

VIRTUAL TIDBITS

DOCU-TYPE - VIRTUAL ASSISTANCE, WEB DESIGN & HOSTING

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In this issue:

- 1 Editor's Notes
- 2 What's New?
- 2 Spotlight
- 3 **Ebooks to Build Your Business**
- 4 A Little Bit of Fun!
- 4 Dates to Remember
- 4 Outlook Tip
- 5 Cool Links
- 5 Christmas Gift Giving on a Budget
- 7 Creative Christmas Cards
- 8 We Want to Hear From You.

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Editor's Notes:

Welcome to the latest issue of Virtual TidBits. Can you believe that another year is almost over? It seems to just fly by these days. The leaves are colourful for a couple of weeks and wham... it's freezing outside (in our neck of the woods, anyway)! Oh well, it's all part of living in a four season part of the world.

The Holidays are just around the corner and the stores and online retailers are starting to showcase their 'wares' to the world. If you have something special to offer for the festive season, now is the time to start getting the word out and displaying it on your website. We have included some articles in this issue to help you and your business during this holiday time in this issue.

We hope everyone has a wonderful couple of months and a fabulous holiday season. Enjoy family & friends and make attainable resolutions for the New Year.

Happy Holidays!

Sincerely,



Janice D. Byer, CCVA, MVA

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What's New?

There are quite a few "new" items this month.

First, Docu-Type is proud to now offer our existing and new clients even more assistance. We, yes we, now have the assistance of several associates who offer specialized services that we had not offered before as well as enhanced our existing services. I have taken the time to carefully choose the right people to offer my client's the exceptional services that they are accustomed to and even more. I am

also still on the lookout for even more talented Virtual Assistants and Web Designers to ensure that everyone who needs our help will not be turned away.

And another "new" is the articles on our blog. If you haven't stopped by our Small Business and Web Design blog at www.docutype.org/blog, please be sure to come by and sign up to receive our RSS feed so you get all new articles as soon as they are posted.

I told you about our "new" website,

didn't I? If you haven't checked it out yet, pop by and let us know what you think (www.docutype.net).

We also have a number of new clients and newsletter subscribers that we want to welcome to the Docu-Type family.

Once again, I want to wish everyone a happy holiday season and if I or my team can help you with any projects, just let us know.

You enjoy reading Virtual TidBits, don't you?

Well... now you can have 7 years of archived issues on 1 CD.

Docu-Type's Virtual TidBits Newsletter Archives 2000-2006 is now available

100 articles relating to small business and over 500 links, resources and tips to help you run your business. We even include a list of each newsletter and what articles are in each issue so you can pick which issue you want to read when you want to read it. No more of the time consuming task of downloading each issue from our website. Find out more - www.docutype.net/news.htm

Spotlight - Words Plus Administrative Services - www.wordsplusadminservices.ca

Words Plus Administrative Services focuses on providing a high quality of business administration service in order to help you achieve and exceed the business needs of your clients and keep your business successful.

Barbara Gilbert is the owner and chief administrator of Words Plus Administrative Services. She has over 25 years' administrative experience in the public and

private sectors, working with various levels of management.

Her services include Words Processing, Desktop Publishing, Data Management, Contact Management, Bookkeeping, Meeting & Event Planning plus so much more.

And we are working on putting her beautiful holiday card creations on her site now so be

sure to come back and see them. You will love them and want to order yours right away.

For more information on Words Plus Administrative Services and their beautiful holiday cards, please visit her website at

www.wordsplusadminservices.ca

(we should have the cards up there within week or so :-)

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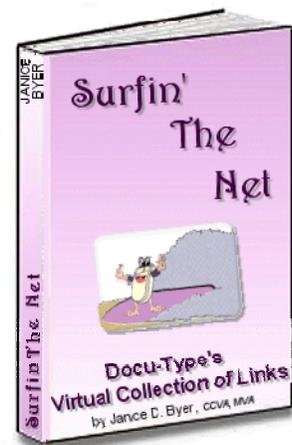
Upcoming Ebooks:

How to Make a Blog (almost done), Website Design for Mobile Devices, ...and more

Surfin' The Net - Docu-Type's Virtual Collection of Links

Being a virtual company, I have spent many, many hours on the Internet since opening my company. During that time, I have saved quite a lot of links to sites I have been to many times; have been referred to by others; or just looked like I might need them some-time in the future.

As a way of saying thank you to my clients, contacts, associates, and the business community as a whole, I have managed to go through all of those links in my Favourites (IE) listing (wow... that was a fun job, let me tell you :-)) and have compiled them into categories here just for you.



This Ebook is a compilation of the secret weapons of our success and is a must for all small business professionals!

Also included in this ebook are some of my articles. For many years I have been writing articles that have been published in many online and print publications. I wrote these articles from my experience... they are "been there, done that" articles on a variety of subjects. I wrote them to help others so what better content to include in Surfin The Net?

And... we are even throwing in a **FREE Bonus Ebook** -
Organizing Tips Submitted by Experienced Virtual Assistants.

Find out more and order your copy at
<http://www.docutype.net/SurfinTheNet/linksebook.htm>

A Little Bit of Fun - The Why's of Men

1. WHY DO MEN BECOME SMARTER DURING SEX?
(because they are plugged into a genius)

2. WHY DON'T WOMEN BLINK DURING SEX?
(they don't have enough time)

3. WHY DOES IT TAKE 1 MILLION SPERM TO FERTILIZE ONE EGG?
(they don't stop to ask directions)

4. WHY DO MEN SNORE WHEN THEY LIE ON THEIR BACKS?
(because their balls fall over their butt-hole and they vapor lock)

(You're laughing, aren't you?!?)

5. WHY WERE MEN GIVEN LARGER BRAINS THAN DOGS?
(so they won't hump women's legs at cocktails parties)

6. WHY DID GOD MAKE MEN BEFORE WOMEN?
(you need a rough draft before you make a final copy)

7. HOW MANY MEN DOES IT TAKE TO PUT A TOILET SEAT DOWN?
(don't know, it never happened)

(C'mon guys, we laugh at your blonde jokes!)

And the personal favourite:

8. WHY DID GOD PUT MEN ON EARTH?
(because a vibrator can't mow the lawn)

Remember, if you haven't got a smile on your face and laughter in your heart...Then you are just an old sour puss !

Outlook Tip - Emptying the Sent Items Folder

For many of us, we keep a copy of emails in the Sent Items folder of Outlook so that we have a record of conversations. Well, that folder seems to always be so full that it is scary to think about clearing it out. You can try using rules to have emails sent to other folders automatically after you send them (which I still haven't mastered) or you can do a purge of the Sent Items folder every once in a while. Scanning through that folder and using the ole CTRL key and mouse click to highlight them can be quite time consuming. The following is a little tip I finally figured out. It still takes time but not nearly as much.

In the top Standard Toolbar, click on:

Tools

Find (this may bring up a little toolbar that you can use or...)

Advanced Find

Messages Tab

Look for: Messages

In: Sent Items (use Browse button to choose this)

Then choose how you want to search (by words in a certain field or email in the From or To fields). Click on Find Now and then a list will show the emails. Highlight them all, right click and move them to your desired folder. Hope this helps.

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Dates to Remember (for November/December 2007)

November:

1st - All Saint's Day

11th - Remembrance/Veteran's Day

22nd - Thanksgiving Day (US)

25th - Eliminate Violence Against Women



December:

1st - World Aids Day

4th - Chanukka begins

25th - Christmas Day

31st - New Year's Day

(These dates come from a variety of online resources and are correct, to the best of my knowledge)

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Cool Links

At www.CVAC.ca, we recently asked our members for their input on software that they, as VAs, use on a regular basis. The following are some of those (aside from the usual MS products):

Open Office - www.openoffice.org/ - a free office suite.

Adobe InDesign - www.adobe.com/products/indesign/ - desktop publishing

AVG - <http://free.grisoft.com/> - free and paid anti-virus software

TraxTime - www.spudcity.com -

time tracking software

Google Mail - mail.google.com - email program online

Express Scribe - www.nch.com.au/scribe - transcription

Conference - www.freeconference.com - free phone conferencing

Collaboration - <https://www.google.com/a/> - online collaboration

VoIP - www.skype.com - free computer to computer calling and cheap long distance

32bit Broadcaster - www.electrasoft.com - Email broadcasting

Win2PDF - www.win2pdf.com -

PDF converter

WinZip - www.winzip.com/ - file compression

Send This File - www.sendthisfile.com - file sharing

PassKeeper - www.passkeeper.com - keep track of your passwords

Picasa - <http://picasa.google.com> - digital photo management

The list goes on and on and will be available at www.cvac.ca soon.

Christmas Gift Giving on a Budget

by Janice D. Byer, CCVA, MVA

For many entrepreneurs, our clients are not only our source of income, some are also our friends. We appreciate them for far more than how much work we do for them. We should show our appreciation throughout the year to these valued people but especially during the holiday season.

Yup... it's that time of year... time to think about how to best display your thanks to your valued clients and contacts for being a part of your business and its success. Not all entrepreneurs can afford big gifts, especially in the start-up phase.

There are certain things that you can give to your clients that you could make yourself. Not only can this be a way of showing your appreciation, it is also a way to give your personal touch to the gift. And when you add

that personal touch, your clients will be reassured of your exceptional customer service, thoughtfulness, and why you are, or soon will be, successful!

When you provide personal gifts you also gain a sense of fulfillment. It is very heart-warming to know the appreciation that will be felt by your clients for your special efforts.

The following are just a few ideas of homemade gifts that are both economical and personal:

Coasters - You know all those CDs you get in the mail, newspapers and magazine? Hang onto them and create coasters from them. You can get CD labels at office supply stores on which you can print a design, picture, or info about your business; foam or cork backing at craft supply stores; and

lacquer finish (that will withstand heat) at home repair or paint stores.

Bookmarks - Pick up some coverstock paper at your local business supply store and design a bookmark. You can print a full sheet of them on the coverstock. You will then have to cut them or you may be able to get perforated cards in the shape of bookmarks. Again, anything can be put on here, including just lines with the heading "Notes From This Book". For an added touch, buy some tassels and punch a hole in the top of the cards to put the tassel in to.

Continued on Page 6

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Christmas Gift Giving on a Budget (cont'd)

Calendars - Everyone needs calendars, especially busy entrepreneurs. The following are just a couple of relatively easy calendars that you can create and they make the perfect gift.

Pocket Calendars - You don't need a laminating machine to whip together a few business card calendars, perfect for carrying in a wallet. Most business supply stores carry self-laminating sheets. You simply put together a small calendar with your desktop publishing software, cut them the size of your business card and glue them on the back, arrange them on the laminating sheets and cut them to size.

Wall Calendars - Again, your desktop publishing software can be used to design each month and print them on separate sheets of paper. As an added touch, allow room to list inspirational sayings, put in a word search puzzle, or a light comic strip (being careful not to go against any copyrights). Then put each month into a sheet protector remembering to set them up like a normal wall, flip calendar. Slide a binder clip over the top ends and punch a hole in the center of the other end and your calendar is ready to be hung up. And don't forget to send a dry erase marker so your client can write down their appointments.

Magnetic Calendars - You have a couple of choices here. You can put your business card or enlightening phrases on a magnetic sheet and attach them to a tear-off calendar. Or, you can use pre-cut business card size magnetic sheets to make a card holder, note page holder, or small calendar. Actually, with the larger magnetic sheets, you can let your imagination run wild.

Gift Certificates - Design a gift certificate to provide your clients with one of the services you have to offer. If your client generally has web design services from you, offer them one of your administrative services so they can see the variety of help that you can provide them. Or, how about offering your client free ad space in your newsletter

or a banner ad on your website. One thing to remember is to put different time frames on each certificate. The last thing you need is to have everyone redeem his or her gift certificates at the same time.

Key Chains - Here's where your self-laminating skills will come in handy again. Design small key chain cards, putting your company information on one side. On the other side, put your client's information; a scenic picture; calendar; or marketing tips. You can include just about anything that would appeal to your clients. You will have to pick up some key rings (be sure to check yard sales, dollar stores, and craft supply stores) and then simply laminate the cards, punch a hole in one end and slip the key ring in that hole. Here's a tip... be sure to cut the laminate sheet far enough around the card so that water will not get in. You may even want to punch the hole in the card first and then punch a smaller hole in the laminate so there is some sealing there.

Another idea, if your budget will allow, check with your local dollar store or craft supply store to see if they have key chains that will allow you to insert your own message. Less work but could be more costly.

You get the idea. Let your imagination create something both personal and professional. Each of these ideas will take time to do so be sure to start in plenty of time to create them and then send them to your clients. One thing about these ideas is that your budget will thank you. Take a look around your office right now.... What can you use to make a special gift?

Janice Byer, CCVA, MVA, owner of Docu-Type Administrative & Web Design Services (<http://www.docutype.net>) provides professional, creative and affordable virtual office assistance and small business website design. She is also the author of several Business Building Ebooks - http://www.docutype.net/business_ebooks.htm

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Creative Christmas Cards - A Great Gift Idea on a Limited Budget

by Janice D. Byer, CCVA, MVA

Little Billie wants the latest Power Ranger. You know, the one that shoots lasers and turns into an 'Incredible Hulk' kind of thing. And little Sarah, she wants the newest Barbie, the one that 'all her friends have'. And then, of course, there's your beloved spouse who thinks he will just die if he doesn't get a new set of torque wrenches.

Ah... the joys of Christmas gift giving and the terror of going way over budget.

But wait.... don't forget that not only do you need to get that something special for your family and friends, you also need to take this time of year to show your clients that you truly appreciate and value them as well.

By now the question of going over budget is really starting to get scary. But it doesn't have to. Showing your appreciation doesn't mean you have to max out your credit card or take out a second mortgage on the house. All you need to do is show your true feelings and be creative.

Let's start with the usual Christmas card. These are a given, and every entrepreneur should send these. And, if your limited budget means that this may be the only form of holiday cheer that you can share this year, let's make it special.

Most business professionals believe that it is not tactful to include your business card in with a Christmas card. The holiday card is supposed to be a means of showing appreciation, not a form of advertising. So, there are other subtle and creative ways to keep your name on their minds while still showing them that you care.

First, let's look at the envelope that you send the card in. They are usually pretty plain and blank. Ah, blank.... the perfect canvas, so what can we put there to 'fill some space' and show your creativeness?

Get your trusty word processor or graphics design program up and running and create a holiday image to print on the back of the envelope. Or perhaps put your favorite Christmas poem on there or a coupon for one your products or services. You can include your website address in small print at the bottom. Oh, and don't forget to have the envelope in the closed (but not sealed) position when you run it through your printer. If the envelope is white, try to include some colour. But if the envelope is green or red (or any other colour), then it would be best to do the printing in black.

On the front of the envelope, don't forget to put your return address in the top left hand corner and perhaps add a little graphic of holly or bells at the bottom. If you can, put your website address or phone number in your return address.

These last two suggestions will not only show your creativeness to your clients, it will also be seen by everyone that handles your envelope, from the time it leaves your office until the time your client actually opens it.

Another way to show your appreciation at this special time of year without spending a lot of money is to offer a special to your clients. Include a coupon with the card offering them free products or services. Remember to make it a limited time offer. This will help to generate some sales after the Christmas rush is over.

Speaking of including something in with the card, why not put together a list of websites that would be helpful to them, or perhaps a gift certificate from one of their favorite sites?

Continued on Page 8

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Creative Christmas Cards (cont'd from page 7)

Also, if you have a small piece of promotional material (ie. pen, pencil, notepad, etc.), you can include it. Anything that will not be offensive at this time of year, will not be too 'advertisey', and something that will fit in the envelope.

If your budget is so limited that you can't afford to mail out cards, why not send some (or all) of them by email? There are some wonderful sites where you can send all kinds of cards, including animated or interactive ones.

These include <http://www.bluemountain.com>, <http://www.cardfountain.com>, <http://www.regards.com>, and of course, Kathy Ritchie's site at <http://cards.123greetings.com/cgi-bin/cards/sendcard.pl?log=rsslady>.

If you have ever read any of my other articles (<http://www.docutype.net/press.htm>) you know that I truly believe that creativeness, and not the size of your wallet, makes for good communication between you and your clients. One of

my favorite stores is the dollar store in town and you would be amazed at the ideas that you can come up with to help promote your business, on a limited budget, by just walking through the aisles.

Please remember to take each client into consideration when you send him or her something. Be creative and show a personal touch on your holiday sentiments and the rewards will come, not the credit card bill.

Janice Byer, owner of Docu-Type Administrative & Web Design Services (<http://www.docutype.net>) provides professional, creative and affordable virtual office assistance and small business website design. She is a Certified Canadian Virtual Assistant (CCVA), Master Virtual Assistant (MVA) and co-founder of the Canadian Virtual Assistant Connection. She is also the author of several Business Building Ebooks at (http://www.docutype.net/business_ebooks.htm).



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We want to hear from you!

Now I would like to ask for more feedback and details. What do you like about the newsletter and what would like to see changed? Are the

fonts good? Do the articles meet your needs? Does the newsletter, on a whole, help you and your business? What would you like to

see more of? Etc. Send your comments to

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