

On the Lighter Side

A mechanic was working late one night when a man walked into his shop.

"Can you help me?" the man asked. "I think I am a moth."

The mechanic replied, "I am a mechanic. You need a psychiatrist."

"Yes, I know," replied the man.

"Then why did you come here?"

"Your light was on."

Are You Missing Email?

As spam continues to grow Internet providers like Comcast, Verizon, AOL etc. continuously modify and tweak their security practices. These changes sometimes stop emails from reaching our clients, particularly if you receive email at your domain address (ex. george@jobel.biz) that is then forwarded to your provider address (ex. mrhonorable@comcast.net). While most email issues don't have their origins with us, we find it increasingly necessary to assist clients with these issues.

If you notice a decline in the number of e-mails you're receiving through your web site, test it by sending yourself an e-mail through your web site. If it doesn't transmit, or bounces back, please contact us directly and we will gladly help diagnose and suggest a remedy to the problem.

Junk Email A Problem?

We have just contracted a new service for our clients. In addition to our own system's spam blockers, we now offer 3rd party RedCondor premium email security services. We have been testing ourselves it for 6 weeks and have seen an AMAZING reduction in junk email. The cost is \$30/annually per email box after a \$25 set-up fee. Call for more details.

Coming Soon

Next issue we will take you way back to your childhood, reviewing sites offering nostalgic facts, information and videos.

(Do you have ideas for our site reviews? If so, drop us a line!)



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WEB WISE

FROM THE DESK OF GEORGE C. JOBEL

Online Buying Grew Dramatically in 2007

Online shoppers were drawn more to clicking their way through the holiday shopping in 2007 than in previous years, according to the U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Commerce.

According to the Department of Commerce, the nation's retail e-commerce sales for the fourth quarter of 2007, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, was \$36.2 billion. Compared to the fourth quarter of 2006, e-commerce during the holiday season increased by 18.2 percent, dramatically outpacing the broad retail sales gain of 4.7 percent overall in the same period.

According to the Virtual Marketing Blog, which cites top research and survey companies like Jupiter Research, Forrester Research and DoubleClick, consumers use the internet to effectively comparison shop for the best deals.

Recent research on shoppers indicates:

- Seventy-one percent of online shoppers browse multiple stores prior to making a purchase.
- Sixty-one percent of online consumers are more likely to shop online with a retailer that offers free shipping than one that doesn't.
- Forty-two percent of online shoppers in the U.S. use comparison engines.

Recently Launched Websites

GenesisGallery.com
GlaziersResource.com
MelindaHayesJewelryDesigns.com
NHUsedAutoSales.com
NHCookingClasses.com

Welcome to our New Clients!

Allphase Excavation, Waltham, VT
Distinction Hair Studio, Concord, NH
The Fiber Studio, Henniker, NH
Finnegan Development, Prospect Hts, IL
Gateway Restaurant & Lodge, 3Rivers, CA
Greenhorse.com, Portsmouth, NH
Hills Brothers, Merrimack, NH
John Maher, Esq., Portsmouth, NH
NH Special Olympics, Manchester, NH
NH Tutors, Nashua, NH
Silver Hanger Cleaners, Bellingham, MA
Snedeker Plumbing & Heating, Concord, NH
Summit Computers, Weare, NH
Swift Plastics, Columbus, IN
Vacation Getaway, Inc., Minisink Hills, PA
Westport Trading, Westport, NY

Send a Greeting Card, Fast!

No time to pop into the pharmacy to pick up a birthday card? E-greetings are an easy way to shoot off a personal message with a little flare. We reviewed the following sites:

Virtualflorist.com is mainly designed for sending floral bouquets. Virtualflorist.com has a nifty feature for sending free cards.

While we find Virtual Florist's art and messages basic, an extensive gallery offers numerous occasion cards, holidays, birthdays, get well, weddings & inspiration or 'just because cards' and blank e-cards with photos of flowers and plants that are also available. Users can also chose the font, background, image, pick a color for each feature and opt for a short selection of piano music to accompany the card.

As most e-greetings, Virtual Florist allows the sender to include a short note and preview the entire card before emailing it. Senders may also select whether they want to be notified via email when the card has been opened.

Egreetings.com, a similar site, uses flash animation and interactive greetings, but fewer customization options. The site lists most calendar holidays and also includes some cards designed by American Greetings.

Many of the e-greetings include cartoon graphics or photo postcards set to music.

Senders may write as much text as they want inside the card and select the font options. An option to add a photo into

the text box is also available when the sender chooses to customize the card.

Registration is required for Egreetings, but it's free and includes an option to create an email address book. Senders may also choose to be reminded of upcoming holidays via e-mail.

Wowzcards.com is free and easy to maneuver. The site has mostly photo postcards with short sayings. It offers an option to add various moving background effects and cartoon mortices to the each postcard and to include a video clip from YouTube, Yahoo or Google, or various clip art or photos before sending. Again, text font color and size options are available as well as emoticons.

Numerous options exist on the Internet that include e-greeting memberships for an annual fee. Just remember that the programming of these sites is expensive. Know that the site owners have to pay for that somehow. If you don't want to receive junk email updates, promotional materials or a weekly newsletter from these sites, carefully read and deselect any unwanted options before clicking send.

Pay Less, Travel More!

Planning a trip and want that mind-blowing deal? Many travel sites provide the lowdown on low-cost transportation and lodging in weekly e-mailed newsletters.

SmarterTravel.com, is a website with articles and well-researched ways to effectively implement your next excursion. The site caters to "specialty travelers," seniors, families, adventurers, students and frequent flyers, offering a wide range of tips to save on last-minute fares and cruises. Users can sign up for a customized Deal Alert newsletter that lists all the last minute flights and dates from the departure airport(s) of their choosing, and updates are e-mailed every Thursday. Grab-bag style, the Deal Alert newsletter includes discounted flights, which list the destination, travel dates, the airline, and price per ticket. SmarterTravel also lets visitors compare airfare prices between several different online ticket sellers such as Orbitz, Expedia, and Travelocity. Numerous useful travel 'how to' articles are located in the news and advice section and the site also has travel guides to common destinations.

Frommers.com, publisher of the popular travel guides, Frommer's also has a web site targeted to deal hunters. Frommer's offers a destination search where users can type in any local and bring up all kinds of facts and figures. Users can book trips right on the web site through providers such as Cheap Air and Thrifty Rental Car. Subscribers to the free Frommers.com general interest newsletters gain access to breaking travel news and feature stories three times a week,

including Monday's Smart Deal of the Week, Wednesday's Frommer's five deals and Friday's Airfare Deals & News. Travel Health feature stories that appear monthly along with the Global Price Index, a report that shows how far your money will go when you travel.

Frommer's also has several twice-a-month newsletters that update travelers on cruise deals and trends, family travel tips, national park profiles and winter sports updates.

BudgetTravel.com, (publishers of the magazine by the same name) also has a free weekly newsletter stuffed with travel bargains and last-minute sales. It features stories on everything from English pub food to U.S. garden and flower show deals. When registering users will also receive the Budget Travels' Travel Marketplace Newsletter, which provides a place for advertisers to show off their special deals on everything from airfare to cruises.

Like Smarter Travel and Frommer's, Budget Travel includes a wealth of destination information, but it also includes a handy tool site with worldwide weather, snap guides to popular cities, airport codes, and currency exchange rates to make planning a trip easier.

Expand Your Business in a YouTube World

The viral marketing success of YouTube, Google Video and Yahoo! Video is evident by their astounding visitor hit counters.

We have now expanded into video web services to give visitors to your site a way to watch your business in action. Adding videos, then submitting them to sites like AOL Video, Blip.tv, Brightcove, Crackle, Daily Motion, Google Video, Metacafe, Myspace, Revver, Sclipo, Veoh, Yahoo Video, YouTube, Viddler, and others will bring traffic to your website, and help to garner site traffic and sales from a younger, web-savvy audience.

Take Note: According to a Kelsey Group Survey posted in the Wall Street Journal, out of 501 adults surveyed in February, 59 percent said they viewed an internet video ad. Forty-three percent of those same adults visited the advertiser's website. Eleven percent of those adults forwarded the video ad to friends and family.

In two to four minutes of video, you can illustrate your company's uniqueness, demonstrate your products or showcase your premier line. Opportunities to illustrate your business via video are boundless. A seasonal client in Vermont raised his rates 40% and is **still** 300% ahead of last year's registrations, predominately due to viral video. Call today with your questions.