

Worth Knowing About



MANY HAPPY RETURNS!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



The expression “Many Happy Returns” is traced back to 1779 when it was used to convey best wishes for a happy new year. For over a century it was used in relation to New Year’s and many other celebratory days, including April Fool’s Day! At some point late in the 19th century, it became associated primarily with birthdays.

It is not used as commonly these days, but is still bestowed upon some birthday girls and boys (probably by an aging uncle). In any case, we’ve dusted it off to wish you the best in 2006. And, as marketers are wont to do, we’ve exploited the term to suit our promotional needs. We hope you enjoy the information provided in this, albeit streamlined, newsletter, and wish you a Happy Christmas, Happy New Year, and

Many Happy Returns!

- 1 Many Happy Returns
- 2 (Many Happy) Returns on Investment
- 3 (Not so) Many Happy Returns



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(Many Happy) Returns on Investment



Is Your Web Site an Investment or an Expense?

Most companies that spend a considerable amount of money on a Web site will be interested in measuring the success of the site and determining their return on investment (ROI). But how do you measure the ROI of a Web site?

Many firms focus on Web stats—the number of page views, hits, click-throughs, unique visitors, etc. All of which is important data for assessing the use and effectiveness of your Web site, but it doesn't address the ultimate question—does your site generate more money than it costs? In fact, it goes deeper than that; to calculate a Web site's ROI, you need to consider three areas:

Costs: How much money has your company spent to develop and launch its Web site? How much do you spend on its daily operation, including staffing, systems, maintenance and improvements? How much is spent on advertising and marketing just the site?

Revenues: How much in sales and other income can you attribute to your company's site? How much of that is direct—sales derived from an e-commerce site, and how much is indirect—leads generated online that evolved into sales?

Savings: To what extent does your company's Web site reduce or control expenses? How much is saved due to streamlining business processes, reducing staff or cutting distribution costs?

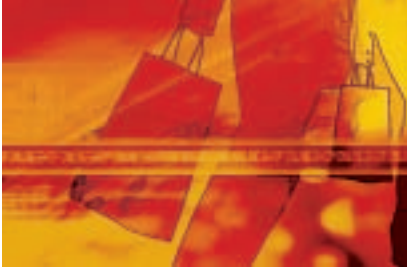
WELCOME JENNIFER!



Jennifer Perehinec started with PROSAR in September and has already proven herself to be an uncommonly astute marketer. A distinguished alumnus of Queens University's Commerce programme, Jennifer gained further experience and demonstrated her innovative thinking and leadership skills working with two other marketing firms in the Ottawa area before joining our team.

(Not So) Happy Returns

The past two years have seen many retail chains acting more like Scrooge than Santa when it comes to returning merchandise. Declining profits and an increase in fraudulent claims are two of the reasons cited for a stricter outlook on returned goods.



Some retailers are simply requiring a receipt, enforcing a time limit on returns or offering only store credit; however, others are far more sophisticated. Many national chains are using intelligence software to track consumers' returns. For example, Wal-

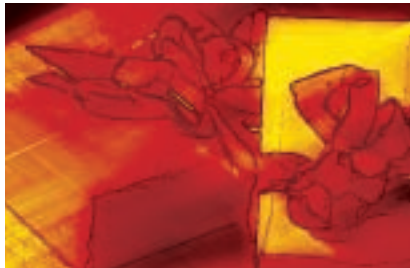
Mart uses a popular program

called The Return Exchange to flag potential abuse—three returns without a receipt within a 45-day period and you'll need a manager's approval for any return during the next six months.

There is also an increase in the use of restocking fees (a percentage charged to the consumer returning the item, which is deducted from the amount returned), particularly among electronics retailers. Not surprisingly, this trend is not being embraced by shoppers. A recent survey by BIGresearch in the US showed that 83% of consumers did not agree with restocking fees and many of those stated that such fees would influence where they shopped.

So take extra care when shopping this season; and remember, if you end up stuck with a gift that even the retailer doesn't want—there's always Ebay! In fact, more rigid return policies have not been the trend on the Internet. Online and mail order companies have continued to offer flexible return policies; they are still regarded as a necessary incentive to encourage online shopping.

For the record, any retail sector client of PROSAR's deals with returns in an honourable and respectful manner— that's just the kind of people we work with.





Many happy returns

from the
PRO*STAR
team!

Holiday schedule: Closed Dec 23 - Jan 03 inclusive