

eNews *Archive*

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We are pleased to report that the National Extension e-Commerce Advisory Committee met in early January to evaluate the pool of applicants for the latest round of e-commerce competitive grants. The committee was extremely pleased to have the opportunity to study, discuss, and select from the pool of applications received. As we are now in the process of communicating with the applicants to inform them of what proposals were selected by the advisory panel, we will highlight the newly selected grants in the next issue of e-News.

Aside from the proposal review process, the advisory committee had the opportunity to review the work being accomplished by grantees awarded funds in last year's e-commerce competitive grants cycle. The committee was genuinely excited about the innovative educational programs taking shape to support Extension e-commerce educational programming. Our hope is that we will be able to begin releasing these exciting new resources to our Extension colleagues in late 2006.

Our colleagues at the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development and the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development are making significant progress on the topics to be showcased at the multi-state e-commerce training program they are hosting in their regions later this year. We will release information about these important workshops in an upcoming e-News issue. As always, we want to hear about the e-commerce efforts that you are undertaking to support the needs of small businesses and communities in rural America.

Bo Beaulieu
Director

News and Research:

New Internet Portal is a Growing Network for Experts and Sharing Research
A group of scientists, academics and nonprofit groups are creating a new Internet directory to provide information vetted by experts on all major topics of human knowledge. Released recently in a pilot, this new directory aims to collect the best of the Web in one spot. It differs from other search engines and directories in two key ways: by rejecting advertising and by putting its content under the editorial control of a self-organizing network of experts.
<http://www.digitaluniverse.net>

What Does It Take to Be Successful at Marketing?

How do producers go about finding markets for their products? This age old question often defines the difference between producers that are successful and those who fail. To be successful in marketing and business there are a few tenets that producers should consider. Read the entire article at the link below.

<http://www.agmrc.org/NR/rdonlyres/F50E07F2-A0D4-4528-BC2C-B4CB64CD4BF6/0/jan06action.pdf>

E-Commerce Sales Tax Loss Is a Growing Issue

By Sid Salter, Clarion Ledger

As Mississippi's legislature struggles with legislation involving grocery and cigarette sales taxes, attention is beginning to turn toward e-commerce sales tax losses as a way to increase revenue. Read a copy of Sid Salter's January 11, 2006, article in the Jackson, Miss., Clarion Ledger newspaper at the link below.

[Link to PDF](#)

Online Retail Sales Grew in 2005

By Enid Burns, ClickZ.com

Internet spending for 2005 gained 22 percent over 2004 spending. Data released by comScore Networks finds total Internet spending, including travel, hit \$143.2 billion in 2005. An estimated 6 percent of all non-travel consumer retail spending (excluding expenditures for autos, gasoline, and food) is spent online, according to the research firm. Of the total online spending, \$82.3 billion was spent on non-travel retail and \$60.9 billion was spent on travel.

<http://www.clickz.com/stats/sectors/retailing/article.php/3575456>

Kentucky Launches "No Child Left Offline"

Kentucky Governor Ernie Fletcher has announced a new pilot program, No Child Left Offline, which will provide 500 refurbished state computers to economically disadvantaged 8th-grade students across the state. The Appalachian Regional Commission helped sponsor the initiative, while Microsoft donated software and Lexmark donated new printers for each computer. The initiative is part of Fletcher's Prescription for Innovation, which seeks to increase computer and Internet access.

<http://www.ecs.org/00CN2747>

Agriculture on the Web: Current Situation and Prospects for Web-based Commerce and Services

This article from the Agricultural Marketing Resource Center outlines the history and current usage of e-commerce for agricultural marketing purposes. According to the most recent data (NASS 2005), 58 percent of U.S. farms have computer access and about half of all farms have Internet access. However, farmers are still shy e-commerce users. About 9 percent of farms reported purchasing agricultural inputs over the Internet in the 2005 survey (up from 8 percent in 2003) and 9 percent conduct agricultural marketing activities over the Internet.

<http://www.agmrc.org/NR/rdonlyres/73F78E52-0C39-422F-8F5E-6F07549A57AA/0/oct05action.pdf>

E-Commerce Successes:

Midwest Wireless

Midwest Wireless is based in Mankato, Minnesota, and operates in 36 counties in Minnesota , 45 counties in Iowa and 4 counties in Wisconsin . The company was started in 1990, when a group of telephone companies combined their wireless licenses to form the largest single wireless network in the United States . Under the leadership of Dennis Miller, President and CEO, Midwest Wireless has increased its subscribers from 100,000 in 1999 to 300,000 in 2003.

<http://www.accesse.info/casestudies/midwestwirelessfiles/midwestwireless.html>

Helpful Tools and Resources:

Broadband Over Power Lines Investments Gaining Momentum

By Phil Britt, Networking Pipeline

Broadband over power lines (BPL), first touted in the late 1990s as a way to deliver high-speed communications to homeowners and businesses, is finally becoming a reality. Broadband over power lines revenue growth should increase from \$57 million in 2004 to \$4.4 billion in 2011. In addition, a number of large technology companies, including Google, IBM and Motorola, have heavily invested in BPL service. Google, Hearst Corp. and Goldman Sachs have recently made a combined capital investment of \$100 million in Current Communications, a broadband over power lines service provider.

<http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?sssdmh=dm4.158803&articleID=174400971>

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