

Signals in the Static: **Chuck Berry** turns 80. **Paul Simon** turns 65. **Bruce Springsteen** turns 57. **Eminem** turns 33. **John Mayer** turns 29. Died: country music legend **Freddy Fender**, 69; NYC rock club **CBGB**, 33.

**Enviga** is a "calorie burning soft drink" from **Coca-Cola** that will begin to roll out across the U.S. next January. **Burger King** will release three Xbox games based on its TV commercials, priced less than \$5. The **Stevens Creek Community Church** in Augusta, Ga. Installs three "Giving Kiosks" (ATMs) in the church lobby, which are expected to take in \$200,000 in donations this year. **Neiman Marcus** tests "Cusp"—free-standing boutiques selling fashion, CDs, books, beauty products and in-store stylists. **Wal-Mart's** new Christmas site features an animated elf character that guides children to click on a product which is then emailed to their parents. A "yes" click receives applause while a "no" click causes the pictured toy to be sent to a dump truck. **McDonald's** allows their customers to order free music and videos from their mobile phones in a mall food court in Schaumburg, Illinois. The selected content is then played on TV monitors inside the restaurant. A 24-hour automated hot food kiosk called **Bamn!** opens in NYC ([bamnfood.com](http://bamnfood.com)). Also opening in NYC: **The Hawaiian Tropic Zone**, a 16,000 sq. ft. restaurant in Times Square that features bikini-wearing waitresses who participate in a nightly beauty pageant.

**J.P. Morgan Chase** advertises on branded stickers around electrical outlets in airports. **Rolodex** places ads inside the plastic bins at airport security checkpoints. A new teen novel, **Cathy's Book**, includes eye shadow samples within its pages and "secret" web sites and phone numbers connected to products made by **P&G**.

Happy Halloween '06: Nearly 4 million girls will dress up as a princess this year. Top costume for boys: Pirate. 63% of young adults 18-24 plan to wear a costume, while 13% of adults 65+ plan to do the same. Top-selling adult costumes include witches, pirates, vampires, cats, and clowns. *Adweek*.

New Flavors: Citrus flavors like açai and yazu appear in **Hain Celestial's** Mountain Sun fruit juice and **Williams-Sonoma's** Red Miso Glaze. Established flavors like vanilla, tomato and garlic are crossing over into non-traditional categories like **Lipton** Vanilla Caramel Truffle Tea, **Sassy Salsa** Popcorn, and **Danone's** Greek Yoghurt Sasiki, respectively. *Mintel International*.

Poverty is Also a Demographic: Clothing retailer **Casual Male** will launch a big-and-tall brand aimed at the lower-income market. **P&G** introduces **Bounty Basic** and **Charmin Basic** targeted at the same, price-sensitive group. Prepaid debit cards (used by the more than 20 million adults without a bank account) are the fastest growing financial services product, and are being issued by **Nascar**, **Domino's Pizza**, and a large number of retailers. *Brandweek*.

Women's Winter Fashions: Tunic sweaters, platform shoes and boots, skinny jeans, above-the-knee A-line skirts, military-style coats, minimalist-look jewelry. *Wall St. Journal*.

Happiness, American Style: In a recent survey 40% of adults claimed they were "extremely happy" and 40% "somewhat happy" about their relationship with their immediate family. They are more likely to be extremely happy with their love life (33%) than with their cars (27%). 13% said they were extremely happy with their physical appearance, while only 7% said they were extremely unhappy. *Directions Research*.