economic downturn. His point was that start-ups, venture capitalists, entrepreneurs and business innovators can and will bail-out America if government gives them the incentive to do so. The message was clear: invest in the new, not the old. The search for the next big thing is already on.

- **Seize - Don’t Cede - the Innovation Ground**

There is little doubt that today’s deep recession will produce fresh, innovative brands and maybe even entirely new business sectors. And certainly every job-aged American and retiring baby-boomer is hoping that today’s painful recession yields such a positive silver-lining. But that doesn’t have to mean that today’s value-producing innovators get bumped off the stage and replaced in the hearts and minds of opinion-leaders and policymakers. That said, what you do in the next twelve months may very well determine how opinion leaders “brand” your brand – will you be leading the charge into the new economy or retreating into the old one?

- **Everyone is Watching and Listening – Innovators Communicate!**

There is really one issue in America today – The Economy. And all eyes and ears are glued to reports, stories and analysis about when, where and how it will improve. The topic dominates media coverage (new and old) and is the first and last thought on the minds of opinion-leaders and policymakers each and every day. Hardly a footnote is the fact that 307 members of Congress (stimulus supporters), dozens of governors and thousands of state legislators and mayors are chomping at the bit to don a hard hat, tour a “wireless” school or demonstrate the newest mobile health care application in their state or district. There’s never been a better time in the age of modern multi-media to *vividly* tell an optimistic story about how innovation is moving America forward. The story that is wireless broadband and its valuable impact on education, healthcare, public safety and countless other sectors is still new and needs to be told. Because at the end of the day, those who effectively communicate how their innovative products and services are creating jobs and value in today’s environment will be the ones who are credited with “Rebooting the American Economy.”