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Welcome to the Latest Issue of eNews:

The SRDC is pleased to forward to you the January 2007 issue of eNews. We are also incredibly pleased to announce an exciting new E-Commerce training scheduled to take place June 4-6, 2007, in Nebraska City, Neb. The "E-Commerce Strategies for Small Businesses and Communities" workshop will be held at the Lied Lodge and Conference Center in Nebraska City, and will feature a variety of new Extension educational curricula. Please check our [homepage](#) for updates, registration information and other news about this exciting training opportunity. Plan to reserve your spot early, as space will be limited.

As always, if you see important articles, programs or education products that you would like to have considered for inclusion in future issues, please feel free to let us know. We welcome your comments at any time.

Bo Beaulieu, Director
Julianna Brown, Editorial Assistant

Special Item of Interest

The SRDC is excited to announce another round of funding for our e-commerce competitive grants program. The theme for this new round of grants is "Building Quality E-Commerce Educational Resources to Support Extension Programming." This year we are requiring pre-proposals, which must be submitted by **March 15, 2007**. Full proposals will be due April 2, 2007. Please see the [pre-proposal request](#) for more information.

News and Research:

Biggest Tech Surprises of 2006, Part 1: Telecom

By Paul Korzeniowski, E-Commerce Times

Integrated cellular WiFi networks were just one of the big surprises listed in this article. To learn more about this and the other four telecom surprises of '06, read the article at <http://www.ecommercetimes.com/story/54807.html>.

2006 in Review, Part 2: Search Wars Raged, Did Anything Change?

By Keith Regan, E-Commerce Times

Google is still on top in the world of search, but what changes took place in 2006? Find the answer plus a link to Year in Review, Part 1 at: http://www.ecommercetimes.com/story/54582.html?u=sbarta&p=ENNSS_9f9cf29c291e8a1b4c89f535_3f4c9f69

E-Commerce Spending Off the Charts

By Nicholas Carlson, Internetnews.com

Driven by high sales on Black Friday and Cyber Monday, online holiday sales are up 24 percent over 2005. Learn more at <http://www.internetnews.com/ec-news/article.php/3652021>

Unused Gift Cards Give Retailers \$8 Billion Boon

By John P. Mello Jr., E-Commerce Times

Gift card sales were up this year at both online and brick and mortar locations. Annual sales may have exceeded \$80 billion, but as much as ten percent of that may go unused. While laws vary from state to state on how retailers must handle gift cards that go unused, the message to consumers is to spend, spend, spend. See the full story at <http://www.ecommercetimes.com/story/54792.html>

Shopping Cart Considerations

By Michelle Megna, E-Commerce-Guide

If your New Year's resolution was to purchase a new shopping cart for your online store, you might want to take a look at list of things to consider. The checklist is important whether you're thinking of switching current carts or are just getting started. Read more at http://www.ecommerce-guide.com/essentials/shopping_carts/article.php/3652916

2007: IT Predictions for the Year Ahead

By Nancy Weil, IDG News Service

What stories will make IT headlines in the upcoming year? See what consultants and analysts are predicting at: <http://www.networkworld.com/news/2006/120706-2007-it-predictions-for-the.html?t5>

Fifteen Surprises Ahead in 2007

By Chris Taylor, Business 2.0

This slide show highlights 15 technological innovations expected to make news in 2007, including smart toys, blanket WiFi and Apple I-TV. Read about these and others at <http://money.cnn.com/popups/2006/biz2/revolutions/index.html>

E-Commerce Successes:

Rural America Arts Partnership: Jon Hassler Theater, History Center and Writer's Center

By Jay Yoo

The Rural America Arts Partnership, or RAAP, is a nonprofit community arts initiative in Plainview, Minn., that serves as an umbrella organization for three affiliated organizations: Jon Hassler Professional Theater, Rural America Writers' Center and Plainview Area History Center. RAPP has successfully used the Internet for advertising and communication and has played an important role in the revitalization of Plainview's Main Street. Read the story in its entirety at <http://www.accesse.info/casestudies/ruralamericapartnershipfiles/ruralamericapartnership.html>

E-Library Focus

University of North Carolina Libraries <http://www.lib.unc.edu/reference/busecon/ecommerce.html>

Helpful Tools and Resources

Access eInternet:

Developed by the University of Minnesota Extension service, this online curriculum is targeted to people who are just now learning about the Internet. Topics include getting connected, e-mail and online safety. <http://www.accesseinternet.info/index.cfm>

SRDC Southern Region Information Toolkit

In the Southern Region Information Toolkit, you'll find a wide variety of economic, demographic and social indicators that can be used by organizations and agencies at the local, state and regional levels. See for yourself at <http://srit.srdc.msstate.edu>

Circular Area Profiles

Missouri's Census Data Center will give you data (such as population) in a circular radius around a city. Data are available for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. <http://mcdc2.missouri.edu/websas/caps.html>

U.S. Small Business Administration Free Online Courses

Along with many other resources, the SBA offers several free online courses on topics that range from how to start a business to info on building a Web site. Check out these courses at <http://www.sba.gov/services/training/onlinecourses/index.html>

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