Marlene B. Brown's July 2001 Marm's Memo: "Outages and Glows" Condensed Version
Full version found here http://www.technotouch.com/articles.html

This edition's topics include: Robot Stars, New Products, Video Conferencing, Bandwidth Mobility, Bypassing Fax Machines, New Uses for Old Computers, Tech Homes, Opening File Types, Beating the Competition, Sales Software that Works; Hot Topics in CRM, Global E-Commerce, Keeping Customers, Growing Your Business, Value in Linking, Worthwhile Emails, Web Use Stats, Recent Tech News, Internet Adapters, Global E-Biz Info, Websites that Work, Smart Appliances, Kids and Parents, Staying Afloat, E-Learning, Next Generation, Leadership in Business, Workplace Issues, Net Health Care, E-Women, E-Security, E-Shopping, Levity Thoughts, Virus Update, Wonderland Experiences.

OUTAGES AND GLOWS: On June 29, 2001, an outage hit online Nasdaq, causing the Nasdaq Stock Exchange to halt stock trading on two key systems after random network outages caused problems with the quotation services. On July 12, 2001, a federal judge ordered Napster to remain offline until it can show that it is able to effectively block access to copyrighted works. Napster executives had imposed a two-week blackout as it sought to install new audio fingerprint technology. On June 4, 2001, sabotague and a hacker brought down our web hosting company. How do you get the glow back when an outage of any kind hits you?

While the outages are costly and frustrating, it's how we handle crises that counts, the "glow" that we emanate in the way of crisis management. The Nasdaq extended their regular trading by an hour to compensate for their down time. Napster's CEO said, "we are continuing full steam ahead toward the launch of our new service." We gave our clients a month of free web hosting and services to compensate for their inconvenience. What determines if customers choose to continue to do business with companies who have temporary "outages" is the "glow" that comes from honesty, integrity, and a track record of outstanding customer service. More on this later.

ROBOT STARS: What has green ears, a long gray nose, walks with difficulty and can't talk but has already starred in a pop video and may mark the birth of a new generation of friendly, companion robots? A Japanese venture firm unveiled its small humanoid PINO robot, whose name & long nose are modeled on Pinocchio, one of a series of Japanese robots designed for personal or household use. 70-cm tall PINO starred with Japanese pop diva Hikaru Utada in her music video: and shook hands with the Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad at a science show in Malaysia.

NEW PRODUCTS: Each year, Comdex and PC Expo have fewer exhibitors and attendees, but there are always interesting new products. Here are some: Nec's Versa DayLite was the most innovative Transmeta Crusoe-based ultralight. Panasonic's new DVDBurner drive can record data to DVD-RAM or DVD-R media. Hewlett-Packard's Digital Entertainment Center is a 40GB hard drive jukebox, an Internet radio

that plays streaming RealAudio, and a CD burner with an integrated CD-R/RW drive. Toshiba, Casio, and Sony all offered digital cameras that push image resolution to new heights.

VIDEOCONFERENCING: The dynamics of videoconferencing are changing through a mix of factors that could cut costs in half and finally bring long-promised benefits to corporate users, thus becoming more affordable. Drivers of videoconferencing include ease of use, lower costs through Internet channels, improved quality, ability to collaborate in real-time, and corporate pressures to improve efficiency.

BANDWIDTH MOBILITY: Want to compute in multiple rooms, sharing the same high-bandwidth Net connection you've got with your tethered PC? D-Link DWL-920 11mbps USB Wireless Home Network Kit lets you set up a wireless home network. The two-node home network bundle includes an access point which will connect up with your existing cable connection and adapters. Amazon.com. lists the product at $499 with an instant rebate of $50, plus shipping.

BYPASSING FAX MACHINES: Want to send and receive faxes from your computer? It's easy. Just use three downloads from ZDNet. 32bit Fax lets you design cover pages and send faxes to individuals or groups, and it includes a FaxBook that stores frequently used group and individual profiles. Snappy Fax 2000 lets you turn your scanner, PC, and fax modem into a full-fledged fax machine. You'll be able to send and receive faxes, send faxes by e-mail, and even use your scanner and printer as a copy machine.

NEW USES FOR OLD COMPUTERS: If your old computer has a Pentium processor, you can probably put it to use. But if it's an older computer, there's not much hope. If you have two or more computers in your house, you should consider networking them together for ease in file sharing and printer sharing. Once you're networked, you can use your old computer for a file server, a computer on which you can store files that are centrally available to anyone on the network. Using your old PC for a file server also gives you security advantages. Your files are potentially safer sitting on the old computer instead of the new computer. A server also simplifies the backup process.

If you do find you have no use for your old computer, dispose of it properly. See if some charitable organization will take it off your hands. If you're not sure where to turn, check www.sharetechnology.org This site maintains a national database of organizations and disabled individuals looking for specific equipment, as well as people with specific equipment to offer. If you can't give your old computer away, make it a point to find an electronics recycler in your area.

TECH HOMES: Internet usage continues to explode, broadband access gains favor, smart appliances are introduced, more homes have multiple PCs and internet devices – now technology that allows consumers to connect computers and other electronic devices through existing power outlets has become a reality. A consortium of 90 high-profile technology companies have finalized a new standard that will serve as a common way for connecting electronic devices to the Net through electrical outlets. Powerline technology will have multiple outlets in every room, is cost effective, available worldwide, easy to install, and uses existing power sources for communication. Move over, Flintstones, here we come!

FILE TYPES: Ever tried to open an attached file and couldn't? Gotten that little window that says "Open With" and you don't have any idea which program to choose? What's the difference between file types and how can you open your files in the right program? File types, or extensions, are the three letter suffixes after the "dot" in file names (exception, Mac's don't usually use extensions). If you don't see your file extensions, you can display them by right clicking on the object or file, if it has been saved with the .ext (extension) of the program it was created in. If it wasn't saved that way, when you right click on the file and choose Properties, the General category will show you the Type. The Revisons category will show you the name with the file extension.

To discover the file types you have on your machine, Right click on the Start button, then Left click on Explore. Click on View on the top menu bar, Folder Options, File Types. If the type you need isn't there, you can add it. Some common file extensions: .doc = Word document; lwp. = Word Pro document; .wpd = Word Perfect document; .wps = Works document; .xls = Excel worksheet; .apr = Approach database; .jpg = JPEG photo; .ppt = Powerpoint presentation; .pdf = Adobe Acrobat; .rtf = Rich Text Format; .txt = text file. If you still can't open documents, perhaps you need to upgrade to the latest version of the various programs you use. Quick tip: when creating a document to email as an attachment, do a Save As, Rich Text Format (.rtf). Your formatting will stay intact and others can easily open it.

BEATING THE COMPETITION: One way to beat your competition is to charge less for a similar product or service. But you can also beat your competition when your price is higher, by becoming a specialist in a narrowly defined targeted market. People like to do business with a specialist who has a unique insight into their situation. They feel confident about getting what they expect from a product or service when it is proposed by somebody who understands them and their unique needs.

SALES SOFTWARE THAT PAYS OFF: Some e-businesses that have rolled out sales force automation software have failed to see a return on investment. The reason often stems from the fact that many salespeople are averse to using it, thinking "What's in it for me?" "Get your mitts off my customer data!" Salespeople are known for their independent and competitive attitudes. So when a sales manager tells his or her salespeople that they must spend a certain portion of their day on this, the response isn't always positive. Show them how it will turn leads into sales and they'll feel like they can't live without it

HOT TOPICS IN CRM: There are four hot CRM (Customer Relationship Management) areas this year: wireless or mobility-based customer service, customer self-service, marketing analytics and collaborative commerce. The concept is simple, "put all your information in one place so its accessible to everyone in the organization at any time, and use that to improve the customer experience." CRM merely implements the policies, procedures, and processes that keep your business and its customers on friendly terms. What matters is the process. You already have customer relationship management practices in place. Examine them closely. What works? What could be improved?

GLOBAL E-COMMERCE: Brides-to-be have discovered how easy it is to plan a wedding using the Web. It's also easy to go online and buy their gifts. You shop, pay and ship everything over the Internet, saving yourself time. But what happens when the wedding is in Hong Kong or Argentina? Today, few e-commerce sites allow you to complete an online transaction that involves shipping your purchase to an international location other than Canada.

Companies who've partnered with international transportation companies like UPS are able to take advantage of technology such as the Intl Shipping Process System, which determines customs fees before a package reaches its destination. The Internet is global. Now is the time for enterprises to think about how they can cater to billions of shoppers worldwide.

E-COMMERCE STATS: * According to eMarketer, the global e-commerce economy is expected to reach a total $550 billion in 2001, nearly double the $286 billion generated in 2000.

* A Boston Consulting Group study finds that the North American online retail market grew 66 percent to $44.5 billion in 2000.

* The US government is the largest single vendor on the net, selling over $3.6 million of good s online during 2000.

* The consumer program, IMPACT 2001, reveals that e-commerce has a big future. U.S. e-commerce revenue will grow to $38.7 billion by the end of this year. Datamonitor says consumers and businesses are

still demanding e-commerce and revenue opportunities for dot-coms and IT companies still exist. "Many e-businesses have concentrated on duplicating bricks-and-mortar business models in cyberspace and they have proven to be highly competitive in retaining their customers".

KEEPING CUSTOMERS: Why do customers choose to stay loyal to a certain company? Some of the factors might be that the longer a company spends talking to its customers face to face or on the line or via email, the longer those customers will stick with the company. Customers will be more loyal when the customer support is outstanding, and support personnel are patient and followed-up. While products are expected to be good, you stick with a company if it treats you well.

GROWING YOUR BUSINESS: Experts identify three main stages of business growth. The Startup Phase is the time when you get your business up and running, locate customers, make sales and try to get money coming in. At this point, you are an Owner/Operator. The next stage is Early Stage Expansion. In this phase, your business experiences "growing pains". In the third stage, your business moves from Owner Operated into Management. You are no longer involved in the day to day operation of running the business or of producing the product or service. Experts claim that only a minority of small businesses move into the third phase. You need to manage growth as you move from Startup into Stage Two.

VALUE IN LINKING: Getting linked is the simple concept of having other web sites link to yours. While it's a simple concept, it's not a simple process. It is a lot of work to find sites that have a similar audience as yours, then search their site to see if they even offer free links to other sites, and then find contact information to ask them to link to you. While this takes time, there are many benefits to getting other sites to link to you, including more business for you and higher rankings in some search engines. I design websites with a front page that promotes my clients business, and a links page for reciprocal links.

SENDING WORTHWHILE EMAILS: There are millions of men and women on the Internet, with more pouring on every day from all parts of the world. The percentage of email users is incredibly high. Most studies put it above 95% of net users. The Pew Internet Project tells us that half of those online use email on any given day. Jupiter Communications research shows that 74% of them call email "essential". Email is the unsung hero of the Digital Age. Here's some thoughts on how to use email effectively:

Use email: * to get answers back to people quickly; * for quick short answers. * when you want or need a written record of an exchange * to clarify points of agreement and then summarize * to update people on new things they need to know * to use in combination with a website (powerful because it keeps the email short and puts the detailed information on the website) * to send newsletters

Write good email: * make it conversational, not formal * keep it as short and sweet as possible * put the most important information at the beginning * include copies of previous emails when necessary for clarification * include a signature file, an online business card that contains information on who you are and how folks can reach you * don't type in all caps * make the subject heading clear and pertinent

WEB USE STATS: * Jupiter Media Metrix tell us advertising only contributes 17% of a major consumer website's traffic. More powerful forces driving traffic to a site include seasonality (46%) and an overall rise in Internet use (46%).

* A survey by NFO Research finds that two thirds of US Internet users who travel for business go online to find business-related flight information. 93% of them use the web to plan vacations.

* Jupiter Media Metrix is out with a report that half of all Web usage happens on sites and services owned by just four companies -- AOL Time Warner, Microsoft, Yahoo and Napster.

* Media Metrix reports that US consumers who visited automotive research websites spent an average of 19 minutes on the sites during March 2001.

RECENT TECH NEWS: * The New York Senate has approved legislation that makes it the first state in the nation to ban drivers from using handheld cell phones while driving. Polls showed that 87% of New Yorkers favored the ban.

* IBM announced it has developed the world's fastest silicon transistor. As a result of its refinement of its silicon-germanium chip-manufacturing technology that produces transitors that are far thinner than others, information can travel faster or at the same speed using far less power.

* An Adams Group May 2001 survey of senior-level managers of mid- to large-sized companies reveals that eMarketplaces or B2B e-commerce should grow 98% in 2 years. Outside of the e-business and technology sectors, expectations are even higher with estimates of a 120% growth in the next 24 months.

* A research by Strategis Group implies that there will be at least 530 million mobile phone users by the year 2001. The billion mark will be reached by 2004. Services and applications will grow with the same speed as the Internet did in the mid-nineties. As mobile phones become increasingly popular, you can be sure that one of the greatest innovations in the upcoming decade will be the introduction of WAP (Wireless Application Protocol).

INTERNET ADAPTERS: The rest of America seems to be catching up with the early adapters of the Internet, as the online population now mirrors the general U.S. population. From 1996 to 2001, a shift in the demographic of users has occurred, moving away from the predominantly male, mostly wealthy, young American. The picture now appears more even, with 51 percent of women online and 49 percent of men -- the same breakdown of men and women in the American population, according to the 1999 U.S. Census. The COO of Insight Express says, "...never before has such a basic demographic shift produced such an enormous opportunity for so many companies in so many consumer markets."

GLOBAL E-BIZ INFO: * More than 429 million people worldwide have Internet access, with the US and Canada accounting for 41 percent of the figure. A recent report released from Nielsen found that Europe, the Middle East and Africa have the second-highest proportion of access with 27 percent, Asia Pacific has 20 percent online and 4 percent of the population of Latin America has access to the Internet.

* According to Japan's Ministry of Telecommunications, the number of Internet users in Japan is expected to double to 87.2 million by 2005. There were 47.08 million users in 2000 and about one-half, 23.64 million, used a mobile phone to access the 'net.

* According to RedSheriff, all the top 10 Australian sites experienced increases in traffic in May 2001, with the top 5 sites enjoying double-digit growth. There was growth in several categories: classifieds were up 24.7%, online auctions grew by 23.8%, and employment listings rose by 21.2%.

* The Yankee Group predicts that Brazil will enjoy a 23% compound annual growth rate for the number of Internet users from 2000 to 2006, reaching 42.3 million users at the end of that period. The CAGR amounts to 20.8% for household users, 22.8% for corporate users and 27.0% for academic users.

* Forrester Research reports that as of July 2001, two in five Europeans have Internet access. Between 16% and 17% of users with less than 6 months 'net experience use the Internet as a primary news source whereas 35% to 37% of users with 2 or more years of experience turn to the Internet first for news.

* Petrobras, Brazil's federally-run energy company, expects its e-purchasing system to save $1.6 billion annually, nearly one-quarter of its $6.3 billion in annual purchasing. The online system debuts in Oct 2001, and Petrobras expects to save 6% on the $500 million in purchasing that month.

* A recent report finds that 40% of Germans over the age of 14 are surfing the Iinternet. The June 2001 study from Forsa also reports that 28.5% of German internet users access the 'net either several times a week or daily. 20% of the 26 million Internet users are age 50 or over.

* According to Oftel's quarterly consumer survey, as of May 2001, 70% of adults in the UK own a cellphone. Additionally Oftel found that 78% of homes have at least one cellphone and 15% of owners consider their mobiles their primary means of communication.

* Analysts predict that mobile data revenue in Western Europe will grow from EUR 7 million to EUR 130 billion in 2011. The report, "Controlling the 3G Value Chain," finds that the next 24 months that lead up to the introduction of non-voice 3G technologies will decide the leaders in the 3G market.

* Neilsen Ratings Global Internet Trends shows that Sweden is the tops in European online shopping. Out of the 46% of people browsing for products online, 26% purchased products. Sweden was followed in online shopping purchases by Denmark, Switzerland, New Zealand, Finland, and the Netherlands.

* IDC India reports the Internet population in India will grow by more than eight times to 37.5 million by the end of 2005, with home and small businesses flourishing. Internet use from home is expected to grow by 87% and the small business base will grow by 72% from 2000 to 2005.

* A Dublin, Ireland taxi firm is launching a fleet "e-taxis" that can be ordered by sending an SMS text message by mobile phone. E-Taxi/CityCabs is betting that the SMS-crazy Irish, said to have one of the highest rates of SMS messaging in the world, will jump at the chance to "text for a taxi".

WEB SITES THAT WORK: Web surfing is a fast-paced sport. Some surfers can hit 10-20 sites in a ten minute span. That leaves each site about a minute to capture the surfers attention. Every business website needs at least three things: 1. A unique and positive image; 2. An irresistible reason to stay past that minute; 3. A lasting relationship. Make sure your site has all three. Why? A huge percentage of visitors judge your entire business within those first 10 seconds of visiting your site. Be sure your website immediately displays a reason for visitors to stick around, including ways the site can help them. Offer them an opt-in list of value to them so that you can form a lasting relationship with them.

SMART APPLIANCES & THE NET: There's a whole new generation of "smart appliances" - the Internet Fridge and Internet Microwave and others. You can do your banking from your microwave, or even watch TV while heating up dinner. These appliances can track your consumption, and, by your scanning products as you use them up, can build a shopping list for you, which you can then transmit via the net to your friendly Internet Grocer. We will become so wired as a society these things will seem normal, and we will wonder how we ever existed without them. Anyone who is not online, will be at a sharp social disadvantage, pros and cons of such a world can make for an interesting discussion.

KIDS AND PARENTS: A Stanford University study showed that more than two-thirds of parents say the Internet is a necessary tool for students K through 12th grade, eighty-two percent think that filtering software is necessary, and three fourths feel it's okay to monitor their children's email without permission.

STAYING AFLOAT & GROWING: If you asked people how they would describe the computer and web industries, some of the most common answers would have to be fast-paced or rapidly changing. Never before has there been such a fast turnaround when it comes to innovation and discovery. There are literally 1000s of marketers out there competing with you for your customers' attention. Any kind of flaw

in your marketing plan can be a fatal one, and one of the most common flaws that can damage your business is a lack of information. So, how can you stay well informed in today's fast changing market?

* Understand your audience. It's important to remember that your customers' wants and needs will change over time. Adapt to these changes by using reports, polls, demographics, and ratings, and communicating with your customers. Email your customers to see if they are satisfied, and ask them what they are looking for in your product or service. Make sure they can contact you with problems or feedback. * Understand your competitors. Actively look for your competitors and see what they are doing on their web sites. If you notice trends or changes, it may help you adapt more quickly to a changing market so you can offer your customers the best service and product possible.

E-LEARNING: Faced with the global challenge of training people, universities and corporations have turned to e-learning. Using the power of the Internet, instructors teach courses to employees in a wide variety of environments. With increasing access to the worldwide web, employees easily go on-line from virtually anywhere to take a course. However, not all employees are ready to embrace on-line learning. Many are still not computer-literate while others find this computer learning a bit intimidating. Hardware issues, whether to develop courses in-house or contract them out, scheduling, and training in the process of computer-based learning are all challenges to be met. However, e-learning is here to stay.

NEXT GENERATION: The next generation appears not to be influenced by the baggage that many adults have carried for generations. They have little patience for game-playing and silly politics, being eager to tackle challenges, resolve them, and move quickly to the next challenge. Technology is their efficiency weapon. Today's young people, tomorrow's leaders, communicate instantaneously via email and the web. With translation programs, language barriers disappear. Younger generations, looking toward the future, have truly embraced the concept of globalization.

LEADERSHIP IN BUSINESS: I recently read an article that said leadership is replacing management. No big surprise. In 1994, I wrote a book entitled "TechnoTouch: Managing Change for 21st Century Leadership$^{©}$". It covered the premises that workers no longer want to be managed – they demand leadership, which requires a whole different set of skills. Maybe the reason the issue is rising anew is that workers have heard talk of management to leadership, but have not seen action. Leadership means letting go, giving workers more responsibility, more freedom, more power, and more accountability.

Many executives, managers, and supervisors are calling themselves leaders, but are still managing -- directing, organizing others work, monitoring closely, disciplining. These techniques impede growth, which requires original thinking, creativity, innovation, and risk-taking -- all essential in today's competitive, fast-moving world. Most people in charge are more comfortable with management than they are with leadership. Example of new behaviors must come from the top of the organization. Employers who manage this transformation will have a competitive advantage in the future.

WORKPLACE ISSUES: Drake Beam Morin talked to human resource professionals at nearly 400 companies across the U.S. and had 81 percent tell them that employee turnover was the most critical issue for their organization. Their average annual voluntary turnover rate is 20 percent.

NET HEALTH CARE: Almost one-half of online surfers looking for health-care information find it is too difficult to comprehend. A study published in the Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine found that in 89 documents of pediatric care, most were written between 10th or 12th grade level. Since 50 percent of the US population reads at or below that level, authors suggest these documents should be written on the 8th grade level or lower.

E-WOMEN: With statistics showing that women make 75-80% of all buying decisions, sales and marketing strategies are changing. According to Census Bureau statistics, women-owned businesses in

the US continue to increase. Women are also 54 percent of the voting population. Take the quiz on this site about women who've made a difference down through history. http://www.womenleadersonline.com/

E-SHOPPING: Haven't purchased your graduation gifts yet? A quick way to send gifts is online, with sites that have secure shopping carts. Order your flowers at http://www.chestersflowers.com -- or your specialty gifts at http://www.giftbarnonline.com Make others happy, take advantage of the sales, and save yourself time! Want an enjoyable evening out, while supporting a great community asset? Purchase tickets to the Children's Museum's 4th annual Wine & Art event online. http://www.museum4kids.net/

E-SECURITY: E-commerce websites which feature Secure Transaction are stored on specially-configured computers which ensure that the data transferred between the customer's PC, the website and the computer responsible for processing the credit card, turning the data into a code which cannot easily be read by others. When a customer fills in their credit card details on a form at a secure website and then clicks the order button, the credit card information is sent as little bits of electronic encrypted data.

LEVITY THOTS: A survey, conducted by soapmaker Unilever Canada, found a third of respondents admitting to singing in the shower. The most sung tune was "Singing in the Rain." Personally, I like to sing "Oh Mr. Sun, Sun, Mr. Golden Sun" (especially when the grandchildren will be visiting and we want the rain to go away). Check out our Fun Stuff page. You'll find some neat jokes and thoughtful sayings to get you through those stressful times! http://www.technotouch.com/

VIRUS/HOAX UPDATES: A government Internet watchdog warned companies of a new worm, a malicious program that spreads to previously compromised PCs and seemingly prepares the infected machines to launch a denial-of-service attack. The program, known as W32-Leaves.worm, places additional code on the compromised machines and synchronizes the PCs' internal clocks with the one at the U.S. Naval Observatory. More info on our Tech Stuff and Virus Info page.

WONDERLAND: Some of the recent special moments spent with family, friends, clients, and community have been: Picking strawberries and mining for diamonds with my two youngest grandchildren; Being chosen as one of the Top 20 Women-Owned Business in NYS; Enjoying phone and email conversations with my FL based son and CA based daughter; Having nice drop-in visits from my two local daughters; Delivering keynote presentations; Taking and uploading pictures "live" at the 1st ever Rotary RYLA International Convention; Beginning my year as President of my local Rotary Club and CNY's Children's Museum Board of Directors; Receiving awards for our website design and Internet marketing; Working with phenomenal clients; Watching our "grand-cats" enjoy the sunshine. Perseverence and focus brought us from outage to glow. Life is good. Friends and clients are great. Family is precious. Thank you, God.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH:
" ***The trouble with experience as a teacher is that the test comes first and the lesson after.***"
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Marm's Memo is written by Marlene B. Brown, author of "TechnoTouch: Managing Change for 21st Century Leadership," (Sunrise Publishing) and other books. Comments are welcome. Archives can be viewed at http://www.technotouch.com/articles.html

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