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## **AN ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY IN EEMA**

*A Strategic Brief*

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## INTRODUCTION

A circle of growing legal restrictions is closing in on the tobacco industry in North America and Europe with a likely spread to the Middle East over the next decade. The anti-smoking forces -- energized by the rising interest in health as a personal value and by its power as a political force wrapped in "green" clothing -- are using the health issue to promote:

- Restrictions on the advertising and marketing of cigarettes (Canada, EC, France, and the possibility of Sweden, Switzerland, and even Turkey)
- Higher taxes on cigarettes (eg. various U.S. states, Canada, France, and Sweden)
- Growing discussions of bans on smoking in public places.

Realistically, the industry faces two kinds of threats: politically, the threat is the creation of a highly restricted marketplace whereby cigarettes become a very expensive product which cannot be used in most public places and cannot be marketed beyond limited physical availability in some outlets. The second threat has to do with the social acceptability of the product, ie. whether the smoker will feel comfortable about being a smoker in any social environment.

This paper will address the second of these concerns, largely because social acceptability is ultimately the bedrock upon which the industry's long run survival depends. If one assumes the gradual erosion of marketing and use freedoms and the imposition of higher taxes (prospects to be fought but nonetheless assumed for the long run), the industry (and each individual tobacco company) will be left at the end of the century with *consumer loyalty* as the sole support of the marketplace. And that loyalty will have to survive despite a host of social, legal, and political pressures.

Certainly, there will always be smokers and, therefore, a market to be served, even if the industry is denied adequate communications tools. But the question is: how big will that market be -- 10% or the population? 30% of the population? A great deal will depend upon the social acceptability of smoking.

This paper will discuss a strategy for addressing that issue.

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## **SELECTING THE BATTLEGROUND**

Currently the battleground for smoking is defined by health issues. There is near unanimity within the medical, public health, and governmental communities that the primary health question is a "proven" fact. The various statistics that are used regarding "excess deaths per year" have become the rallying cry for almost every restriction placed on cigarettes, whether the proposed action is relevant or not to the improvement of public health. (In a recent television appearance, the French Health Minister was challenged on the real impact on cigarette consumption of the proposed advertising ban. He replied by talking about the number of French who supposedly die each year because of cigarettes.)

It is not clear to what extent the medical community believes that ETS is a health hazard, although the general reluctance of scientists to publically state their doubts on this question suggests that questioning the ETS health issue might not make a scientist popular among his colleagues. With regard to the public, the PM Baseline Survey shows that one out of two people (smokers and non-smokers alike) in Sweden, Finland, and Turkey believe that ETS is a health hazard, and much higher percentages of Swiss believe the same (84% of smokers and 91% of non-smokers).

These figures suggest that ETS communications has a long way to go.

Equally, they reveal the source of the power of the anti-smokers as long as they can fight the cigarette wars on a battlefield of health. By starting with a firm base of public opinion about the existence of a health problem, they move outward with their arguments as to what to do about the problem. The industry stands somewhat flatfooted in response since it questions the fundamental premise (ie. the existence of the health problem) -- a stance which puts it in conflict with the weight of public opinion.

In many markets (such as the U.S., the U.K., and Scandanavia) an effort has been made to shift the debate from the health issue to one of free choice and rights of the smoker. With labels on the product and on advertising and with full awareness of the alleged health risks, smokers are making an informed choice, a right which they should be guaranteed as part of a free society. This shift in battleground works well in societies which highly value *individualism* and personal freedom, particularly when one is making arguments regarding

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discrimination against those who smoke. But it does not work well for the ETS issue, since the smoker's "rights" are countered by the non-smoker's "right to clean air." The battleground of individual rights can also be less than effective in societies, such as those generally found in the EEMA region, which tend to put a greater premium on *social harmony* or on *correct behavior* than on individuality and personal freedom.

The need, particularly in EEMA countries, is to find a different battlefield to fight on rather than health or individual choice. In the case of the former, there is an uphill battle against "recognized authority" by a self-interested party. In the case of the latter, there is probably a lack of a widely shared political value in personal freedom and individuality. But even more importantly, in societies which tend to favor *social harmony*, cigarette smoking involves an annoyance issue, which, according to the PM Baseline Survey, is a significant factor for both smokers and non-smokers in their overall attitudes towards smoking.

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## THE ANNOYANCE ISSUE

In every market covered by the PM Baseline Survey, over two-thirds of non-smokers said they were annoyed by cigarette smoking. For the EEMA countries measured (Sweden, Finland, Switzerland, and Turkey) the figure was usually around 7 out of 10, with 1 out of 3 non-smoking Swedes and Finns saying they were annoyed at least once a week and approximately one out of two Swiss and Turk non-smokers saying the same thing.

And the annoyance issue is more than a health concern. When annoyed non-smokers were asked if they would still object to environmental smoke if the Minister of Health told them that it was harmless, large majorities said they would still be annoyed (70% in Sweden, 78% in Finland, 60% in Switzerland, and 73% in Turkey).

This environment of social disharmony seems to be sensed by many smokers as well in the EEMA markets. In Sweden one out of four smokers say that they seldom or never feel at ease smoking in public places. In Switzerland, that number rises to 44%, in Finland to 57%, and in Turkey to 58%. This suggests that smoking in public is already a problem, irrespective of the lack of specific government action or threat of action. Throughout the region there is tension, with somewhere between 42% and 53% of smokers saying that they hear complaints "often".

The annoyance issue is as dangerous and perhaps even more dangerous than misperceptions of the health impacts of ETS. If government officials, business managers or restaurant owners feel that they want to ban smoking for health reasons, the scientific data can be mustered to show that such a ban serves no health purpose. But, as has been discovered in the battle for airline smoking, as long as the decision-maker can fall back on a "comfort" or "customer preference" argument, it doesn't matter what the science says. It becomes a question of social harmony and good customer relations -- a subjective judgment which, according to the above figures, would not favor the maintenance of smoking in public places.

But the ultimate danger of the annoyance issue is more than the question of outright bans or enforced segregation. The ultimate danger is in the area of social acceptability: that the annoyance of public smoking creates the kind of atmosphere where smokers are reluctant to light up anywhere except in the privacy of their home and even then they feel guilty. In the extreme, being forbidden to smoke becomes a reluctance to smoke out of real sense of social guilt. In countries such as those in the Nordic area and Switzerland where *social harmony*

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is a highly regarded value, social guilt can become a genuine threat to smoking, with the possibility that the smoker will feel like a social pariah simply because he smokes.

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## **THE THEORY BEHIND AN ACCOMMODATION SOLUTION**

Like the anti-smoking lobby, the industry needs to start its argument for the social acceptance of smoking on a solid ground of agreed public opinion. If there is a value alignment between the public and the industry as a starting point for dialogue, then there can be a redefinition of the smoking issue, particularly with regard to social acceptability.

The concept of a value alignment is based on the principle that underlying all attitudes, there are fundamental values, and it is at the value level that most long term human relationships are built. Nations and religions are built on value alignments among people, on agreements that certain key ideas are fundamental and important. Once those agreements are reached, other disagreements can be discussed in relative harmony, because at the level of core values, there is an underlying alignment of ideas.

Smokers and non-smokers need to recreate a value alignment. Traditionally, social harmony existed between smokers and non-smokers largely in the form of non-smoker toleration and indifference. In the heyday of smoking in the fifties and sixties, smoking was so much the social norm that it was acceptable as a fact of life. The value alignment was based on the everyday nature of smoking, woven into life and reflected in widespread advertising, and images in the cinema and television. At such a time, public authorities could not have considered drastic actions against smoking since it would have disturbed a social unity. And the social acceptability of smoking was regularly reinforced by everyday experience.

The health issue, the decline in smokers and the gradual disappearance of reflections of smoking in the media have eroded the "normalcy" of smoking. The PM Baseline Survey suggests that even in countries where public smoking is common (eg. Turkey, Greece, Spain, Finland, Switzerland) the normalcy of smoking is threatened by the annoyance issue. Smoking may be common, but it is no longer commonly accepted. The need, therefore, is to regenerate a value alignment on public smoking which is comfortable for both smokers and for non-smokers.

That need, in fact, is threefold:

- Smokers must be given a place to stand where they feel they are normal, good citizens in the mainstream of society despite the

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fact that doctors and health officials will continue to badger them about their smoking

- Non-smokers must feel that their desires not to be impacted by smoking are being respected
- Public authorities must feel that they would be disturbing the social peace and not adding to social harmony if they disrupted the situation. \*

Theoretically, all those needs can be met by the concept of accommodation, which is based in the fundamental value of *social harmony*: i.e., that there is high value in social peace and the collective acceptance of differences within a framework of mutual respect and toleration. Accommodation involves a variety of themes:

- Smokers have made an informed choice but don't want to impose that choice on others. Therefore, they will be courteous and respectful of others' rights not to breathe their smoke. *THIS CONCEPT GIVES THE SMOKER A PLACE TO STAND AS A THINKING INDIVIDUAL WHO RESPECTS BOTH HIS OWN RIGHTS AND THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS.*
- Non-smokers respect the rights of others to choose to smoke and respect their right to do so publically as long as it does not impinge on the non-smoker's right not to breathe smoke: *THIS CONCEPT SOLVES THE NON-SMOKER'S PRIMARY PROBLEM WITH SMOKING AND GIVES HIM A REASON TO CONTINUE TO PERMIT SMOKING IN PUBLIC PLACES.*
- The needs and rights of both groups must be accommodated in public places and in polite society. *THIS CONCEPT ALLOWS MERCHANTS TO AVOID SOCIAL CONFLICT AND TO MAXIMIZE THEIR REVENUES BY ATTRACTING HAPPY SMOKING AND NON-SMOKING CUSTOMERS. IT ALSO KEEPS PUBLIC OFFICIALS FROM SUPPORTING BANS.*
- Those who would disturb the social peace of smokers and non-smokers by overriding the rights of one over the other are anti-social. *THIS CONCEPT PUTS THE ANTI-SMOKING ACTIVIST OUTSIDE THE GENERAL CONSENSUS AND MAKES HIM, NOT THE SMOKER, ANTI-SOCIAL.*

These concepts form a theoretical framework for changing the nature of the battlefied on the smoking issue.

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On a more practical level, an accommodation strategy involves several possible interlocking programs:

- Courteous smoking
- Smoking sections in public places
- Commercial alliances with owners of public places (e.g. restaurateurs)
- Alliances with both unions and management on affirmative workplace smoking policies
- Development of smoker groups and alliances ready to articulate the accommodation message
- Communication of ETS science and IAQ solutions

How these programs can work and interlock is discussed in subsequent sections, but the objective of accommodation is to create a future world where smoking exists as a legitimate social activity. As a policy goal for the industry, this is extremely important. In such a world, the social acceptability of smoking can be preserved because there will be places where smoking exists and where personal experience will allow smokers to see their own legitimacy as people who have made a choice. Without the existence of such public spaces, smoking will become an asocial activity, something done outdoors and in private, away from the centers of many of the most meaningful human activities.

The objectives of an accommodation strategy thus turn out to be two-fold: first, to provide the themes and ideas that allow smoking to remain a legitimate choice in a society which respects social harmony and, second, to simultaneously preserve the public space for smoking to occur.

That is the theory, but there are three questions which must be addressed:

- How do we know this would actually work in the real world?

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- Doesn't accommodation imply certain concessions which might, in some markets, precede real political pressures and therefore accelerate a process which we want to retard ?
- How can this concept be implemented in the real world ?

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## **EVIDENCE THAT IT MIGHT WORK**

No one has implemented a full accommodation strategy as is outlined in the next sections of this paper. But aspects of accommodation strategies have been tried in fragmented ways in different markets at different times. And the results have been modestly successful for each piece of the strategy.

- o When the tobacco industry or individual companies have tried to develop courteous smoking campaigns (in the U.S., Belgium, Germany, Sweden, etc.), they have generally been well received by both smokers and non-smokers alike. For example a follow-up survey among business leaders who saw PM/EEC's courteous smoking ads last year showed that 86% thought the ads were a good idea. Non-smokers were sceptical whether the ads would actually make smokers more courteous, but they were strongly in support of the effort to try. Bottom Line: there can be a value alignment around the idea of courteous smoking.
- o The PM Baseline Survey shows that countries with generally higher restrictions on smoking (eg. the U.S., Sweden) have generally more favorable attitudes towards smoker's rights than those with few restrictions (eg. Turkey, Greece, Spain, and Italy). Indeed, Sweden shows up as a mini-model of social harmony for smoking: Of all the countries measured it has the lowest number of non-smokers who say they are annoyed at smoking (66%) and the highest number who say they believe that smokers are courteous (48%). Significantly, Sweden also has the lowest number of smokers who say they are ill at ease when smoking (26%). At the same time, Sweden shows the highest support in Europe for separate sections at work (73% of non-smokers and 70% of smokers) and separate sections at the office (77% of non-smokers and 69% of smokers). Sweden also shows the one of the lowest levels of support in Europe for banning smoking on domestic flights (37%) and the lowest support of all countries for having government restrict cigarette smoking in public places (40%). Bottom Line: The survey suggests that support for separate sections tends to be coincident with evidence of greater social harmony between smokers and non-smokers and with an improved sense of "ease" among smokers.
- o Much of the success of the smoker clubs in Sweden (Smokepeace) and Denmark (Hen-Ry) has been based on their messages of moderation and accommodation. These messages have attracted individuals of high caliber and status to the smoker movement

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and have allowed the advertising and public relations efforts to gain widespread acceptance. Smokepeace, which was launched in June, 1989 had over 2000 members by early 1990. Hen-Ry started 1989 with about 200 members and ended the year with over 2000. Contrast that performance with the difficulties encountered by the smoker groups in the UK, US, and Australia, where far more strident approaches stressing smoker rights have not led to growing membership or growing political influence. Bottom Line: Smoker mobilization tends to be more successful when the message stresses accommodation rather than simply smoker rights.

- o A restaurant accommodation program developed by PM in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania has successfully recruited nearly half the restaurants in the area to a public identification of smoker accommodation. While the pre and post program public opinion surveys in Pittsburgh show no major shifts in public attitudes on smoking, fully 80% of the public supports the accommodation themes of the campaign. Moreover, the industry has won political and social praise for its efforts, with many community and business leaders endorsing the program. Bottom Line: When the tobacco industry publically identifies itself with accommodation programs, it can make new friends in both business and politics.

There are other examples as well from around the globe that show that messages of accommodation tend to create a friendlier climate for tobacco interests than do messages of smoker rights or health statistics. And while the PM Baseline Survey indicates important national differences with regard to specific issues like restaurant smoking, office smoking, and airline smoking, in nearly all markets, the differences in each market between smokers and non-smokers on accommodation issues tends generally to be small. This suggests the possibility of value alignments on these issues.

In short, experiments with aspects of accommodation have tended to show that it does improve social harmony and create an environment for smoking which allows the smoker to feel more at ease and more connected to the mainstream of society.

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## **SHOULD ACCOMMODATION BE ACTIVELY PURSUED?**

In countries where there seems to be little push for smoking bans in restaurants and other private establishments, it is usually argued that a pursuit of accommodation would tend to transform a quiet issue into a noisy one. Indeed, most of the objections usually raised against the idea of assertively pursuing an accommodation strategy boil down to three principle arguments:

**Smokers Will be Offended:** This argument is used against courteous smoking efforts (ie. we will be telling our consumers that we don't think they are courteous) and against any effort to actively encourage smoker sections in public places (ie. we will be making the situation harder for our consumers than what is today).

The results of the PM Baseline Survey, along with the kinds of program experiences noted above, tend to mitigate against these arguments. The Survey makes clear that smokers in most markets are currently uncertain and uncomfortable. Programs which help to ease their social situation and which give them the tools to create a public response to their needs will probably be welcome.

Obviously, any program concept needs to be tested with focus groups or by other research techniques to assure that it is acceptable to smokers. For instance, the PM Baseline Survey indicates that in Turkey there is only low interest in restaurant smoker sections. One would definitely want to test how and if one wanted to pursue such a program in Turkey.

But, conversely, in Switzerland, where 9 out of 10 people believe ETS is a health hazard, and 73% of non-smokers feel annoyed by smoking (of whom 59% say they feel annoyed in restaurants), and where only 19% of non-smokers feel smokers are courteous (one of the lowest scores measured), it is not surprising that 51% of Swiss smokers say that they hear complaints often (one of the highest scores in Europe) and that 64% say that they support separate sections in restaurants. A kind of social war -- albeit hidden -- seems to be raging in Switzerland, war that smokers are in danger of losing unless the industry comes forward with ammunition which allows social harmony to be recreated.

**We Will Be Raising Issues that are not yet a Problem:** This argument is used in those cases where there seems to be little current discussion about the creation of separate smoking sections, either through legislation or voluntary action. In most EEMA markets

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this is more or less the case, and, thus, the argument assumes that any effort by the industry to promote smoker sections would greatly accelerate a process which is otherwise proceeding slowly and sporadically.

As noted above, however, the PM Baseline Survey indicates that the lack of *public policy* focus on accommodation issues does not necessarily reflect the daily experience of smokers and non-smokers in most EEMA markets. The annoyance issue exists today, largely in the form of a daily *social* issue. Thus, the argument that the issue would be created by industry action is inaccurate. Rather, the opportunity exists to take the existing social issue and force it to take a particular shape that would be favorable to the long run interests of the industry and of its consumers. This is not a question of creating a non-existent issue, but rather a question of managing an issue which already affects smokers.

In addition, EEMA's market by market public affairs review of smoking restrictions (undertaken as part of its public affairs planning) shows that the issue of smoker sections is creeping into every market through the route of the international hotels and upscale restaurants. And while most restaurant and hotel associations continue to oppose legislation in this area, more and more of their individual members are adopting voluntary policies. Thus, the challenge becomes one of managing the process of smoker segregation, not generating it.

**We Should Not Make Concessions of Any Kind to the Status Quo:** This argument, based on the well-substantiated political notion that if you give up an inch you will end up giving up a mile, is used because it is generally felt that the creation of smoker sections is a loss for the industry. As long as the status quo allows smokers to smoke anywhere they choose in public places, the creation of limitations of any sort is a loss in the total battle. Thus to proactively seek a limitation on where one can smoke is a concession.

This argument has its own self-contained and irrefutable logic. It misses, however, the perspective of managing the battle for the long term, particularly on the issue of social acceptability. The problem is that the status quo (unhindered smoking) is, according to PM's own Baseline Survey, inherently unstable. It will not last in its current form and it is a question of how to manage the transition.

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The challenge for the industry is one of fighting change or trying to shape it. To stand against change is to act rather like the South American oligopoly that refuses to go along with land reform (or, more relevant to EEMA, the Communist bureaucrats who refuse to adjust to the need for decentralized decision-making). Where do you want to be when the inevitable change has occurred -- still standing with loyal consumers or surrounded by demoralized consumers forced to accept less than they might have had.

The accommodation strategy is an opportunity to reshape the future of smoking in a way which, according to experience and research, will win smoker acceptance and even loyalty. The question of pursuing the strategy in a pro-active way gets down to a vision of the future: a vision where smokers are still allowed to smoke in most public and work places because both they and non-smokers agree that accommodation is possible and preferable to bans; where smokers have organized themselves around the principles of courteous treatment of each other and of non-smokers; and where smokers are viewed as people who have made a life-style choice which is not outside the mainstream of society.

That vision is the objective of an accommodation strategy. Either the objective should be pursued with vigor to see if it is attainable or it should be ignored. But if it is pursued, then its tenets should not be considered "concessions" but rather understood as tactics for the long run social acceptability of smoking.



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## **HOW SHOULD ACCOMMODATION BE PURSUED?**

Since there has never been a full accommodation strategy implemented in any country, there is no model. Moreover, there is a good deal of evidence -- from the PM Baseline Survey to the Public Affairs Plans of the individual PM markets -- that the situation is different enough in each country that no single strategy will ever exist that can be implemented on a "turn key" basis in every market. Different market situations, different political situations, differing politics in the NMAs, different anti-smoking movements, different cultures all argue for nationally-determined strategies. But in this section, we will review the variety of programs which should be woven together -- with differing timetables and differing implementation plans -- to form a comprehensive accommodation initiative.

**Courteous Smoking:** Most courteous smoking programs have been built around advertising programs which have been run by either an individual company or by an industry association. Some have included brochures as well, which have been available either via direct response through the advertising or distributed through industry channels. Such programs should be, in reality, the starting point of a broader effort since advertising alone can not make social change.

The idea of courteous smoking needs specificity. Advertising programs can create a "value alignment" around the concept that smokers should be courteous when they smoke, but without specificity, there is little that smokers can do to implement the effort. The PM Baseline Survey shows that in most markets smokers are not currently seen as courteous, and the danger of an ad campaign is that it will set up a model of behavior which is only seen to be in contrast to reality. Instead, the model must serve as a guide for action.

Courteous smoking programs should include "guidelines" for both smokers and non-smokers. Such guidelines might include: asking permission to smoke in groups, watching where one's smoke goes, taking responsibility for dirty ashtrays, assertive efforts by smokers to get employers and merchants to improve the quality of ventilation, etc. They could also suggest "conversation guidelines" between smokers and non-smokers as to how to deal politely and respectfully with annoyance situations so that both sides learn a "language" of accommodation that reduces embarrassment and annoyance.

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To make such guidelines real, a variety of communications techniques should be employed: brochures, videos, reminder cards, signage, posters, etc. that could be displayed at point of sale, through smoker newsletters, and in workplace courteous smoking programs which the industry helps design and implement with employers. The source of such communications can be the industry or a company, but ideally they might also come through smoker organizations (see below) who could have courteous smoking as one of their underlying principles and purposes.

In short, courteous smoking must be managed as a major communications theme which is constantly stated, reinstated, and rewarded, much like safe driving, moderate drinking, or respect for racial and ethnic minorities. The message must be delivered pervasively and persuasively, so that opinion leaders -- including politicians -- begin to see courteous smoking as part of the lexicon of the smoking debate.

**Restaurant Programs:** The Pittsburgh program, being a rather expensive test program, gives some guidance to other such efforts but is not a single prototype. Pittsburgh involved a variety of tools: restaurants were recruited to the program by an intensive one-on-one selling effort. A program of co-op advertising highlighting the use of the accommodation logo was initiated to give a financial incentive to restaurant owners to be part of the program. A regular Newsletter was created for on-going communications, and an extensive briefing of local politicians and opinion leaders accompanied the effort.

The principles behind Pittsburgh are, however, instructive. Whether one works through restaurant associations (which is currently occurring in several EEMA markets) or through individual restaurants, there needs to be a concentrated effort wherein the industry (or PM) actively recruits restaurateurs to a program which they believe will benefit their own business. It is not enough to simply *educate* restaurateurs that smokers are an important customer base, that ventilation can solve many smoke problems, and that smoking bans are bad for business. Many restaurateurs will see little reason to change the status quo unless there are specific rewards for doing so.

Among the possibilities are co-op ads, the creation of smoker-based clubs who are encouraged to frequent co-operating restaurants that can be identified by a logo, the creation of awards and rewards ("Restaurateur of the Year") for those who make the effort for

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smokers. And if the message is a proactive "We smokers want smoker sections", there may be value in a consulting service available to help restaurateurs know how to make such changes. Such a consulting service could be a joint project between a Restaurant Association and the industry, all the while supported by a smoker club which gives business to the restaurants that do the job well.

**Workplace Programs:** There are even fewer models of success in the area of workplace programs. A variety of "workplace manuals" have been written over the years and distributed to senior executives, and another is being currently prepared by PMI and PM/EEC as a follow-up to a mailing to CEO's on courteous smoking in the workplace. But similar to a restaurant program which does not include proper motivation and incentives, there is little reason to expect that employers should follow through on gratuitous advice from the tobacco industry.

Workplace programs may be those which are most subject to the admonition to "let sleeping dogs lie". It is usually argued that if an employer has never considered the issue of smoking in the workplace, why should the industry raise the issue? And, as with other aspects of accommodation strategies, individual countries must design programs whose timing and approach reflect their own situation. Note, for instance, the differences which are obvious from the PM Baseline Survey:

- o Sweden: The office is the locale of greatest smoking annoyance (cited by 42% of annoyed non-smokers v. 18% citing restaurants) and 7 out of 10 smokers favor separation of smokers and non-smokers in the office. (Importantly, only 7% favor legislation in this area).
- o Finland: The office is also the locale of the most smoking annoyance (cited by 35% of annoyed non-smokers), but nearly 1 out of 2 favor a complete office smoking ban.
- o Switzerland: While the office is not cited as a major source of annoyance (19% of annoyed non-smokers mention it v. 59% mentioning restaurants) and only one in four non-smokers (and smokers) favor separation at the office, fully one out of two non-smokers would favor a total ban in the workplace.
- o Turkey: Similar to Switzerland. Little notice of the office as a major problem, and yet 58% of non-smokers would favor an all out ban on smoking in the office.

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Thus, here again, one must balance between letting the status quo, which is inherently unstable, continue as long as possible or trying to shape an alternative future where smoking workers are assured of their right to smoke in designated and controlled ways in the workplace. Assuming that the latter strategy is decided upon, workplace programs can and probably should proceed on two separate tracks: a management focus and a union focus.

Management: As noted above, workplace manuals exist which give employers the basic information they need to create a workplace smoking program: information on ETS health questions, information on IAQ and the causes of sick building syndrome, information on ventilation solutions and on courteous smoking efforts, and information of how one can balance between the needs of smokers and non-smokers in the workplace. But these manuals need to be supported by broader programs that actually encourage employers to tackle the workplace smoking issue affirmatively.

Such programs might include: speaking engagements at meetings concerning business management and human resource management, trade press relations, advertising of the workplace smoking concept with direct marketing follow-up, and the creation of model workplace tools (eg. posters, smoking policies that emphasize highly localized decision-making in individual work areas, ventilation surveys) which make it possible for management to implement such policies.

Case studies need to be researched so that the implementation of accommodation programs are shown to reduce employee tension and, hopefully, improve employee morale in the workplace. In some markets, a workplace program might, in fact, begin with the creation of some test programs with a few co-operative employers so that real life cases can become the basis of marketing the concept of workplace accommodation as "smart business management".

Union: Several initiatives with unions have already been launched in Scandanavia under the general topic of Healthy Buildings. Others have been started in France, Holland, etc. through efforts to encourage ventilation companies to support conferences on indoor air quality which are aimed at health experts from leading unions. Most of these efforts approach the smoking issue only tangentially, ie. by asserting that it is minor part of indoor air quality problems and, thus, arguing that smoking bans should not be seen as a meaningful health measure.

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While union relationships are always delicate and must be managed first and foremost by business considerations, it would be useful to consider broadening the current union strategy which only encourages third parties to educate unions on IAQ. One approach, which is being pursued in Scandanavia, is to work with the union media. Another approach might be through smoker clubs and a specific effort to recruit high ranking union leaders into smoker clubs. These individuals could then be given the materials to educate their own leadership on the smoking accommodation issue as a worker rights issue, ie. that smokers should have the right to smoke at the job within controlled circumstances and that taking away that right is an infringement. Unions could then become carriers of a variety of accommodation messages: courteous smoking, ETS health science, etc. and could start to include the need for both proper ventilation and for smoking areas as a negotiation issue.

Other approaches to unions are possible: directly from tobacco companies or, if possible, through tobacco worker unions. These approaches could include political work at union gatherings to get the smoking issues on the agenda, briefings of union leaders by smoker advocates, or extensive work in the union press using an articulate "populist spokesperson". All of these approaches would have a similar aim: to make smoking accommodation an issue which unions see as a fundamental right of workers in the workplace.

**Legislation:** It is generally agreed that it would be undesirable for either restaurant or workplace smoking to be subject to general legislation, even if that legislation demanded accommodation. A basic principle of the accommodation approach must be that accommodation of smokers and non-smokers is a highly interpersonal matter that should not be subject to legislation. This principle is generally supported in the PM Baseline Survey, ie. asked whether government should pass laws restricting cigarette smoking in public places, only 40% of Swedes, and 43% of Swiss and Turks approve. Interestingly, 7 out of 10 Swiss and Turks strongly agree that when smokers and non-smokers use some courtesy, there is no need to have government rules. (However, in neither country are smokers currently seen as "courteous".)

Finland is somewhat different on these questions. With only 26% of non-smokers finding smokers courteous (similar to Switzerland and dissimilar to Sweden), a majority (53%) favors bans in public places and relatively high percentages favor office bans and airplane bans.

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Nonetheless, there may be opportunity for legislative implementation of the accommodation strategy. If, for instance, a national or local governmental body is considering legislation for a smoking ban in public buildings, a political alternative of legislation for smoking sections could be offered. If such legislation is supported by local smoker groups and by regular users of the facilities (eg. train travelers for a railroad station) and public opinion surveys were simultaneously conducted to show support for smoker accommodation rather than smoking bans, the result could be to stop a legislated ban.

In an ideal world, one might pursue an affirmative legislative strategy, eg. to seek positive legislation which requires that smokers must be given a place to smoke in all public accommodations, safety rules permitting. Experience to date in the U.S. with efforts to pass "non-discrimination" legislation for smokers, however, suggests that such an effort may be premature. It is not inconceivable, however, that such legislation could be part of a comprehensive, multi-year accommodation strategy which creates strong political and social momentum around the idea of accommodation being the best route to continued social harmony.

**Smoker Clubs:** This paper is not an appropriate place to discuss the broad strategic issue of the development of smoker clubs and how this can best be achieved strategically and tactically (eg. quantity of members v. quality of members, transparency of tobacco company support, etc.). Nonetheless, it is important to recognize that smoker clubs have an extremely important role to play in the implementation of accommodation strategies. This is for several reasons:

- - First, accommodation must be perceived to be for smokers, not for the tobacco industry. If smokers are not visible carriers of the accommodation message, it will lack credibility.
- - Second, there is evidence from the PM Baseline Survey and from the Swedish and Danish experience with smoker clubs that the accommodation message could be a powerful tool for attracting responsible individuals to the smoker movement and for gaining credibility for that movement with the media and with opinion leaders. While it is an untested hypothesis, it may well be that "accommodation" is one of the most powerful messages around which one can motivate smokers to do something about their besieged status.

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- - Third, the underlying purpose of accommodation as a strategy is to impact the social acceptability of smoking. Smokers clubs are important tools for continuing to reach smokers with the message that there are respectable, responsible people who can make the choice to smoke. Accommodation creates the venues for smoking, but smoker clubs embody the idea that smokers are legitimate members of society.
- - Fourth, as noted above in the sections on restaurants and workplace, smokers clubs can be important tools in making accommodation programs worthwhile for merchants and employers. This is particularly true for merchants such as restaurateurs: if smoker clubs come to represent an endorsement which leads to more patronage, the restaurateur has a motivation for action. Smokers clubs therefore can be an important part of the success of a restaurant program because they can provide the motivational tools for merchants to see a reward in smoker accommodation.

**Direct Mail:** If one assumes that marketing communications vehicles such as advertising and sponsorship will become less and less available to the industry and that the media will become more and more difficult to use, there obviously is a need to create new vehicles for direct communication to cigarette consumers. The techniques of direct mail, while expensive, have the advantage of being not only systems of communications, they are also systems of response. They offer the opportunity to communicate a message like accommodation and then ask for a response from those who would agree to hear more and to participate in efforts to promote this form of social harmony .

Direct mail allows the creation of "constituencies" for a concept like accommodation. By using a combination of computers and targeted messages to discover one's natural supporters, one can continue to feed supporters with information and motivation to express their views to others. This is the theory behind PM/USA programs like the Smoker Newsletters and the U.S grass roots action programs which are used to fight tax increases and other restrictions. The concept need not be narrowly political, however. The readership of the Italian *Calumet* magazine was built on a basis of direct reponse mailings, with the result that those who currently receive the magazine are a self-selected group who want to read these opinions.

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An individual tobacco company can be the source of a direct mail effort on accommodation themes (eg. courtesy, the advantages of smoker sections, support for merchants and others who respect the smoker's need for a comfortable place for smoking, etc.) as can the industry (eg. Italy). Smokers clubs can be another source of direct mail efforts, particularly on accommodation themes. As the voice of smokers, these clubs have a stake in achieving accommodation as well as a stake in communicating the concept to other smokers.

Such clubs can also, if they choose to do so, develop extensive membership bodies through direct mail offerings which provide smokers with a variety of benefits, eg. discounts on restaurants, entertainment, travel, etc. Much like other clubs (eg. gun clubs) or organizations of shared interests (American Association of Retired Persons, one of the most potent lobbying forces in the U.S.), large memberships can be amassed around specific benefits one can gain from a relatively inexpensive membership. AARP could never have organized people on the basis of self-identification as "old", but when they offered discounts on many important purchases to people who were over 55, they were able to gain mass membership of "old people".

Direct mail as a technique can be a powerful tool for an accommodation strategy. It allows the continual flow of reinforcing information to a large body of people and creates the mechanisms which encourage smokers to directly reward the merchants and decision-makers who support their accommodation.

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## CONCLUSION

A great many important strategic and tactical issues have not been dealt with in this paper, particular the issue of whether an accommodation strategy should be implemented by Philip Morris alone or by an industry grouping. This too would seem to be a decision which must be based on individual market and national factors, since NMA's differ as does PM's role in the market and in the NMA.

One final concept, however, should be explored.

The fundamental change which drives the need for an accommodation strategy is that smoking has moved from *acceptable majority behavior* to *annoying minority behavior*. All the evidence from the PM Baseline Survey suggests that the annoyance issue pervades discussions of the right to smoke in public, and accommodation -- separate sections, courteous smoking, recognition of the rights and needs of both parties -- permits a framework to remove the annoyance and recreate a value alignment around the idea of social harmony.

And all evidence from research and from experience suggest that the concept works to bring people together and to help shift the position of the smoker and of smoking.

But there is another aspect of fundamental change which must be recognized. As smokers become more besieged and as tobacco commercial communications are restricted, the fundamental relationship between the tobacco company and the cigarette consumer changes. Brand values will no longer be able to be defined through advertising imagery and sponsorship style. Brand values will have to be created in new ways -- most probably through direct marketing and through the forging of a new kind of relationship between the consumer and the brand. Brand values may come to be more and more dependent on *relationship* issues -- does the brand help me in other ways, offer other benefits (eg. a magazine, a travel club, discount tickets to restaurants that cater to smokers), or represent something which I respect and believe in (eg. accommodation) and support me in being the kind of person I want to be.

Holding on to social acceptability is not just an industry battle; it can also become part of a brand battle. Marlboro-sponsored waiting areas in airports may be more than a symbolic gesture: it could be part of a brand strategy. Philip Morris award programs for restaurateurs

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might be more than reinforcement for accommodation: it could have to do with brand loyalty among local gourmands. In short, if accommodation is a truly powerful idea and the above programs are well organized and managed, they could become intertwined with brand and market strategies for creating consumer loyalty in the year 2000. It may well be that the brands that lead the way on assuring social acceptability of smoking will be the brands which have the greatest loyalty among smokers.

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