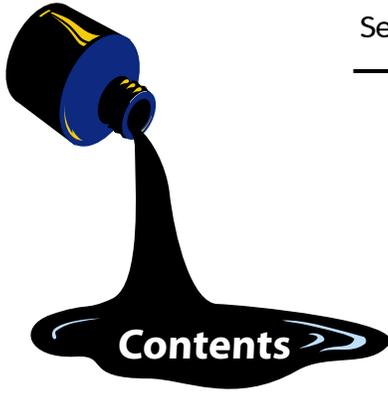




Nevada News

Serving the Retail Community Since 1969

July 2004



Nevada Youth Smoking Less Says CDC

Fewer Nevada high school students bought cigarettes in 2003. So says the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The agency conducted a study, which found that Nevada's youth are smoking less. The Nevada Department of Education confirmed the numbers.

According to the summary, the percentage of Nevada high school students who attempted to purchase cigarettes in stores dropped by 35 percent from 2001 to 2003, and the percentage of students who actually purchased cigarettes in stores in the previous month dropped by 46 percent during that same period.

In addition, fewer Nevada high school students are smoking. In 1993, 28.3 percent of high school students smoked an entire cigarette before the age of 13. In 2003, only 18.8 percent of high school students smoked an entire cigarette before age 13. Similarly, the percentage of Nevada high school students who smoked cigarettes on 20 or more days of the previous 30 days dropped from 14.4 percent to 8.8 percent. Also, the percentage of students who smoked at least two cigarettes on the days they smoked dropped from 20.8 percent to 11.8 percent.

"Our enforcement activities geared toward preventing minors from purchasing tobacco products are paying off, along with the many campaigns statewide to educate young people about the dangers of smoking. The public health community, schools,

and retailers have all cooperated in this effort, and the future dividends are enormous—and enormously positive," says John Albrecht, deputy attorney general from Nevada.

Find the CDC's complete youth risk behavior survey at <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov.yrbss>.

The June 2004 statistics on Nevada retail tobacco enforcement continues with good news.

Out of 647 attempted purchases by underage youth, there were only 54 citations issued. The purchase rate was 10.8 percent. Albrecht says, "this is very good news for the tobacco enforcement program here in Nevada. Please continue your work to have sales staff check IDs and refuse to sell tobacco to customers under 18 years of age."

In other tobacco news, a group called the Nevada Tobacco Prevention Coalition filed a petition that would prohibit smoking in most government and commercial buildings and public places. The petitioners are aiming for the 2006 ballot.

This petition exempts casinos and bars that do not serve food but would ban smoking in all grocery stores, drug stores, convenience stores and most bars and taverns.

Smoking bans have hit most states with 45 having restricted smoking in public places. Some states require all workplaces and government-owned buildings to be smoke free or provide separate areas for smoking.

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Seen & Noted

Preventing Tobacco Sales to Minors

Where can you find the best and the brightest in the workforce to work for you? Maybe the National Retail Federation (NRF) can help with their Retail Careers and Advancement program.

The NRF Foundation has developed a well-rounded program to recruit people into the industry, and they tell their story at www.nrf.com/RetailCareers. The site not only has loads of information for those seeking a career in retail, it also assists businesses in finding those well-qualified people every business seeks.

A list of career opportunities with definitions includes specific information from different companies on those things that potential employees want to know about such as health, dental and retirement plans, leave time, promotion possibilities, financial support for continued education and professional development, diversity programs, work-life balance information, vacation, sick and/or personal leave time, etc. Employers can also use this information to find out what they're up against when recruiting employees who are shopping for the best prospects.

The NRF Retail Skills Centers, which are located around the U.S., offer recruitment, training and placement services for companies. Retailers can use the centers to find, select, train and motivate their professional sales and service employees, while workers can build employability and retail skills and knowledge to enter and advance in the retail and service sectors. Centers are created through partnerships among the NRF Foundation, mall developers, employers, local, state and federal government agencies, schools and colleges and community-based organizations. Businesses and/or communities can contact the NRF Foundation to find out how to create a center. The centers offer programs according to the needs of the community they serve.

Looking for a few good employees? Want to become a partner? Just want to keep up with the latest in the industry? Then tap into the NRF website and find out what's happening at www.nrf.com/RetailCareers.

Smith's Gives Scholarships to Clark County Students

Smith's Food and Drug Stores, along with the Clark County Education Foundation, recognized 10 Clark County high school seniors with \$1,000 scholarships to be applied toward costs of higher education or training.

The Smith's Personal Best Scholarship acknowledges students who, in the face of serious personal challenges, have demonstrated courage and determination to overcome those obstacles and continue in their pursuit of an education. Grades are not a factor when determining the scholarship recipients.

Since the program began in 1995, 133 Clark County students have been recognized as Personal Best recipients. Teachers, counselors and employers nominate students who they feel will benefit from the scholarship.

Smith's works with the Public Education Foundation, established in 1991, to award the scholarships. Besides presenting grants and scholarships, the Foundation works to increase graduation rates and promote systemic reform.

Local Governments Look to Impound Abandoned Shopping Carts

By Paul Enos

Manager of Government Affairs, RAN

The issue of abandoned shopping carts has migrated from Clark County to Northern Nevada. The cities of Reno and Sparks are both looking at ordinances which will allow the city to collect and impound abandoned shopping carts, and then charge retailers a fee of anywhere from \$25 to \$50 per cart to get their property back.

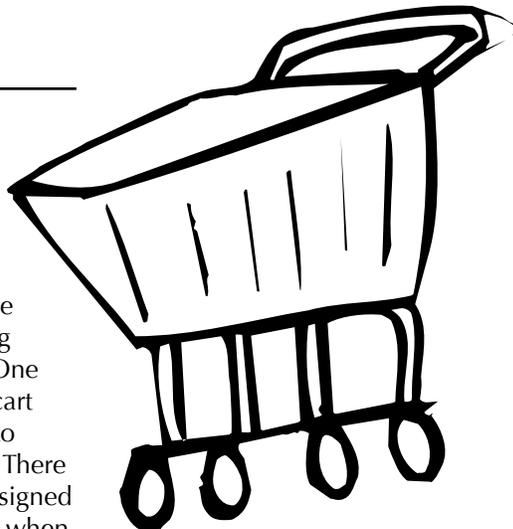
Last month a code enforcement summit in Reno addressed this topic at great length. Reno City Councilwoman Jessica Sferrazza suggested that all stores with shopping carts should be taxed so the city does not have to spend any additional tax dollars to collect the carts. When it was suggested that the police enforce the current law and cite those individuals who remove carts from store property, a representative of the city scoffed at the idea and said that it was the retailers who were causing the problem and not the people stealing the carts. When RAN provided the city with a list of contacts for the stores that use carts, the code enforcement officers said that it would be too difficult to contact the stores to tell them to pick up their carts.

The City of Sparks is beginning a trial program this month to determine the cost to the city to collect and impound the abandoned carts. They are also drafting an ordinance that gives them the ability to fine the retailer when the city collects an abandoned cart.

Shopping cart theft is a serious problem that retailers have already addressed. The expense for stolen carts, which cost from \$100.00 to \$150.00, can quickly add up to thousands of dollars when they

are taken. Cart collection businesses have contracts with many retailers throughout the state and have proven to be successful in reducing the stores' cart loss. One retailer sells a small cart to its patrons at cost to discourage cart theft. There is also technology designed to lock a cart's wheel when it is taken off the property. However, this technology is very expensive and can be rendered inoperable by vandals.

RAN appreciates the assistance of



the retailers who have provided us with support and information as we try to find a common sense solution for this issue.

Nevada Medicaid Preferred Drug List Implementation

By Dawn Daly

Provider Relations Clinical Representative
First Health Services

On July 14, 2004, the Nevada Medicaid Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee will be selecting drugs for the Preferred Drug List (PDL). The Preferred Drug List will be posted to the Nevada First Health Services website: <http://nevada.fhsc.com>, on July 16.

Each pharmacy will be receiving a packet in the mail the week of July 19. This PDL packet will contain a letter explaining the implementation process, the Preferred Drug List, and an educational announcement. Please remember, this PDL implementation applies to Nevada

Medicaid and Nevada Check Up Fee-For-Service recipients only, not to Managed Care recipients.

If you have any questions regarding this process or would like individual training sessions for your stores, contact Jamie Wyels at 702-914-2131 in Southern Nevada, or Dawn Daly at 775-784-3906 in Northern Nevada.

The educational announcement with the training schedule can be viewed online at <http://nevada.fhsc.com> by selecting "Preferred Drug List" under the "Pharmacy" drop-down menu.

How to Handle the Foreign Accent

By Nancy Friedman
The Telephone Doctor

It's fairly common today to talk with people who have accents, either international or domestic. How many times have you talked with someone just from a different region of the USA and not understood him or her? Miscommunication is easy when talking with someone with an accent, and with more and more businesses going global, it's even more important to know how to deal with a foreign accent. Don't forget, if a customer's accent is foreign to you, your accent is foreign to him or her. So, these tips apply both ways, and they're effective both phone and in-person conversations.

❖ **Don't Pretend to Understand**

It's OK to gently explain that you're having difficulty understating them. Let's face it, if you have an accent, you know it. One of the least effective things you can do when you don't understand someone is to pretend you do. Some folks nod or say, "OK," just to move the conversation along. That's not doing anyone any good. It's perfectly all right to simply say, "I apologize; I'm having a little difficulty understanding you. If you could slow down just a little bit, I'll be able to get it all correct for you." Knowing that

you want to help and get it right is the most important thing to the person with the accent. Remember, too, that your tone of voice is universal. So keep it at a light, slower pace and yes, smiling is also universal. The customer will hear your smile in any language.

❖ **Don't Rush**

You may want to really rush someone who speaks with an accent, and that's not a good idea. Rushing threatens the best of us, let alone someone with an accent different than yours. Slow down a little.

❖ **Don't Shout**

It's an accent, not a hearing problem. Often, we subconsciously speak louder or repeat the same word over and over thinking that will help. It doesn't. It's insulting to shout at someone. Keep that smile on your face and keep trying to let the person know that you are there to help. It might take time, but it will help.

❖ **Don't be Rude**

No one really thinks they're rude, but if you've ever said, "Hey, I can't understand you," or even uttered a terse "Huh," that's rude. Again, explain that you're having some difficulty understanding. They'll often repeat what they've said. If the situation is hopeless, and you simply aren't getting anywhere, don't be embarrassed or afraid to call for help. Perhaps another person can better understand what the customer is saying. But remember, being shuffled from one person to another is frustrating to anyone, accent or not, so continue to be patient.

❖ **Do Keep a Job Aid Available**

Usually, about 80 percent of the calls we receive are from people with the same accent, be it Hispanic, Asian or European. If your job has you working with a large percentage of customers with the same accent, keep a few simple phrases in that language near you, short phrases that let the customer know you're trying. If you're in a Hispanic environment, phrases like, "Un momento, por favor,"—One moment, please—will help. Even if you mispronounce it, the customer will understand that you are trying. Hopefully, there is a co-worker nearby who is either fluent or well spoken in one particular language who can help you formulate an effective work aid.

And remember what I said earlier—you smile is universal. Use it early and often, no matter who you're talking to!

Nancy Friedman is president of Telephone Doctor Customer Service Training and a speaker at association and corporate meetings. Call 314-291-1012 for information or visit www.telephonedoctor.com/keynote.

Listen Your Way to Successful Sales

Speaker and sales pro Jeff Blackman tells the story of the time he once visited the head of a major financial firm. Blackman had been trying to close a deal to provide a series of seminars to the company's professional staff. His action plan had already been approved by the company's HR department, but the CEO was to make the final decision.

Blackman walked into the CEO's office ready to make his presentation. As he shook hands, the CEO gave him a hard stare and ordered, "Sell me."

Instantly Blackman changed his strategy to meet the challenge. "Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?"

The CEO agreed: "Fire Away!"

During the next 50 minutes of the meeting, Blackman asked questions like, "What do you think about the action plan? How does it match your objectives/ What would you change?" But the CEO did most of the talking as Blackman jotted down the answers to each question.

"All right," the CEO said at the end. "Let's do it!" Instead of talking the CEO into the deal, Blackman had *listened* to the CEO investing in it. "Despite his challenge to sell him, I didn't," writes Blackman. "He sold himself!"

*From **Sales Management Report**, 800-878-5331, www.ragan.com. Adapted from "He said, 'Sell me!'" by Jeff Blackman, in Jeffrey Gitomer's *Sales Caffeine* e-newsletter.*

The Employee Break Room – The Hidden Employee Benefit

The break room might be one of the easiest places to boost employee morale. How does yours stack up to these suggestions for a well-stocked break room?

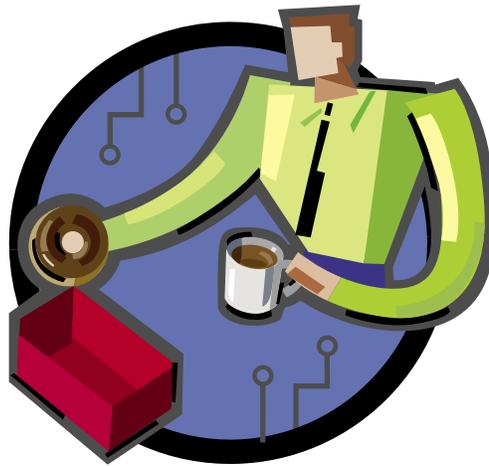
A really good break room has a few essentials, starting with the surroundings. Is the area clean, well lit and have the supplies available to keep it that way? Is it comfortable? Does it have the basics such as a microwave and small refrigerator so that employees have somewhere to store goodies and don't always have to go out for lunch?

Although it isn't necessary to store large quantities of food, a few items have come to be staples of the well-stocked break room. Always keep on hand a coffee maker, coffee and coffee filters, and don't forget the tea bags and instant coffee.

If there's food and drink, there needs to be paper and/or ceramic cups, paper plates and utensils. And for those who don't drink coffee, you may want to stock packets of instant hot chocolate. It's also a good idea to keep plenty of water on hand, which can be bottled or from a water cooler.

It's not necessary to keep full-course meals on hand, but a few munchies can go a long way in helping employees keep both their mental and physical energy up. Consider stocking snacks such as microwave popcorn, pretzels, cookies, energy foods like granola bars, and even fresh fruit if warranted.

As far as cleanliness is concerned, employees should be required to clean up after themselves. Be sure they have the tools complete clean up duties. Provide dish soap and/or other cleaning products such as cleansers, dishcloths and towels, sponges, a broom, mop, and paper towels. Don't forget garbage bins and bags.



If the break room is large enough and employees regularly take their lunch breaks there, you might consider providing magazines, a sound system and even a TV. Although those things are certainly extras, you have to consider the time you expect employees to stay at the office.

Another smart item to keep on hand is the well-stocked first aid kit. You can buy complete kits at many stores, including office supply stores, or you can buy a container and stock it yourself with products appropriate for the kit and your office.

Most of these items are easy to assemble. Office supply stores often carry everything from office supplies to foodstuffs and kitchen appliances. Sometimes even employees will have some extra equipment at home that they would be willing to share with the group.

The well-kept and well-stocked break room can be that one little perk that keeps your employees doing their best job for you. What would you want in a break room if you were working for someone? Make a list. Is that what you've provided for your employees?

Is That Customer Underage? Check Out That Driver's License

Nevada's driver's licenses are geared to help retail clerks and law enforcement officers quickly identify if a driver is under the age of 21 or 18. Licenses for both of these age groups have a distinctive look.

Unlike the license for those over 21 years of age, which is printed in a horizontal format, the entire license for drivers under 21 is printed vertically. That includes the photo and the words. The language on the license includes the words "Under 21 Until," followed by the date the cardholder will turn 21. This language is highlighted with a yellow band.

The license for those under 18 years of age is printed in a horizontal format. There is a light blue header bar across the top of the license containing the words, "MINOR UNDER 18" printed in yellow in the upper right corner. The photo on this license has the driver facing slightly to the left.

For detailed information about the licenses issued by Nevada and to see what the licenses look like, go to <http://www.dmvnv.com/dldesign.htm>.

Say What??

"If the automobile had followed the same development cycle as the computer, a Rolls Royce would today cost \$100, get a million miles per gallon and explode once a year, killing everyone inside." –Robert X. Cringely, *InfoWorld Magazine*

Source: "Quick Bites," by Sam Geist. 800-567-1861. <http://www.samgeist.com>.

Admobile of Reno Brings New Interest to Outdoor Advertising

Several years ago when Eric Thompson lived in Seattle, he found himself following a truck that was carrying billboards—mobile billboards. Eric says, “I was dying to see what was on the side. I knew it was advertising, and I knew it was a great idea.” In fact, he was so excited about the idea that he contacted his friend Chris Boratenski who was running his own business in Reno, a transportation company that served an area from the airport to Lake Tahoe.

They were convinced that mobile ads were something that the area needed, so they took the leap. Chris sold his transportation business, Eric moved to Reno, and they invested in Admobile, offering the latest and hottest form of advertising in the Reno area.

Location, location, location. Yes, it is everything, especially when it comes to advertising. And it’s what sets Admobile apart from other outdoor advertising. If you place your ad on this venue, you’ve given your ad the advantage of being in the right place at the right time as it travels a planned route throughout Washoe County to hit the highest traffic spots all day long.

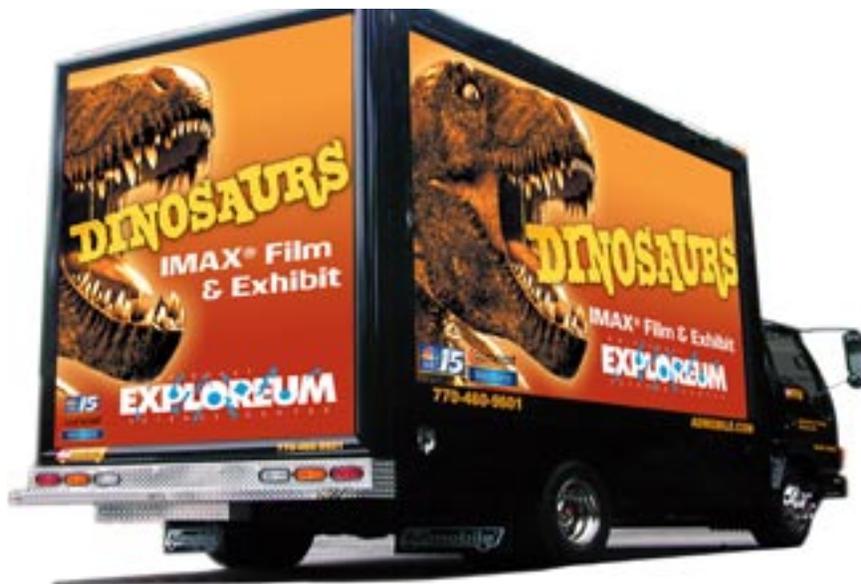
Eric says they use the latest data from DOT and local agencies to map out a drive route that hits the highest traffic areas throughout the day. The truck is on the road from 7:00 a.m.

to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The truck carries ads on all four sides and is entirely lit for those shorter daylight hours in winter. The truck carries both stationary billboards and tri-image signs that give an advertiser the advantage of animation. The tri-image sign rotates every eight

around, and Admobile is now getting referrals from ad agencies. It doesn’t hurt that advertisers are seeing the truck around town all day long and are as impressed as Eric was when he saw a similar advertising form happening in Seattle. “There’s never been anything in Reno like this,” Eric

says. “When you’re driving around, you can watch the people staring at it and see they have good reactions to it.”

Eric’s partner, Chris, drives one of the two daily shifts. Bob Hannah, a retired boat captain, takes the other driving shift. Getting good help is a problem. Eric says they need more like Hannah, who is completely reliable and responsible. Chris and Eric are looking for just such another driver.



seconds, allowing an advertiser to say more with one ad—the effect isn’t lost on our tech-happy society. And having your ad seen on an average of 60,000 times a day can only be good news.

Eric and Chris opened for business last December and had planned out a path for growth. The popularity of the advertising medium caught on faster than they expected, though, and they’ve already ordered their second truck despite the cool reception they initially received from the advertising business in the area. Eric says, “The hardest part about starting was getting accepted by the ad agencies in the area.”

He says the agencies have come

work through their ad agencies or work directly with Admobile of Reno, which offers creative services. It might be a good idea to reserve a spot now because this fall, they’ll be running the truck to the San Francisco area during the football season, giving advertisers an even larger territory for their ads.

Call Chris or Eric and they’ll give you all the important information about how mobile advertising is a smart move. Get on the road with Admobile of Reno. Call them at 775-337-1919, and you’ll get to talk to a person, not a machine. If you love to search for yourself, visit their website, www.admobile-reno.com.

NSBDC Classes

The Nevada Small Business Development Center (NSBDC) offers a variety of safety training classes every month in Elko, Reno and Las Vegas. Classes help employers learn how to comply with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations while ensuring a safe and healthy working environment for their employees. Following is a list of classes scheduled for September.

Elko

<u>Class Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
Identifying & Controlling Electrical Hazards	9/15/04	8:30 am - 12:00 pm
Four Hour Defensive Driving Course	9/15/04	1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Both classes will be held at the Human Development Center, Hwy. 225, Owyhee, NV. Classes are free. Register early by calling 775-778-3312 or 877-472-3368.

Reno

<u>Class Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
Supervisory Communication with Non-English Speaking Employees	9/2/04	9:00 am - 11:00 am
Powered Industrial Trucks "Forklift Safety Awareness"	9/8/04	9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Introduction to OSHA	9/21/04	9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Hearing Conservation Program	9/28/04	9:00 am - 12:00 pm

These classes are held in Reno at 4600 Kietzke Lane, Suite E-144. These are not all the classes available. Classes are free. Call 824-4630 to register and for more information.

Las Vegas

<u>Class Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
Confined Space Awareness	9/2/04	9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Powered Industrial Trucks "Forklift Safety Awareness"	9/8/04	9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Excavation Awareness	9/8/04	1:30 pm - 4:30 pm
Asbestos Awareness	9/16/04	9:00 am - 11:30 am
Workplace Emergencies and Evacuation	9/21/04	9:00 am - 11:30 am

These classes are held in Henderson at 1301 N. Green Valley Parkway, Suite 200. These are not all the classes available. Classes are free. Call 702-486-9144 to register or for more information.

NACS Show Opens in October

The National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) Show 2004 is the largest gathering of convenience and petroleum retailers and suppliers in the world. It runs from October 17 through October 20 in Las Vegas and this year features the "\$ Aisle.

NACS says it's time to capture the consumer base that is shopping for dollar items. The "\$ Aisle will show retailers how to capitalize on that trend, which they say is the fastest growing retail segment in the U.S. Find out how to merchandise new products that not only showcases them but shows off the retail base of the store. The "\$ Aisle" will be located in the merchandise area of the exhibit floor. Find new products priced between 99 cents and \$5.00 to wow your customers. Go to www.nacsonline.com or call 703-684-3600.

• Seminars •

October – 2004

NRF Shop.org Annual Summit

October 6 - 8, 2004
Anaheim, CA
Contact: 800-673-4692

FMI & IFDA Productivity Conference & Expo

October 17 - 19, 2004
Dallas, TX
Contact: 703-532-9400

NACDS 2004 Fall Conference

October 17 - 19, 2004
Bonita Springs, FL
Contact: 703-549-3001

NACS Show 2004

October 17 - 20, 2004
Las Vegas, NV
Contact: 703-684-3600

CGA Western Food Industry Exposition

October 24 - 26, 2004
Las Vegas, NV
Contact: 800-794-3545 or email to expo@cagrocers.com

January 2005

NRF 2005 – Retail's BIG SHOW

January 16 - 19, 2005
New York, NY
Contact: 800-673-4692 or
202-626-8194

NACDS Regional Chain Conference

January 27 - 30, 2005
Naples, FL
Contact: 703-549-3001

March 2005

IHA International Home & Housewares Show

March 20 - 22, 2005
Chicago, IL
Contact: <http://www.housewares.org/ihshow>

Abbreviations

CGA • California Grocers Association
FMI • Food Marketing Institute
IFDA • International Foodservice Distributors Association
IHA • International Housewares Assn.
NACS • Nat'l Assn. of Convenience Stores
NRF • National Retail Federation

Internet Service Providers to Work to Stop Spam

AOL, Microsoft, EarthLink and Yahoo will join efforts in the battle against spam. Just when the FTC announced it would not pursue a no-spam registry, the four big Internet service providers took a baby step towards combining their efforts to implement a technical dam to the flood of unsolicited emails.

Each company has been separately pursuing technology that will identify the sender of an email, also called electronic authentication. Because most spam and all phishing (identity theft fraud) uses a fake return address, there are high hopes for sender authentication.

AOL and EarthLink were backing the Sender Policy Framework technology (S.P.F.); Microsoft's proposal is Caller ID and Yahoo is working on Domain Keys. Microsoft has agreed to merge its Caller ID with S.P.F. to create Sender ID. Yahoo is sticking with Domain Keys and announced that it may also use Sender ID, while AOL and EarthLink said they will be using Domain Keys by the end of the year. (They already use S.P.F. to verify outgoing email.)

None of the technology is perfect, but they should help in stopping some of the spam. S.P.F. and Sender ID, which are the easiest to put into effect, allow an Internet provider to designate certain I.P. addresses as the computers that are authorized to send email on its behalf. Domain Keys verifies the actual sender of a message, not the computer used to send it.

FTC Says 'No' to Do-Not-Spam List

Federal backing of a do-not-spam list is a no-go, says the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). According to Timothy Muris, chairman of the FTC, "Any consumer who registers an email address could get more spam."

The FTC claims that a national do-not-spam list containing the email addresses of thousands could turn out to be the gold standard for unscrupulous email marketers. Instead, the commission is pushing for a unified electronic authentication system, a technology that could be used to verify an email sender's address (Spammers often use false return addresses). Microsoft, AOL, Yahoo and EarthLink, who oppose a do-not-spam registry, are working together to create such a system.

The FTC announcement got mixed reviews, though most agreed that a registry would be unworkable with present technologies. The FTC examined three possible registries: a registry containing individual email addresses; a registry containing the names of domains that did not wish to receive spam; and a registry of individual names that required all unsolicited commercial email to be sent via an independent third party that would deliver messages only to those email addresses not on the registry.

The FTC reported that none of these "could be enforced effectively...and would likely result in registered addresses receiving more spam because spammers would use such a registry as a directory of valid email addresses."

Muris says the FTC will push for an authentication system. If the private sector doesn't act soon, he says, the commission will create a federal advisory committee to determine whether the government can require Internet providers to adopt one.

While the FTC put the brakes on a

no-spam registry, the reviews on the Can-Spam Act, which went into effect on January 1, continue to look bleak. The latest survey by the Pew Internet & American Life Project conducted between February 3 and March 1, 2004, finds spam increasing.

- ❖ 29 percent of email users said they have reduced their overall use of email because of spam, an increase from 25 percent surveyed in June 2003.
- ❖ 63 percent of email users said that the influx of spam made them less trusting of email in general, compared to 52 percent last June.
- ❖ 77 percent of emailers said the flood of spam made the act of being online unpleasant and annoying, an increase from 70 percent last June.

The survey found that 86 percent of email users reported some level of distress with spam. Lee Rainie, director of the Pew Internet Project, says, "In the weeks since the Can-Spam Act went into effect on January 1, email users said they are seeing no relief and, in some cases, things are getting worse."

That doesn't surprise detractors of the bill. Many agree with Scott Hazen Mueller, chairman of the Coalition Against Unsolicited Commercial Email. He says the Can-Spam Act isn't just weak, "This law does not stop a single spam from being sent. It also gives a federal stamp of approval for every legitimate marketer in the U.S. to start using unsolicited email as a marketing tool."

Mueller and others were particularly critical of Congress favoring a consumer "opt-out" tool, which allows marketers to send unsolicited emails, rather than an opt-in method, which means consumers have to request that email be sent to them.

E-Gov Not Drawing Much Interest

Although the U.S. government is sponsoring a number of websites to help Americans find out all kinds of information, citizens haven't taken the time to visit e-gov.

Three years ago, the Bush administration made a concerted effort to provide information for the general public on the Internet on everything from the Internal Revenue Service to outdoor recreation.

Although Americans who do make it to the different government websites say they are pleased to find that the sites provide a ton of information, not many are taking the time to take advantage of the offerings.

According to a survey released by the E-Gov Institute's Government Solutions, most consumers haven't even visited recreation.gov, although half of the respondents to the survey said they had visited a national or state park.

Recreation.gov has information about the many outdoor recreational opportunities available in the U.S., including specific information on the network of parks across the country.

The general public also largely ignores other government sites, such as NASA.gov, whitehouse.gov and IRS.gov.

"There is a huge potential for these e-gov sites to be heavily used by Americans. But the government is going to have to find a way to tell Americans to come on over to these sites," says Evans Witt, chief executive officer of Princeton Survey Research Associates, the group that conducted the survey.

The E-Gov Institute is a subsidiary of FCW Media Group, publisher of Federal Computer Week and FCW.com.

Technology Helping Doctors in U.S. Serve the Wounded Overseas

Soldiers in Iraq are the lucky recipients of medical treatment over the Internet. In the last six months, doctors in the United States have treated about 600 soldiers in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan who are suffering from leishmania. Leishmania is a parasitic disease carried by sand flies. Although the disease is easy to diagnose and treat, if left untreated, it can cause organ damage. Because there is currently only one dermatologist in-country, telemedicine has offered the means to get soldiers treated without an onsite doctor.

Using the Internet, doctors are able to look at photos of affected areas on soldiers, and within a few hours, return a diagnosis and method of treatment by email.

The Department of Defense started investing in telemedicine about 10 years ago. Although the technology is good, delivery has suffered because of Iraq's lack of a satellite bandwidth to accommodate high-tech tools. Soldiers in Afghanistan have more access to medical help from stateside doctors. Bandwidth is more available in Afghanistan, and doctors at Walter Reed Army Medical Center can view photos of an operating table and help guide operations there.

Iraq is getting more help, though. Medics assigned to 30 new Stryker evacuation vehicles can get help from home as they can now send and receive text messages about injured soldiers.

There's \$\$ in Online Retail Growth

Online sales grew in 2003 and is expected to continue to increase its market share in 2004.

"Online sales sped past the \$100 billion mark in 2003, surpassing all industry expectations." That's according to *The State of Retailing Online 7.0*, an annual Shop.org study conducted by Forrester research of 150 retailers.

Surveyed retailers said that sales jumped 51 percent to \$114 billion and that online sales represent 5.4 percent of all retail sales.

Not only was 2003 a good year for retail sales over the Internet, the growth spurt is expected to continue in 2004. The survey projects that sales will grow by 27 percent, to \$144 billion.

"Online retailing has arrived as a profit engine with double-digit operating margins," says Elaine Rubin, chairwoman of

Shop.org. "Retailers online have found the right balance between selling a product, acquiring and retaining customers and earning a profit, which is powerful news for consumers and retail investors."

The study also found that a greater number of retailers are continuing their march to profitability—79 percent of all online retailers were profitable last year, up from 70 percent in 2002.

In 2003, each online product category experienced strong growth, but some areas were particularly robust. Online travel sales were solid, increasing 91 percent to \$52.4 billion, while home and office, at \$11.1 billion, and computer hardware and software, at \$11.0 billion, were major drivers of online growth.

Shop.org is a division of the National Retail Federation.

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Important information for SIG members

The NRS governing self insured groups requires notifying members of all new members to the Group. New members for NRNSIG from June 15, 2004 to July 15, 2004, are listed below. For a complete member list, please call RAN at 775-882-1700. Please Note: Due to the many new members added each month to NRNSIG, we are unable to list all members on this page.

NRNSIG

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Ace Tire Store | Escondido Manor | Pain Institute of Nevada |
| American Auto & Tire | Family Medicine Associates | Park East Apartments |
| American Machine Company | Flower Box Western Florist | Peter M. DiGrazia, DMD |
| Artistic Gardens | Habitat Home & Garden | Transition Services |
| Blaine Warren Advertising | Hotel Furniture Liquidators | Westfield Eye Center |
| Cesar's Shoe World | Internal Medicine Specialists | Western Stage Props |
| Colonial Health Services | J & K Bakery Equipment Services | |
| Colonial Home Care | Jay C. Chamberlain, MD | NRNSIG members who wish to register a negative vote on a new group member, please write NRNSIG at 810 E. Fifth Street, Suite A, Carson City, NV 89701, indicating which member and the reason(s) for the negative vote. |
| Community Family Doctors | Joseph M. Johnson, MD | |
| Custom Dairy Products | Louis Delionback, MD | |
| Eastern Sierra Medical | Oasis Home Health | |
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| Elko Wire Rope & Mining Supply | Pacific Lighting Corp | |
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The Question of Fit

Recent Finding Challenges a Long-Standing Tenet of Hiring

By James Larsen, Ph.D.

Peter Drucker used to remind his business clients that the most important decisions they make involve hiring. Accordingly, managers are very careful when they hire. They take their time, carefully consider different candidates, and follow rules.

Rules for hiring can originate in experience, common sense, and beliefs about people, but occasionally, they don't agree. When this happens, managers must weigh the evidence that supports competing rules and then decide how to proceed. Research evidence can be helpful.

One ongoing disagreement involves conscientiousness versus fit. Is one more important than the other, and should it guide our hiring decisions?

Conscientiousness proponents insist that good people who work hard and care about their work will grow into their jobs and continue growing as their jobs evolve. The proponents of fit insist that people and jobs have qualities that can either fit or not fit, and placing a person in a job that fits benefits both the person and the business.

The logic for both rules seems solid. What's a manager to do? Should she select qualified people who display outstanding qualities of conscientiousness or look beyond basic qualifications and select people who match a long list of skills and qualities that seem important? Marcia Simmering, from Louisiana State University, recently completed research that may help us.

Professor Simmering followed students in an executive MBA program and examined the relationships between conscientiousness, fit, self-directed development, and change in the firms in which her students

worked. Her findings may surprise you.

A good fit stifled self-development in the most conscientious of her students.

A misfit stimulated self-development. It did not cause them to seek employment elsewhere as is commonly thought to happen.

A misfit also stimulated her most conscientious students who engaged in the most self-development to

Conscientious employees who feel a misfit between themselves and their work settings will want to develop themselves.

change their work settings for the better.

Common sense leads to the conclusion that a good fit would have only benefits and a misfit would have only penalties. Ms. Simmering's research suggests different conclusions. A good fit robs people of a good reason to develop themselves and their firms, but a misfit provides it. When conscientious people feel a misfit with their jobs and their employers, they get to work and reduce these feelings. They change themselves, and they change their work settings. In the settings Simmering studied, it was for the better.

The most obvious implication to be drawn from Simmering's research is to favor conscientiousness over fit in making hiring decisions. However, there is more to be drawn from this research that is helpful.

Conscientious employees who feel a misfit between themselves and their work settings will want to develop themselves. They will want to take classes and try new assignments. Managers can be alert to these

desires and can provide a supportive atmosphere that will encourage them.

Misfit also occurs periodically in the careers of those who receive promotions, for example, first-line supervisors. Supervisors are good people who know the work and the firm and are called upon to manage employees. When they make the transition from employee to supervisor, they experience misfit. Managers can anticipate these feelings and plan appropriate training and development experiences. For new supervisors, this feeling of misfit provides the "teachable moment" when people are receptive to new learning.

Finally, managers can deliberately create feelings of misfit to stimulate both individuals and their firms. For example, although the Internet provides access to potential customers that is the envy of sales people from ages past, it has proven to be a disappointment. Many have wondered why, but a look at many websites often reveals the trouble. The people who design them have no understanding of basic selling. They fail to qualify buyers. They do nothing to create a sense of need for the product or a desire for it.

Try this. Assign your web manager a small sales territory. Get him away from his computer. Have him talk to people who just might buy your product. He'll experience misfit, but he may just learn enough about what he's doing to transform your website into a real selling tool.

*Reference: Simmering, Marcia J., Jason Colquitt, Raymond Noe, and Christopher Porter (2003) "Conscientiousness, Autonomy, Fit, and Development: A Longitudinal Study." **Journal of Applied Psychology**, 88(5), 954-963.*
C 2004 Management Resources

State Watch



Businesses Get Small Cut in Payroll Tax

Businesses got a tiny cut in the payroll tax starting July 1, 2004, the new fiscal year.

The quarterly tax went from 0.7 percent (for all but financial institutions) to 0.65 percent. The reduction is a result of the new tax laws passed by the 2003 Nevada legislature.

Though the reduction may be small, businesses welcome any relief from the tax hikes passed in 2003. Businesses that have large payrolls aren't turning up their noses at the reduction.

"It's very small, but anytime costs go down, they eventually move through to the customer," says

Faye Anderson, spokesperson for Reno-based Sierra Pacific Power Co. "With 1,350 employees, Sierra Pacific could save from \$40,000 to \$50,000 a year."

Companies that pay employee's health insurance can deduct those costs from the total payroll before the tax is applied.

In 2003, state legislators hit businesses with record tax hikes to make up for a shortfall in state income. Since then, state coffers have been filling up at higher numbers than projected. Among other taxes, business pay a \$100 annual license fee.

Need more information about state taxes? Visit tax.state.nv.us.

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