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How to sell Santa's slip-ups

By Donald Lee

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Shoppers spent more than \$15.5 billion this Christmas on gifts on the Internet alone. Just imagine how many millions went to unwanted polka dot sweaters, electric nose hair clippers, and thigh masters. That wasted cash piled up under the Christmas tree. We've all had it happen to us. In fact, you had it happen to you this year. You unwrapped the pretty red bow and tore through the shiny paper on that present from your Uncle Mortie, and immediately, you had to put on your best poker face.

How did you know I needed a sushi roller kit?" you exclaimed with as much excitement as you could muster through gritted teeth.

The problem is you don't eat fish sticks, let alone raw salmon.

You can't be too sore at poor Uncle Mortie, though, and the other friends and family who gave you unwanted holiday gifts this season. Buying Christmas gifts is difficult work. Then again, getting rid of a doosie of a Christmas gift is no piece of fruitcake either. That is, unless you know how to use the Internet to return your unwanted gifts from the comfort of your own home or, better yet, sell them for better use.

You're probably wondering how it's possible to sell off Santa's slip-ups when you feel bad enough returning them. In most cases, your friends or loved one invested time and money into shopping for your gift. They browsed countless Web pages. They trudged through the mall. And they were sentenced to hard time in the cashier line. All of it they did to please you.

At the same time, however, your friends or loved one couldn't read your mind as Jolly Old Saint Nick supposedly can. They could never tell if you'd appreciate that coffee table book on coffee tables, or that matching set of plaid socks and necktie. They could only guess at your inseam or your blouse

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size, or whether you look best in blue or black. And they had no way of telling that your third cousin on your father's side got you the same exact gift. With no list of who was naughty and who was nice, Uncle Mortie and company added to the millions wasted worldwide.

This waste doesn't have to be. Your loved ones only wanted to make you happy with their presents. So it stands to reason that if their gift didn't do the trick—because it was the wrong size, a duplicate present, or completely off the mark—they would want you to fix the situation. Whatever it takes, they would want you to be happy, right?

That leaves you with two options. You could return the gift to the mega store or the maul-er, mall. You would join the thousands of your neighbors with the same idea, all of whom are cramming into your local stores and cash register lines to return their unwanted gifts. Then you would also have to face the thousands of bargain shoppers out there looking for those post-Christmas specials, a rush that lasts well through January.

What's worse, some stores won't let you return goods if you don't have the original credit card or receipt. That means you could at best be left with gift cards with expiration dates at stores that you may not like. At worst, you could be stuck with your gift, not knowing what to do with it.

Now you're seeing the light. No, it's not the light from the inflatable 12-foot Santa Claus and reindeer on your neighbor's front lawn. It's the light from your computer monitor: the Internet. Today's Web can link you with someone who will think Uncle Mortie's gift is a precious treasure. This person, whether they're in Peoria or Pawtucket, North Carolina or the North Pole, is willing to pay good money for it.

Classified Internet sites can link you to this person faster than it would take you to stow the sushi set up in your attic. The best classified sites out there will also be free of transaction and membership fees. What's more, they allow you to negotiate price directly with your buyer and plan shipping arrangements, all with privacy and precision in mind.

You'll end up with cash to buy that special something you really wanted. Your buyer will be pleased with Uncle Mortie's gift. Uncle Mortie, well, he'll be glad the gift he gave you, doesn't just sit in the attic.

Donald Lee is the public relationship manager for Buysellcommunity.com. Buysellcommunity provides free classified listing services for individuals and businesses to market their products and services online. For global and localized classifieds, please visit

10 Reasons Santa's Broke This Year

By Darlene Arechederra

1. Santa Spends More Than He Makes

Santa's paychecks are nothing to sneeze at, but he stays focused on his next raise. (Yes, of course Santa gets a raise each year!) He has no idea what it costs him to live the Santa life. He doesn't track his earnings nor his spending. Santa's got to provide for his reindeer, his horse and his North Pole home – just like the rest of us.

2. Santa Has No Emergency Account

Santa's transportation tends to break down right in the middle of major blizzards. Only last week, he had to whip out his credit card to pay for sleigh-towing. When Santa finally made it to the repair shop, he again had pay for the sleigh repair with credit. Just last year, he nearly had frost bite after his brand new sleigh had broken down.

3. Santa Lives Paycheck to Paycheck

Santa cashes his paycheck at the North Pole Bank, but most of the money gets spent before it makes its way to his checkbook. If it makes it there, most of the money is already owed to the credit card company. Santa has no other money set aside.

4. Santa Doesn't Enjoy Balancing His Checkbook

Santa forgets to balance the checkbook. He spends money, but is never sure what he has available to spend. Santa doesn't know how to build in some fun to help him enjoy working in his checkbook.

5. Santa Spends His Raises and Bonuses

Santa got a nice raise back in January, following his Bonus check in December (bonus based on number of chimneys completed for the year). He thought he'd have plenty of money this year. But Santa likes nice, updated equipment at all times. He bought brand new gear for all his reindeer, even though last year's would have done the job.

6. Santa Eats Most of His Meals Out

Since Santa's job requires that he spend a large amount of time traveling, Santa tends to eat out way too much. He also has to feed his reindeer each time he sits down to eat. The tips alone are enough to keep him in the poorhouse.

7. Santa Lives on the Edge

Santa keeps himself so busy that he can't sit down and plan his life. He hasn't set up a plan to build extra money into his checkbook, nor has he made a decision to actually save any of his money. Even

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setting up automatic deposit would be helpful. Another emergency could wipe him out. (No more Santa?)

8. Santa is Not Preparing for the Future

Santa, jolly fellow that he is, has no money set aside to work for him. He may end up working until his hair is much whiter (or gone). It's pretty much a given that Santa will need to replace that sleigh and maybe even some of the reindeer over the years. Because most of his money now goes to pay off credit cards, Santa just can't picture tucking away any money.

9. Santa Spends Too Much on R & R

Even Santa needs a little rest and relaxation after all that hard work. If he runs out of cash, he charges it. (No, I promised not to tell what Santa does for R & R. He does know who's been naughty or nice ...)

10. Santa Can't Stay Motivated

Santa gives himself a good lecture from time to time. He knows he should be doing better, but he just can't get any traction. Saving his money seems like an overwhelming obstacle. Santa hasn't discovered there are tricks out there to make saving money a fun thing, something he can look forward to doing.

Darlene Arechederra offers simple, unique strategies to help you become a saver. She believes the trick is to discover which ideas work best for you — because your money is not one-size-fits-all. Discover your *own* unique strategy today! Free weekly newsletter.

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What Santa Knows About Marketing

Santa Goes Low Carb!

Santa: The Consummate Entrepreneur

INTERNET OFFERS HOLIDAY FUN FOR FAMILY, CO-WORKERS

Click Magnet Software

Gag Gifting.

The Truth About Diabetes

Fly In Ads Creator

Affiliate Enhancer



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