

## January 2010

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## Important Dates:

**Dates to Remember:**

- 1st - New Year's Day
- 8th - Clean your desk Day
- 8th - Elvis' birthday
- 15th - Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday
- 25th - Fun at Work Day
- 26th - Spouse's Day

- National Clean Up Your Computer Month
- National Oatmeal Month
- Be On Purpose Month

**In History:**

1852 - The first public bath opens in New York City

1862 - The first US income tax (3% of incomes > \$600, 5% of incomes > \$10,000)

1863 - Emancipation Proclamation signed, freeing all slaves.

1892 - The Ellis Island Immigration Station opens in New York

1902 - The first Rose Bowl game in Pasadena, California

1923 - Union of Socialist Soviet Republics is formed

1928 - The 1st US air-conditioned building opens in San Antonio

1934 - Alcatraz opens as a Federal prison

1971 - Ads for cigarettes are banned on TV

## Little Bits:

A tradition common to southern states is to eat black-eyed peas on New Year's Day to gain good luck. Another lucky food is pork (because a chicken scratches backward, a cow stands still, but a pig roots forward, ergo those who

## Happy New Year!

As we begin 2010, we join in hoping you enjoy a bountiful and prosperous New Year, filled with health, hope, plenty of laughter, and surrounded by family and friends — wishing you 365 chances to live your best year yet!

### Web Site Wisdom: Host with the Most

You've started your website project and you have your URL (domain name), what's next? You will need a hosting service; a firm with secure servers and the software and services necessary to "run" your particular website. Here's the short list of what to look for in a host:

1. A stable, reputable firm who is here for the long-term
2. A professional firm who is readily available to assist in times of trouble
3. A host who can provide additional services as your website grows

You can work directly with a service provider, utilize a reseller or commission your web development firm to handle this for you. How you choose to set up your hosting will depend on what services you need. Note that basic website hosting starts at less than \$30/month.

Your website developer can assist you in determining what services and software you need and recommend a provider (we like GoDaddy and CrystalTech). They can also sludge through the technical mire for you and ensure you get the services you need and avoid all the high pressure sales tactics for selling unneeded services.

Choosing a host is an important step as you will be working with your host provider for the long term. Your firm's website is your window to the world; it's important it is hosted well, has little or no service interruptions and can grow as your website grows. Choose your host provider judiciously.

*Contributed by Sarah Breshears, [Creative Minds](#)*

### Social Networking: Make it Work For You

After you've established your various Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts, make them easy to find. Most social networking sites make it pretty easy for you to link the accounts you've created to your website. You can also exchange links with sites or blogs with similar themes.

Be sure to include link-sharing buttons on your pages as well so visitors can forward your content to their social networks as well. Social networking sites can act like the side streets attaching all the suburbs to your city — your own business website at the center of it all.

Now to keep maintaining your accounts from eating up all the time in your days. Here are a few applications that have been created that will help with that. Check out tools like [www.digsby.com](#) for aggregating social media, e-mail and instant messaging all in one handy place. [Nutshellmail.com](#) allows you to consolidate messages from various social network sites into one scheduled digest to make handling the inflow of e-mail notifications more manageable. And [ping.fm](#) allows you to manage and maintain your profile status for 30 supported social networking sites, so one entry updates all your various registered sites.

### Branding: Define your Brand

It is fairly universal that people associate superior customer service with American Express, and fun, lively flights with Southwest Airlines. What is it about *your* products or customer interactions that set *you* apart?

Do you want to be known as the most trusted? The most available? Having the most flexible schedules? Most locations in the city? Spend some time, sit down and think about how you want to differentiate your company from your competitors. Identify those elements of your business, and write them down in a one-page description of your business.

Truly, this is one of the hardest things for most businesses to do — define your brand and differentiate yourself. Yet, it is also critical to your business success and growth.

Now is the time — make it a New Year's Resolution for your company in 2010 to *finally* get this part of your business plan nailed down.

### Finance: Get a Good Deal on a Lease

In last month's newsletter, we discussed how to negotiate the terms, or rent and duration, of a lease. This month, we will take a look at the added expenses.

As part of a lease agreement, landlords typically pass on to the tenants at least some portion, and sometimes all, of their expenses to maintain the building. This can include utilities, upkeep on common areas such as the parking lot, restrooms, lobby, elevators and stairwells, exterior maintenance such as signage, painting or roof repairs, and generally any operating expense they choose to include. Expenses are generally prorated amongst the tenants based on the amount of square footage each tenant occupies.

In a triple net, or NNN, lease, the landlord will bill separately for taxes, insurance and operating expenses (or common area maintenance, CAM). A gross lease, in comparison, includes everything in one payment...usually. Sometimes, the utilities are still billed separately.

The most important thing as a tenant is to know exactly which expense items are being passed on

still, but a pig roots forward, ergo those who dine on pork will move forward in the new year) and sauerkraut, probably because it goes so well with pork. Don't, however, dine on turkey or chicken, lest you scratch in the dirt all year for your dinner too.

It costs about five cents to make a nickel.

The average number of people born in the United States every day is 371,000.

In 1869, Thomas Adams of New York, blended chicle gum from Mexico with rubber to make a new material for carriage tires. When that product failed, he began selling the new concoction as a flavorless chewing gum called Chicklets. It was an immediate hit.

A speck of dust in a computer processor, although only the relative size of a soccer ball in the entire country of Ireland, is large enough to cause problems for the chip.

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The most important thing as a tenant is to know exactly which expense items are being passed on to you as a tenant, understand if and when those amounts can increase, learn the age of the building and it's mechanical systems to better anticipate what major repairs have been done and which are still to come, and don't be shy about asking to see the expense budget for the building so you have a clearer understanding of what costs are actually incurred.

**On the Job: Tackling Multi-tasking**

According to Stanford researchers, those that multi-task the most are the worst at it. They are worse at taking in and organizing information, ignoring irrelevant information, and took longer to switch from one task to another — they tend to love information but aren't very good at processing it.

On the other hand, the people that take on fewer tasks are better able to think effectively about the information. It's all about paying attention! Just like our parents and teachers told us!

Ironically, though, one of the best ways to improve your powers of attention is to take periodic breaks from paying attention. The brain needs time to switch off and zone out for a while, and the chance to do that occasionally actually increases concentration and overall productivity.

So — take a break! And pay attention!

**On the Lyte Side:**

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**“What good is technology if it takes six seconds to send a message but six months to get someone to act on it?!”**