

Why This Is The Best Year Ever to Shop AND Sell OnLine

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**By Shannan Hearne**

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Internet shopping has been a fad for many. They tried it one year with minimal success and major headaches and stayed away from it ever since. There have been credit card scams, delayed deliveries, and confusion over orders.

But not this year.

E-Tailers are better prepared than ever to make your online holiday shopping fast, easy, and hassle free. Online security is better than ever. Retailers are offering super buys and deals like never before. Sites like <http://www.clearancecrazy.com> make it fast and simple to find the best deals. Retailers like eToys are sending email alerts to consumers every time they put items on sale. And consumers are learning quickly how to best utilize the internet for their holiday shopping.

So not only is this a great year for consumers, but for retailers as well. The following are great ways to increase sales and develop loyal customers:

\* Run sales, offer email alerts, and invite site visitors to sign up for your mailing list. Make shopping at your e-site easy and fun. Brick and mortar retailers burn holiday fragrance candles and offer cookies and apple cider. Give your shoppers holiday music, decorated sites, and great buys.

\* Advertise. Advertise. Advertise. Purchase classified and banner advertising on sites that give visitors holiday shopping recommendations. Advertise specific products or services in ezines that reach your niche market. Participate in joint campaigns with other

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sites. If you are a reseller for someone else, find out if you have co-op advertising dollars available.

\* Attain and maintain high rankings in the search engines. This is always important, but never so important as during the busiest shopping season of the year. If you are not good at this, and many people aren't, retain the services of a site promotion specialist like <http://www.successpromotions.com>. And make sure your site is search engine ready.

\* Advertise via email to all your past clients, your leads, and everyone on your mailing list. You should be doing this regularly, but

now it is more important than ever. Consumers are very savvy and they will go where they get the most bang for their buck AND where they get the best customer service.

\* Don't oversell. Know in advance what your Christmas delivery ordering deadline must be to guarantee delivery and stick to it.

\* Offer shipping alternatives that alleviate the Antrax scare. The US Postal Service cannot protect us from all evils. And this year, people are more interested in germ free delivery than they are saving money on shipping.

Friday, November 24, 2001 marks the beginning of the holiday shopping frenzy. Make sure you get your share of the market. Because this is the best year ever to shop and to sell online.

Shannan Hearne is the President and Wizard of Success Promotions Internet Marketing Services. You can turn to the Wizard to build your e-business better. <http://www.successpromotions.com>

### **Choosing The Best Flower Shop**

**By Hannah Roberts**

When choosing a flower shop, you first want to look at the quality of the flowers on sale. Make sure they are fresh. When a shop has a garden nearby, this is a good sign, because its flowers will be freshly picked.

Some flower shops even sell roses and other kinds of flowers that are still planted. The best florists will then pick and cut whatever flowers you choose.

If are planning for a flower delivery, make sure the shop delivers fresh flowers on time! Ask about how

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long the time period is between when the flowers are picked and when they are finally delivered. Even ask about the type of vehicle the florists use.

If you don't know what kind of flowers to buy, browse the colorful shop. There should be tulips, roses, daffodils and everything else you can imagine. And then of course, certain occasions call for certain flowers.

To really find the best flower shop in town, ask friends who have frequently bought flowers in the past (maybe they are in a leadership position and often decorate for special events). You can even scout out a flower plantation to make sure the plants are bred and fertilized well.

Not only are the actual types of flowers important, but so are the arrangements. You will need to find a flower shop that employs clever designers who create elegant, presentable bouquets for any occasion.

You can even research different flower shops online! Many shops can be partially, or wholly, based on the web and they don't operate much differently than normal markets except that the payment and transaction process is of course markedly different (and more convenient). However, it is best to check up on a shop personally, rather than with the Internet, as your eyes and nose can truly detect the freshness and health of a shop's flowers.

Another good thing to ask a flower shop employee is if the store offers refunds for damaged flowers. This way, if you receive flowers upon delivery that simply aren't fresh, you can refuse to pay for them.

After you have looked into the different flower shops, choose your favorite!

Hannah Roberts has an interest in Shopping & Retail related topics. To access more information on

or on

, please click on the links.

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