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## ■ News Bits

### *Fall Hiring Expected to be Stable*

According to Manpower Inc.'s quarterly Employment Outlook Survey, its 15,000 respondents' hiring intentions for the third quarter of 1999 are nearly identical to what they were for the same period in 1998.

Six percent of the companies surveyed plan to cut staff; 32 percent plan to add staff; 58 percent expect no change, and 4 percent were unsure.

Changes are ahead in the information technology field, however. According to the Exec-U-Net Executive Market Demand Index, overall demand for MIS/IT consultants declined by 30 percent.

### *Free Booklet Offer*

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### *Are You a Guru?*

The new Guru.com describes itself as "Power for Independent Professionals." You're sure to find something useful. Check out Jennifer Granick's neat article, "Clients From Hell" at [www.guru.com/guides\\_hellclient.html](http://www.guru.com/guides_hellclient.html).

If you decide to sign up for a Guru.com membership (it's free), mention us! ([RWDigest@aol.com](mailto:RWDigest@aol.com)).



# writers

# Digest

September/October 1999  
\$6.00

## ■ Profile

### Small Town Résumé Writers

*Editor's Note: Résumé writers who live in a small town often face unique challenges. We wondered about things like "if you work in an office, does everybody in town know that the people visiting your offices are getting their résumés done?" We are grateful to Deborah Edwards, from Wellsboro, Pennsylvania, and Laura West, from Paisley, Oregon, for sharing their experiences.*

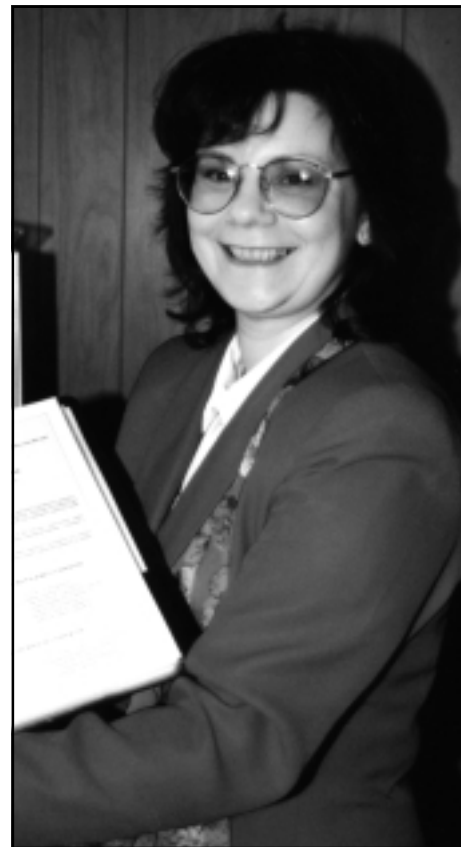
"I started out at home but moved to a second-floor location with cheap rent – \$250 for 950 sq. feet – on Main Street, then to a ground-level suite on a side street in the center of town," says Deborah Edwards, of Résumé Connection. "The location is great – directly across from a community parking lot. I also provide business support services, including temporary help placement and recruiting services. We get different types of foot traffic, so I don't think it's really that noticeable, when someone comes in, what services they are there for."

### Location Isn't Everything

While "location, location, location" may be the key in real estate, it's becoming less important for small-town résumé writers.

"Our town is only 340 people. The biggest town in the whole county is only 2800 people," says Laura West, of Agape Career Services. West says one of her greatest challenges is the economic situation of many local residents.

"The base of potential clients (in this area) is very small. The population of this county is made up of mostly ranchers. They obviously do not need much career assistance, as most of these huge ranches stay in the family through the generations



*Deborah Edwards*

and are worked by the entire family. There are also very few people moving into or out of the area who might need résumés or other career help."

Part of the problem is the low perceived value of résumé services in the area. "There is no awareness or appreciation of a career professional. Everyone here thinks in terms of a general typist, and therefore sees no reason to pay for something they could do themselves or have done elsewhere for \$15."

Edwards also finds finding clients and confidentiality issues to be difficult in a small town.

"Since it is a small town, referrals are lean because people are so protective of

■ see PROFILE page 7

## ■ From the Editor

# The World is Changing...What Does That Mean for Résumé Writers?

A recent article in *Entrepreneur* magazine, dubbed "Millennium Watch," described the future, circa 2005. The U.S. Census Bureau predicts the U.S. population will grow from 272 million in 1999 to 286 million in 2005. These consumers will have a median age of 36.6. The 40- to 44-year old age group will be the largest, followed by the 45- to 49-year-olds.

California will still be the most populous state, with at least 34.4 million folks residing there – a 5.9 percent increase over 1999's population. Texas will see a major racial shift, with the Latino population contributing to the state becoming a "minority-majority state" in about 2008.

### How will these changes affect you?

I predict that the need for resumé writing services will only grow as competition for jobs increases.

Already, people are putting off full-time retirement and choosing to enter into "post-work careers." This is resulting in a need for "transitional work resúmes" – similar to job-changer and return-to-work resúmes being created for younger workers today.

I predict the length of resúmes will also increase as employers need more information to evaluate a candidate's abilities to manage what are becoming increasingly technical responsibilities.

How you interact with clients is also likely to change. On the PARW and NRWA Onelists, more and more resumé writers are sharing how they are using technology to interact with clients.

From talking to a lot of other (non-posting) resumé writers, however, I know that many resumé writers (*including me!*) are unwilling to give up on face-to-face interactions entirely. I personally prefer to work with clients in person, although I *have* done long-distance and Internet-based consultations in the past.

The key issue is meeting your client needs. There will be clients who are unwilling – or unable – to meet with you in person. There will be other clients who do not have the technology to work with you by computer. Each resumé writer will be able to carve out a niche that will suit his or her needs.

Despite all the hype about the Internet, not *everybody* is online yet. We all have clients who have virtually no computer skills. They will need to "upgrade" themselves to meet the changing demands of the workforce ... just as the resumé writing profession will need to change to meet the demographic trends of the new millennium.

*Let me know what's on your mind – what do you see as the changing trends that will affect us in the future?*



*Resúme Writer's Digest* is a bi-monthly subscription newsletter to help resúme writers keep on top of changes in the human resources field, new developments in technology, and trends in the resúme writing field.

Each issue provides information about what successful resúme writers across the nation and around the world are doing, along with concise, timely information culled from a review of select periodicals.

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## Calendar of Events

September 29 - October 2

National Resúme Writers' Conference  
New Orleans, Louisiana – \$295

October 6 - October 9

Professional Association of Resúme  
Writer's Conference  
Colorado Springs, Colorado – \$300

September 29

"How to Grow and Expand Your Private Career Development Business"  
New Orleans, Louisiana – \$250  
For Information, Call (408) 441-9100

*Have a workshop or conference scheduled? Get on our Calendar of Events!*

### Smileys & Shorthand

Use these online symbols (they're called "Emoticons") to add life to your online discussions. *Tilt your head to the left to see the effect.*

:)	=	Smile
;) )	=	Wink
:D	=	Laughing
:(	=	Frown
:(	=	Crying
>:-)	=	(is a) Devil
0:-)	=	(is an) Angel
{ }	=	Hug
:*	=	Kiss

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# What's In a Name? Guidelines for Naming Your Business

Several résumé writers have changed their company names in the course of doing business. How they chose their new names gives guidelines for other résumé writers considering a new moniker.

Kristie Cook, CPRW, of Absolutely Write, changed her company name after a move. "Before I moved, my name was 'Sincerely Yours Secretarial Services.' I wanted my new name to be 1) close to the top of the alphabet, 2) reflect more writing services than secretarial, and 3) be catchy," she says.

## Plan to Accommodate Future Services

If you are planning to offer more than just résumé writing, you will want to make sure your company name can encompass a diverse range of services.

This was the challenge Thomas P. Gove, president of The Original Résumé, faced when he named his company.

"In 1988, I had a vision of creating much more than just a résumé company, something different, something unique, something 'original,'" he says. His company provides résumé writing services,

both in person and soon, online, as well as permanent recruiting services, and consulting services for businesses. They also maintain a database called "The Best Directory of Recruiters" (available in print, online and interactive versions).

## Pick a Name That Fits Your Niche

Choosing a name that reflects the "niche" you want your business to fill is essential, says Ronnie Griese, owner of Professional Image Information Processing Service.

"I wanted a name that would convey to people that what I can do for them would be one of the best in the field," Griese says. "Clients looking for services for themselves and/or their businesses want quality and professional-looking documents and publications. My name implies this."

Jean Cummings, of A Résumé for Today, agrees.

"The name to most people does mean that they will be getting a product that reflects the trends in the marketplace. People will say, 'I wanted a résumé for today.' No one so far has interpreted it to mean I will turn it around in one day."

When choosing a name, do your homework, advises Marta Driesslein, career coach and CPRW.

"To form a name, I used a dictionary, a manual thesaurus, several large city yellow pages and a United States map listing all

cities. I ended up with Cambridge and knew that it is a name that, should someone somewhere also have it, they could not sue me to remove, because Cambridge University, Cambridge in England, and Cambridge Products (Mead Corporation) are public domain entities," she said. "It took me about six weeks to formulate a name, and immediately upon implementation the quality of my clientele and the focus of my business changed for the better."


## Making the Change

Nancy L. Barker, of Busume Resumes & DTP decided to change her business name after she noticed new clients were having trouble with the name. "I think the last straw was when a recent client couldn't seem to pronounce it (even though he heard me say it many times) and insisted upon saying 'bosom-ay.' Ack!"

Sue Montgomery is planning to change her company's name from Résumé Resource to Résumé Plus, effective January 1, 2000. It's a change she has made once before, when she changed her company name from Carolcom to Résumé Resource to "better reflect the true purpose of the organization."

"Advertising, letterhead and envelopes, etc. are changed to reflect the new name. Our clients are notified via our company newsletter. We don't want it to seem that the old company has failed, only that it has grown and is entering a new phase."

"I think business naming is fun because it's a great creative outlet. It's also stressful, though, because it's a critical part of your marketing. Make sure you get it right and it's something you can live with for several years," Cook says.

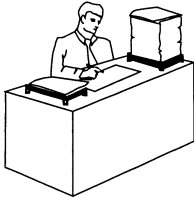


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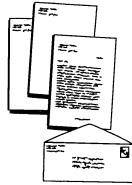
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## Web Tip

### What You Need to Know about Web Site Meta Tags

When choosing the meta tags that you use to register your web site with a search engine, keep in mind that there is a difference between "résumés" and "resumes." The ASCII code for the representation of "résumés" is either "r@#eacute;sum&#eacute;e;" or "r&#233;sum&#233;." Either way, it's not "resume." I strongly recommend that you consider *not* using the accents if you want the search engines to work in your favor.

– Kevin Skarritt, COO/Designer, Image Engineering  
<http://www.imageengineering.com>

## ■ Contest!

### Clients From Hell...



Everybody's had at least one... the client from hell. You know the type – but everyone's experience is a little bit different. Tell us about *your* client from hell – and what you did about him or her (if anything!)

Fax or e-mail your response by October 15, and you could win an autographed copy of "Résumés in Cyberspace" by Pat Criscito, CPRW

ON LETTERHEAD, FAX TO:  
402.333.1658

OR E-MAIL TO:  
RWDigest@aol.com

Contest winner will be announced in the November/December issue of *Resumé Writer's Digest!*

## How Long Should a Job Search Take?

According to Christina Barron of Bernard Hodes Advertising, an old rule of thumb correlates the job searcher's paycheck with the length of time it takes to find the right new job. The formula suggests that you can expect to spend one month for each \$10,000 in salary the job searcher made in a previous position or is hoping to make in a new position.

– *IT Recruiter Magazine, August 1999*

### FindAResumeWriter.com

Before the end of the year, *Resumé Writer's Digest* will be launching FindAResumeWriter.com, a nationwide referral service for resumé writers. Subscribers to *Resumé Writer's Digest* will be able to participate for a significantly reduced fee. The web site will allow job seekers to search for and select a resumé writer who meets their needs from the FindAResumeWriter.com database.

The web site will be promoted through a massive public relations campaign designed to increase awareness of the resumé writing profession and help develop value for the services of professional resumé writers. More details will be forthcoming later this year!

Last Issue's Winner...

### What's On Your Bookshelf?

Last month, we wanted to know...  
What is the one (resumé-related) book on your bookshelf that you can't do without?

Our Winner is: Lorie Lebert, CPRW  
Owner, Résumés For Results  
Novi, Michigan

Lorie responded... *The Gregg Reference Manual*

Lorie is a Certified Professional Resumé Writer (CPRW) with more than eight years' experience in resumé writing and job search consultation. She has been an independent business owner since 1991, "with satisfied clients in all professions," she reports.

Lorie is a nationally-recognized resumé designer and has had resúmes and cover letters featured in several publications, including: *America's Top Résumés for America's Top Jobs*, *Gallery of Best Cover Letters*, *Professional Résumés for Executives, Managers, and Other Administrators*, *Gallery of Best Résumés for Two-Year Degree Graduates*, and *Professional Résumés for Tax and Accounting Occupations*.

Congratulations, Lorie!

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# Preventing Credit Card Chargebacks

A client comes in for a consultation. You agree to work together. She gives you her credit card and signs an authorization to proceed. You run the credit card through for your initial charges and the client leaves. She takes her questionnaire home and you never hear from her again.

A few days later, you receive a notice from your credit card merchant that the client has asked for the charge to be removed. You've been hit by a "chargeback."

According to VISA, your business may experience chargebacks for various reasons. The following are the most common reasons for retail chargebacks:

- Non-Receipt of Draft - 25%
- No Imprint - 19%
- Duplicate Processing - 9%
- Non-Receipt of Merchandise - 7%
- Credit Not Processed - 7%
- Other - 33%

Notice "cold feet" isn't listed. (Maybe that's what they mean by "other.") Your first line of defense is to contact your merchant account provider.

This could be your local bank or a national company. Your best defense is a strong paperwork trail. Having your client's signature on an agreement to provide the service is the first step. If the client backs out before services are fully rendered, the merchant account company will probably work with the cardholder's credit card company to work out a settlement.

If the work was completed and the client signed paperwork accepting the finished work, you're on stronger ground than if the client simply "disappears" and you decide to charge out the balance due based on the work you've provided.

Make sure you follow your merchant account provider's guidelines, including obtaining signatures on manual card drafts or computer-generated tickets.

Want more information? Call your merchant account customer service number (it's listed on your card-reader terminal) and ask for the Visa *Chargeback Management Guide*, which may help you clarify chargeback issues.

## Public Relations

Looking to get exposure for your resumé writing business? Consider writing an article. Check out *Writer's Digest* magazine for leads. For example:

**Back to College** provides information and advice for adults who are going back to school for professional development and advanced degrees. The average reader has an annual income of \$44,000 and wants a degree on the fast track.

Submit your articles to the weekly news/information e-zine on any issue critical to a nontraditional student's success, including articles on **career management or successful work-to-school transitions**. Include examples, illustrations, direct quotes, and resources (online and real-world) where readers can get more information.

Query editor D. Rickert at Box 2001, Fullerton, CA 92837, or use the online form at their web site. Full guidelines are available on their web site ([www.back2college.com](http://www.back2college.com)).

– *Writer's Digest Magazine, July 1999*

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## ■ PROFILE continued from page 1

their positions and the need for confidentiality. Most of the referrals I get are 'next generation' – meaning parents bring their children in for a résumé, or vice versa."

"I train my office staff that although they may know the client on the outside, they don't 'know' the client," Edwards says.

It can also lead to some extreme measures to protect confidentiality.

"I have had to usher clients out the rear of the building to protect their identity. Recently, one of my clients waited in the alley next to the building until I opened the office so that no one would see her pacing the sidewalk. I have also worked with six people from the same company at the same time, and one of them was the HR director," she says. "None of them knew that the others were looking for work; or if they did, they didn't hear it from me!"

### Finding Clients

West uses the Internet to find and service clients. She works from home so that she can be with her three boys (who are all under the age of three). Technology makes that possible.

"I really don't do any business locally. All of my clients are coming through the Internet from other areas of the country," West says.

Edwards agrees. "I generate business from all areas. I even had one client fly his personal airplane to meet with me from central New Jersey because he wanted some interview coaching in person! I do it local or long distance, in person, by phone, fax or Internet. I have a strategic partnership with a state-based job site – PennsylvaniaJobs.com – for which I provide career coaching to job seekers."

West gives back to her community through a variety of community service efforts. "I volunteer about one résumé package a month to someone going through the women's shelter or some other similar organization."

"The best thing about having my business located in a small town is the exposure. Knowing all the 'movers and shakers' and their families on a first-name basis is wonderful. It's very much like having a large family," Edwards notes. "Even the people at the post office know how to find me. I received mail addressed to 'Mrs. Deb' once and it still got to me."

### Encourage Your Clients to Negotiate Salary and Benefits, Survey Says

When job offers are made to job candidates, more than eight out of 10 HR professionals (82 percent) expect to receive counteroffers regarding salary and benefits, according to a recently-conducted joint poll by the Society for Human Resource Management and careers.wsj.com.

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## Start Planning Your New Year's Promotions

If July is the slowest month of the year, January has to be one of the busiest. And one of the reasons for this can be linked directly to New Year's resolutions. Plan now to take advantage of the "burst of business" that accompanies the new calendar by implementing at least one of these activities.

1. Write one feature article or news release about your business. Send it to the business or "working" section of your local newspaper. Possible topics: the new electronic résumé...the future of the job search (according to the *Utne Reader*, 50 million new jobs will open up by 2006, an increase of 14 percent over 1996)...and using cover letters in your job search.
2. Send an "end-of-the-year" letter to past clients, asking them to set their goals for the next year. Every time we send out a letter or newsletter, we receive calls from clients wanting to update their résumés (for a fee, of course), whether we've emphasized that in the letter or not.
3. Plan your newsletter and web site for 2000. The most successful résumé writers combine traditional direct mail with online resources. If you don't currently have a newsletter, plan to introduce a quarterly publication for next year. Start mapping out articles and topics for the newsletter and include them on your web site as well.
4. If you haven't used public speaking to promote your business in the past, give it a try in 2000! There are hundreds of organizations that need speakers - including community groups, professional and trade organizations, schools and colleges. Even if you aren't paid for your time, this is an invaluable way to reach new prospects. Create an informative, information-packed 20- to 45-minute talk and then send fliers out. Find possible groups by looking in your local Yellow Pages or in *Gale's Directory of Associations*, available at your local library.

— Coming In Next Issue: Part II —

## Next Issue...

- *Sensational Seasonal Promotions (Part II)* - attracting clients whose New Year's Resolution is to find a better job in 2000
- *Choosing a Merchant Account Provider* - where to find the best rates and the best service
- *Paper Power - Giving Your Clients a Choice*

## Scam Alert

Be careful about people calling for supplier and model numbers for copy machines and computer printers. This is usually a scam! They send you low-quality toner supplies at a highly inflated price.

How can you check if they are legitimate or not? Tell them you don't have that information available right now, but you can take their phone number and call them right back. They will usually hang up.

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# When Disaster Strikes: What To Do When Your Computer Goes Kaput!

It's every résumé writer's worst nightmare. Your computer's hard drive is fried by lightning. What do you do?

Karen Wilson-Dooley, of Just Your Type, found out the hard way.

"In July, my computer was struck by lightning. I suffered extensive damage to the modem and motherboard. I was without my computer for almost a week while it was being rebuilt," she says. "Once I got my computer back, I spent two days getting all of my software installed and getting things properly set up again."

Computer problems can range from the mundane (accidentally overwriting a file) to the horrific (complete hard drive crashes, lightning strikes, floods or fires).

The first thing to do is examine your most immediate needs. Do you have a client project due today? Is the client's need urgent or can you call him or her and reschedule? (Explain that you had a computer problem. Be sure to give them some idea when you expect to be able to

complete their project.) If you still have a pending deadline and hard copies but no computer, grab the yellow pages and look up the nearest quick-copy shop with computers.

Assess the situation, prioritize the most urgent projects, and act accordingly.

And finally, some haiku to soothe you when things go wrong. (Thanks to David Adler of Reliable Résumé in Lexington, KY for sharing this).

In Japan, Sony Vaio machines has replaced the Microsoft error messages with Japanese haiku poetry.

*Windows NT crashed.  
I am the Blue Screen of Death.  
No one hears your screams.*

*A file that big?  
It might be very useful.  
But now it is gone.*

*The web site you seek  
Can not be located but  
Countless more exist.*

## *An Ounce of Prevention...*

A few minutes each month can save you a *lot* of frustration later.

## **Backup Your Computer Files**

If your computer hard drive crashes, having a disk, tape, Zip or Jaz backup on hand will get you up and going again fairly quickly. At a minimum, backup your files at least once a week. It will be easier to remember if you do it the same day every week. Designate at least two backup "disks" (or tapes, or sets of floppies) and rotate them. *Use Disk A this week and Disk B next week.*

Keep a backup of your software programs and one of your backup disks "off-site."

## **Check Your Insurance**

Make sure your insurance will cover the loss of computer media in the event of a fire or other disaster.



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Membership benefits include information-packed annual conventions, résumé writing training program, certification program, trade newsletters, member discounts, private message board and e-list, and weekly on-line chats.

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To join or find out more,  
Call (800) NRWA444.

(You'll be glad you did!)



*National Résumé Writers' Association*

18580 SouthWest Rosa Road  
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## Society for Human Resource Management Update

"A typical recruiter spends 10 to 20 seconds scanning the first page of each résumé he receives. Unless he sees the skills and experience he's seeking, he'll pitch it. This means one-size-fits-all résumés and cover letters rarely make it through the screening process. If you aren't willing to tailor your qualifications to a particular employer's needs, you're unlikely to get a second glance.

If one screener rejects your résumé, it's unlikely another recruiter will see it. If you're applying for three jobs, send three résumés."

– from "Does Your Résumé Vanish Into a Black Hole?"  
by Taunee Besson

*National Business Employment Weekly*

"For the first time in fifty years, job searching has moved beyond the staid, old realm of paper résumés and the post office. Here's the evidence: A survey conducted in 1998 by Management

Recruiters, International, an executive search firm based in Cleveland, found that 37 percent of companies now recruit on the Internet and World Wide Web, up from 26.5 percent just 18 months ago. More than 29 percent of companies now post jobs on their corporate web sites; a year ago, that number was too small to report.

All-in-all, the Internet résumé gives you several important advantages: speed, accuracy, cost savings, flexibility, staying power, and value-added credential. The keys to its success are effective content and its unique format."

– from "Can Electronic Eyes Read Your Résumé?"

by Peter D. Weddle

*National Business Employment Weekly*

– Information provided by Kristin Accipiter, Media Affairs Manager for SHRM.

Check out the SHRM web site at [www.shrm.org](http://www.shrm.org) for more information.

## Get Your Friends to Subscribe...and Save!

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# Sell Online – For Free

Finally, you can sell your products and services online – for free. Accept credit cards (even if you don't have a credit card merchant account yet). Sell as many products as you like. Automatically calculate shipping charges for customers. All without learning HTML – and best of all, it's free!

Two new companies offer free websites which include e-commerce functions. Simply choose one of the sites and register. Follow the on-screen directions to build your site and you're ready to go. Depending on how many products you will be selling, you can be up and running in as little as one hour.

Visit the sites: [www.bigstep.com](http://www.bigstep.com) and [www.freemerchant.com](http://www.freemerchant.com).

The sites do have their limitations. While you can upload graphics, logos,



and photos, you may not be able to tweak the "look" of your site as much as you'd like. Freemerchant.com includes banner ads on each page.

Use your own domain name or their web address (at freemerchant, your web address would be <http://yourcompany.safeshopper.com>; or at bigstep, it's [www.yourcompany.bigstep.com](http://www.yourcompany.bigstep.com))

Bigstep also offers: e-mail newsletters, online customer databases and personalized newsletters, web site promotion and marketing services, personalized web tracking reports and the ability to create an online portfolio.

Freemerchant provides a fully customized loyalty points program, order tracking, free e-mail and a private e-mail domain and the ability to process credit cards through your own merchant account or to set up one through them.

# Going to a Conference?

Here are some tips for those of you planning to attend the NRWA or PARW conferences in September and October.

To do list:

- Make hotel and air reservations
- Arrange for travel from airport to hotel and conference site
- Get contest entries mailed if you are planning to participate
- Service your car (if you're driving). Get your oil changed, tires checked, etc.

A few days before you depart, begin to make a list of items to take along with you, including:

- Extra cash for books and materials sold at the conference
- Paper and pencils.
- Business cards. You never know when someone will ask for one!
- Comfortable shoes!!!

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