



Marlene B. Brown's December 2000 Marm's Memo "Holiday Sites & 2001 Greatness"

E-SHOPPING: The latest research shows that 4 out of 10 shoppers will buy holiday gifts online, spending an estimated 43% of their holiday budget on the Internet this year. Again this year, I did 95% of my holiday shopping online. Here are some of my favorite sites and what I purchased there:
<http://www.chestersflowers.com> (a beautiful holiday bouquet for my Mom);
<http://www.museum4kids.net/> (membership certificates for friends); <http://www.rotarianswine.com/> (membership for a Rotarian friend); <http://www.amazon.com> (toys for the grandkids); and <http://www.giftbarnonline.com> (gift certificates for my children).

E-TAILING: At a recent keynote presentation, I reminded attendees not to overlook two important groups of consumers. The SOHO Market and "The Experiencers." One: the professional women who own the largest percentage of SOHO (Small Office / Home Office) businesses, and Two: the so-called senior crowd, those over 50 (whom I'm dubbing as the Experiencers). Many experiencers have sizeable incomes or nest eggs, yet many decision makers on e-commerce marketing teams are missing out on this group. If we want to forge new territory in e-commerce, we must be all-inclusive. There can be no digital divides, cultural barriers, gender discrimination, or ageism.

INTERNET SHOPPING: Recent research shows the total online spending increased to US\$6.4 billion in November, up from \$4.4 billion in October. December will be at least equal to November. Thus online spending in 2000 will more than double last year's performance. Shoppers spent an average of \$285 per person. Everything with a digital or electrical heartbeat will be connected to the Internet. The Virtual World, where people's lives are connected, will make them happier. The New Economy is real, and the Web/Net gives more parity to smaller companies.

INTERNET DOMAINS: To alleviate the demand for domain names, the International Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), has approved seven new name suffixes as follows: .info - General Use; .biz - Business; .name - Individuals; .pro - Professional; .museum - Museum; .aero - Aviation Industry; .coop - Business Cooperatives. This will expand the current three suffixes, .com, .net and .org.

INTERNET ECONOMY: In the Net/Web economy, things really do move faster: with e-mail, high-speed data networks, and the Web, it's possible to do more things more quickly. While successful organizations of the next century will still possess good products, sound strategy, and amazing service, they will also require the ability to be fast, to adapt to a volatile business environment, to know and understand how to proactively approach future trends in your industry.

KEYS TO SUCCESS: Never give up; Work hard; Outsource what you don't know; Keep learning; Don't dismiss your daydreams; Make your work your play; Go with your instincts; Have the faith; Keep it all in perspective. The final winner on the popular TV show, "The Survivor", Rich, had the ability to shift strategies and adjust to the rules. Interesting to watch, and analyze for its applicability to life and business success.

KEYS TO INSTINCT: While much of our life's plan may be laid out ahead of time, life is a school and we're here to learn. Thus there is much we can make happen by our free will and choice. Our instinct, our 6th sense, comes through our thoughts. Like a muscle, the more we use our instinct, the better we are.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS: What will be most needed for success in the 21st Century? Experience, Talent, and Passion. The skills that are so essential in the Net world - flexibility, speed, aptitude for technology, hunger for good information, a willingness to change, a global outlook, a continuing belief in the benefits of doing things differently - will be the characteristics of successful business leaders for a long time to come.

TRIMMING TAXES: Except for contributions to some retirement accounts, the last day of 2000 is the drop-dead date for making moves to reduce your tax payments come April. Three steps small businesses can take are: 1. Make equipment purchases now; 2. Set up a Keogh plan; 3. Engage in some tax-deductible holiday generosity. Come April, you'll be glad you did!

WEB ADVERTISING: Advertising dollars are exploding on the Web. Spending by dot-com companies on all forms of advertising is running at a rate of US\$7.4 billion for 2000, including television, radio, print, online, and outdoor billboards. The buying will be done by either competitors or brick-and-mortar companies who want entry into the online world.

WEBSITE GROWTH: The Web's potential as a medium for enabling all kinds of new human interactions and new types of business transactions lives on. The convergence of technological, economic and social forces that created the Internet Economy will not be going away. So many people have experienced the excitement of building businesses in entirely new ways, that the momentum will continue to explode.

WEB E-TAILERS: The holiday shopping season has been a big success for e-tailers. E-commerce shopping sites grew 17 percent overall in the number of visitors from the same period last year. The predictions that consumers would spend \$7.1 billion online in the fourth quarter of this year appears to be correct.

WINNERS: Records are meant to be broken and leaders are meant to be challenged. Tiger Woods, Sports Illustrated's Athlete of the Year said "I worked hard to achieve the wins and got some lucky breaks along the way. I will continue to try to improve and turn my weaknesses into strengths." That's an adage we all can follow, folks. Step up to the plate, accept the challenge, and embrace the moment.

WORTHWHILE THOUGHTS: As I flew home from a recent engagement, the movie I watched had the line: "They had been part of something great, and greatness stays with us". Powerful thought - one we can pass down. All of my children are so highly successful, I'm so proud of them, and they of me. One of my daughters recently said to me, "Mom, your clients are so lucky to work with you. You have such total stage presence as a speaker. And as a web designer and marketing strategist, you're really great at web design and excellent at marketing something you believe in". Folks, this humbles me, and is probably one of the most valued referrals I'll ever get.

WONDERLAND: Some of the recent special moments spent with family, friends, clients, and community have been: Enjoying a family day in NYC, watching one of my daughters perform in an off-Broadway production of the Nutcracker. Receiving and adding holiday cards to our Family page. <http://www.technotouch.com/FamShots.htm> Delivering keynote presentations for various clients: <http://www.technotouch.com/client.html> Appearing on a local TV news show to analyze the election debates: <http://www.technotouch.com/Hometown.htm> Working with my talented technotouch & B2B team, creating and maintaining websites for clients. <http://www.technotouch.com/webdesgn.htm> Being part of a successful Holiday Auction at my Rotary Club. <http://www.rotarydistrict7150.org/NewHartf.html> Being involved in a successful Children's Museum's Fifth Day Event. <http://www.museum4kids.net> Being involved in creating a new website with shopping

cart for a new client: <http://www.giftbarnonline.com> Life is good. Friends and clients are great. Family is precious. Thank you, God.

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MARLENE'S SERVICES: Marlene & her team help companies stay competitive by understanding and taking action on future trends. Clients have used their services over the past two decades to:

- Review or design your Strategic Plan
- Design, redesign, maintain your Website
- Create articles for your website or newsletter
- Help you combine your offline & online marketing
- Provide Leadership and/or Sales training for key people
- Help your team move from tech's voice side to the data side
- Analyze your competition and industry in this volatile environment
- Deliver keynote on Change, Technology, Leadership, Net Commerce
- Conduct a Digital Age or E-Business Briefing Session for key executives
- Coach people at the top during transition times to move forward into the future

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