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## The Smart New Kid on the Block

In May's column we introduced the concept of ambient media, and now we'll explain it. The concept may be rooted in the lavish Las Vegas phenomenon of the 1950s and '60s where a man-made, physical oasis environment was created in the desert. At the time, this evocative and highly sensual environment was electronically enhanced by the most brilliant, gaudy light and signage displays in history.

Today, ambient-media applications are more sophisticated in terms of both technology and art, but the intent is the same. This phenomenon has quickly spread through many world centers where the virtual is replacing the real in creating provocative, world-renowned social and commercial communities. Large-scale exterior ambient media light shows are "lighting up" many cities across the globe, from Las Vegas' famed Fremont Street Experience to Shanghai's Pudong District.

A noteworthy recent retail development is the interior application of ambient-media technology. Using a more focused, smaller-scale mixture of digital imaging and electronic media, comprising digital words, movement, video and still pictures, has resulted in exciting retail interior environments where connectivity among retailers and customers is enhanced and manipulated to great effect.

### THE PRINCIPLES OF KOFFI

One very smart new kid on the block is Koffi of Palm Springs, Calif. ([www.kofficoffee.com](http://www.kofficoffee.com)). Begun in 2005 as a neighborhood gathering place, Koffi has been growing with cutting-edge digital connectivity while staying true to its original brand guiding principles:

- ▶ Be the neighborhood espresso café of choice.

2009 as a collaborative effort of the two owners, John Abner and John Strohm, and Scott Van Dyke, noted architectural photographer and visual technology expert. Koffi's cutting-edge connectivity strategy to deliver on its guiding principles via ambient media is focused on:

- ▶ Maximizing customer networking to enhance its neighborhood gathering spot "of choice" reputation.

- ▶ Enhancing the espresso café environment, Koffi's essence, with appropriate inclusion of new motion and visual media technology: blending a compelling mix of Koffi messages and customer images; giving life to the essence of Palm Springs' community spirit; and spotlighting short videos to increase customer understanding of products.

Koffi's development of an ambient-media palette includes replacing traditional static, printed menus boards with a full digital electronic display. This approach is intended to connect product, brand essence and customers in maximizing Koffi's customer satisfaction. Also, café profitability is improved with the newfound flexibility in changing menu information and showcasing products by day-part, use occasion and special circumstances, all while improving message consistency and customer connectivity. ■



Courtesy of Scott Van Dyke Photography

- ▶ Facilitate customer networking, essential in entrepreneurial Palm Springs.

- ▶ Express the essence of Palm Springs' modernism design and outdoor lifestyle while honoring its rich, vibrant, vintage past.

- ▶ Maintain a tone and vibe that genuinely fits Koffi's five brand connectivity components: stop, gather, interrupt reality, focus, refresh.

Koffi TV, the company's initial digital-media strategy, launched in late