

CHRISTMAS SEASON....AND IT'S ALL ABOUT SHARING

Hard to believe but 2014 is around the corner and it has been quite a year... from environmental, political and social perspectives. Technologically, the internet now has reached more people than TV, particularly in developing countries. Years ago, the TV trend overtook radio as a news provider and in the early 2000s internet usage took over as web-based information shifted; this trend is continuing and has already affected print media. TV and internet are converging together as one, while social media, faster and broader bandwidths, and mobile technologies are responsible for lots of these changes. Studies have shown that 71% of global internet users **share** social media content which include pictures (more than 500 million photos are shared online daily), opinions, links to articles and sites, recommendations on products, services, movies, books, music, video clips (video giant **YouTube** has 100 hours of video uploaded to its site every minute), travel plans and status updates. Of this 71%, more than 80% are under 35 years old, confirming what your kids and grandchildren have already shown you.

The impact of **social networks and sharing** have caused more websites to develop social network pages, knowing full well that today's customer is much better informed than yesterday's. Live, current inter-action is the norm as witnessed by the explosion of infographics as well as the expanding dynamics of **Pinterest, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook** (over 1 billion active users), **LinkedIn, Google+**, etc. Public networking has become much larger than many people probably expected back in 2006 when 12 million users started using **Facebook**.

Worldwide users have gone **mobile**, whether via laptops, tablets or Smartphones – the dissemination of information is being shared at lightning speed; the term “live” has already taken on a whole new meaning as happenings are shared instantly every moment. And to top it off, 86% of cellular web users use these mobile devices while watching TV...talk about multi-tasking! Not only have we gone mobile, we live in a multi-screen world.

Video clips are proliferating everywhere...on individual sites and social networks...and if you yourself didn't see it, someone probably sent you a video hyperlink...and people tend to remember 65% of what they've **seen**, vs. 10% of what they **read**. (Didn't Confucious say a picture is worth a 1000 words?)

VOIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) is used by the majority of homes and workplaces (via systems such as Skype), thus eliminating the need for telephones. The ease and low pricing of Voip systems has enabled people worldwide to communicate and share anywhere, anytime, for free on their PCs.

"Cloud" storage has enabled music, book and document sharing – and this goes beyond corporate usage...**Google Docs, Dropbox, Amazon, iCloud** and the like just to name a couple.

A zettabyte = 1 trillion gigabytes, and 2 zettabytes of data were created and shared in 2011, with an anticipated increase to 8 zettabytes by 2015. THAT is a heck of a lot of shared information! And on that note, we wish one and all a blessed, sharing and joyful Holiday season and a Happy 2014!