



The Nielsen Company
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Media Alert

NIELSEN: U.S. CONSUMERS SHOW THEIR LOVE FOR CHOCOLATE ON VALENTINE'S DAY Nearly One Million Bottles of Sparkling Wine to Be Sold Valentine's Week

February 4, 2009, Schaumburg, IL: U.S. consumers show their love for chocolate for Valentine's Day, with Valentine's week ranking number one for chocolate candy sales. According to The Nielsen Company:

- Consumers are expected to purchase more than \$345 million in chocolate candy during Valentine's week, accounting for 5.1 percent of chocolate candy's annual sales. On a total candy basis, consumers will purchase more than \$448 million during Valentine's week¹.
- More than 58 million pounds of chocolate candy will be sold during Valentine's week. By comparison, nearly 90 million pounds of chocolate candy is sold during Halloween week.
- Lovebirds aren't necessarily early birds, with February 13 - - the day before Valentine's Day - - as the top total candy and chocolate candy buying day in February.
- Bargain shoppers are out the day after Valentine's Day with February 15 as the second most important chocolate candy buying day in February.
- Valentine's week is one of the top weeks for sparkling wine sales, with more than \$8.6 million in sales, trailing only Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's. More than 881,000 bottles of sparkling wine will be sold during the holiday week².
- Perhaps to impress their special Valentine, consumers are willing to spend more for sparkling wine, including champagne, during the holiday week. Sparkling wine (750 ml) has its highest average pricing during Valentine's week at \$9.75, about five percent more than other peak sales weeks.

"As reports of job losses mount, you can bet that U.S. consumers will be challenged this Valentine's Day," said Todd Hale, senior vice president, Consumer & Shopper Insights, The Nielsen Company. "Look for more at-home celebrations and shifts to value-oriented traditional gifts as consumers look for ways to celebrate the holiday in these economically-challenged times."

About The Nielsen Company

The Nielsen Company is a global information and media company with leading marketing and consumer information, television and other media measurement, online intelligence, mobile measurement, trade shows and business publications (Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter, Adweek). The privately held company is active in more than 100 countries, with headquarters in New York, USA. For more information, please visit, www.nielsen.com.

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¹ The week ending 2/16/08 showed \$345 million in chocolate candy sales and \$448 million in total candy sales in U.S. food, drug and mass merchandiser stores, incl Walmart.

² The week ending 2/16/08 showed \$8.6 million in sparkling wine sales and 881,470 bottles of sparkling wine sold in U.S. food, drug and major market liquor stores.