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The State of the Internet Economy

I recently had the pleasure of participating in a "Google Talks" panel discussion at Google's new Washington DC office. The discussion, called "The State of the Internet Economy," also included Hal Varian, Chief Economist, Google, Arun Gupta, Partner, Columbia Capital and Robert Atkinson, President, Information Technology and Innovation Foundation. The discussion centered around the economic health of the Internet industry, especially during the current economic slowdown. What impact do rising gas prices, record foreclosures, higher food costs, and other economic woes have on electronic commerce? All of these economic downturns have a trickle down effect on nearly every corner of society. Yet how does this affect our industry?

Right now, the news is not as grim as one might imagine. Internet commerce has not faced the same laggard fate as many other industries, including the brick-and-mortar retailers. Many retailers are experiencing a boost in online sales while seeing their growth in the traditional stores level off. Online sales have jumped 17 percent in the first quarter of this year, indicating electronic retailing is strong.

Overall, the panel remained bullish on e-commerce. One panelist predicted steady growth for online commerce as high-speed connections increase and core technologies become faster and cheaper. This will help to enhance consumer comfort levels and ease of use. In addition, even with an economic slowdown, consumers will turn to the Internet in greater numbers in order to make more informed buying decisions. Therefore, rather than putting off a purchase all together, they may just seek the guidance of online consumer research or peer group satisfaction.

Certain sectors, ones in which consumers are already comfortable making online purchases, will continue to be strong candidates for e-commerce. Data from Forrester Research is as promising: 53 percent of all computer hardware and software sales take place online; 30 percent of all toys, video products and auto parts are purchased online; and two-

C O N T E N T S

[ERA Awards: **Deadline 6/20**](#)

[ERA's 18th Annual Convention: 9/21-23](#)

[ERA Europe Home Shopping Conference: 6/22-23](#)

[Networking Reception Santa Monica: 7/16](#)

[ERA Webinar: 6/19](#)

[ERA Webinar: 7/17](#)

[New ERA Research](#)

[Government Affairs](#)

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Upcoming ERA Events

June 19, 2008

ERA's Webinar Series - The Product, The Production and The Star: The 3 Things You Need for DR Success
2:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. EDT

June 22-23, 2008

The Electronic Home Shopping Conference 2008
Fairmont Hotel
Monte Carlo

July 16, 2008

Networking Reception - Santa Monica
6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. PDT

Sept. 21-23, 2008

ERA's 18th Annual Convention
Paris Hotel
Las Vegas, NV

thirds of all Internet users have bought products online. Online retail sales, not including travel, reached \$175 billion in 2007, an increase of 21 percent from. Forrester expects online sales to exceed \$200 billion this year. Indeed the economic headlines remain a concern for all of us, but consider the bright spot in all of this—during a downturn, when the going gets tough, the consumer gets online.

View the “Google Talks” on [YouTube here](#).

Edwin Garrubbo, Board Chair

CEO, Creative Commerce, LLC

www.retailing.org

7 Days to Get Your Awards Submissions to ERA!

2008 ERA Awards Deadline June 20

The deadline for the ERA Awards to be presented at the 18th Annual is just one week away!

We are looking for the best the industry has to offer to showcase at the Annual Convention in Las Vegas this September. Access the [ERA Awards Submission Packet here](#).

Send in your submission by **June 20** and you could take center stage in September during the ERA Annual Convention! To get a taste of what the ERA Awards is all about, take a quick look at our [video overview](#).

The Early Bird Gets an Excellent Room!

ERA Annual Convention 2008

Retailers Rock with ERA!

September 21-23

Paris Hotel, Las Vegas

Registration for the 18th Annual ERA Convention at the Paris Hotel in Las Vegas has shot out of the gate at a blistering pace. With a limited room block set aside at the rate of \$214 per night for Convention Attendees, registering today will ensure you get the best room possible.

According to our surveys of attendees, one of the highlights of last year's convention and of the eRetailer Summit in Miami in May was the education and this year is shaping up to be even more beneficial with ERA's new certification and accreditation program kicking off in Las Vegas.

[Register online today.](#)

For sponsorship and exhibiting opportunities, visit <http://www.retailing.org/annual> or contact [Karla Kelly](#) at 703.908.1026

James Taylor to Deliver Keynote at ERA Europe Monte Carlo Conference

ERA Europe Electronic Home Shopping Conference 2008

June 22-23

Fairmont Hotel

Monte Carlo

ERA Europe announces that James Taylor, vice chairman of The Harrison Group and co-author of "The Visionary's Handbook," will serve as the keynote at the Opening Gala Dinner on Sunday, June 22, during the Electronic Home Shopping Conference in Monte Carlo. The dinner is open to all registered attendees and exhibitors [Register now](#) for an unforgettable experience in a memorable location.

Networking by the Sea

ERA Member Networking Reception

July 16, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Casa del Mar

Santa Monica, California

The Casa del Mar - Hotel by the Sea is the picturesque backdrop for an evening of building new relationships and catching up with industry colleagues and old friends.

Free for ERA members and retailers.

Non-member suppliers: \$99. Non-member suppliers who join ERA within 30 days of the event will receive a credit of the \$99 registration fee towards their membership dues.

RSVP to Katie White: kwhite@retailing.org / phone: 703.841.8284

June 19 Webinar:

The Product, The Production and The Star:

The 3 Things You Need for DR Success

(And How to Get Them When You're Starting with Nothing!)

June 19, 2:30 – 3:00 pm EST

Re-ignite your DR campaign! ERA has brought together 3 experts who have been there and done that and are ready to spill the beans to teach you the tricks of the trade that will set you on the path to DR success. Join us for an informative half hour of insider info from the comfort of your own computer.

Speakers: **Neil Gordon**, Executive in Charge of Production, Sylmark, Inc.; **Paul Greenberg**, Chief Creative Officer, Thane Direct; **Blair Taylor**, Agent, Commerical Talent.

Moderator: **Ed Garrubbo**, CEO Creative Commerce and Chair, ERA Board of Directors

ERA Members: Free
Nonmembers: \$99
[Register here.](#)

July 17 Webinar: Recession-Proof Your Business

July 17, 2:30 – 3:00 pm EST

The impact of a slow-down is already apparent – delayed project start dates, slower paying customers, and a discounting of prices by your competitors. Businesses are beginning the process of “downsizing” their revenue expectations. But, is that the right approach? In reality, there are 10 activities that a business owner can implement today that will immediately increase their revenues, decrease their operational costs and boost corporate profitability. Explore these tips for optimizing your business operations.

Speakers: **Brad Dawson**, Managing Director, LTV Dynamics

Moderator: **Ed Garrubbo**, CEO Creative Commerce and Chair, ERA Board of Directors

ERA Members: Free

Nonmembers: \$99

[Register here.](#)

New Research Available to Members

As an ERA member benefit, the following two research papers from Forrester are available to members this month:

- **Maximizing eCommerce Content to Drive Sales**
Rich and accurate product information is critical when it comes to selling online. This paper offers solutions to create online product content strategies that combine the right content and internal talent.
- **Use Personas to Design for Engagement**
Agencies and clients come together in this study to discuss the use of personas effectively. Read how QVC, among others, built connections across all channels to engage existing customers of its TV network with a redesign of its website.

[Click here](#) to access.

[Click here](#) to join ERA.

ERA Meeting with FTC Commissioner Leibowitz a Success

Last Thursday ERA Government Affairs had the opportunity to meet with FTC Commissioner Jon Leibowitz to discuss industry concerns regarding the [FTC Reauthorization Act](#). This bill, introduced in the Senate, has been a source of concern for the industry for [several reasons](#). One of the major concerns is the possibility that it might impose liability on otherwise innocent actors if they were involved in marketing or distributing a product, even if they were completely unaware of any

wrongdoing on the part of the manufacturer or seller. This might apply particularly to direct marketers, fulfillment houses, retailers, or to other forums for advertising. Commissioner Leibowitz was very receptive to ERA's suggestions and is currently working with other members of the FTC and congressional staff to find an appropriate change in the language.

This meeting also provided an opportunity to discuss the progress we have made with the Electronic Retailing Self-Regulation Program (ERSP) and the shared interests of the FTC and the industry in protecting consumers from fraudulent advertising. To date the ERSP has been extremely successful, resulting in 166 cases of voluntary compliance within the self-regulation process. By demonstrating successful self-regulation, the industry is able to protect consumers and discourage unnecessarily burdensome regulation in the future. ERA looks forward to continued cooperation with the FTC on this and other issues

Tomiyo Turner
ERA Government Affairs

Industry News

[CHANNELTRENDS](#)[BUSINESSINDUSTRY](#) [GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS](#)

CHANNELS

- [**Widgets, Widgets Everywhere**](#)

From the time I first played with mobile widgets Plusmo and WidSets, the format appealed to me as a cool way to organize data sources on a phone.

Mobile Insider

- [**Generate Conversions Through Engagement**](#)

Engagement, engagement, engagement! That's where the world of online advertising is going. Why now? What's changed? What makes engagement so important?

Adotas

- [**Cell Phones Still Hot; More Mobile Advertising Proposed**](#)

Although a new Harris Interactive study reveals that over one-third of consumers say the dire economy will not affect their spending habits, the 60% of consumers who will limit their discretionary spending will curtail going out to restaurants (74%) and limit their purchase of electronics (71%). 41% of consumers, however, have no plans to stop or cut-back on the purchase of cell phones, making it an increasingly viable advertising channel.

Center for Media Research

TRENDS

- [**Gen Y Fears Wrinkles: Cosmeceutical Sales To Hit \\$21 Billion**](#)

Americans are hooked on multitasking lotions: A new report from Packaged Facts reports that sales of cosmeceuticals--cosmetic products that offer some additional benefits--are expected to reach \$16 billion in 2007, and \$21 billion by 2012. And while crows-foot-phobic Baby Boomers are certainly a large part of the market, Gen X and Gen Y shoppers

are also fueling the trend. Even babies are on board: \$35 infant moisturizers are among the hot sellers, the report notes.

Marketing Daily

- [Gay Marriage: Bringing Civil Rights and Consumer Dollars to California](#)
In a groundbreaking decision last month, California's Supreme Court legalized gay marriage here in the nation's most populous state. Starting June 17, same-sex couples can now get married in California and receive the same legal rights and responsibilities as any other couple in the state

Advertising Age

- [What Prompts Hispanic-Americans to Buy?](#)
Hispanic-Americans are heavy media consumers. New data from Vertis Communications reveals that in 2007 they were also more likely than the total US population to be influenced by media.

eMarketer

- [What Dads Want For Father's Day: Tools, TVs And ... Cheese](#)
While Father's Day is never quite the blessing to retailers that Mother's Day is--with consumers spending about \$9.6 billion on dad versus \$15.8 billion on mom---stores are being extra clever this year in their attempts to woo gift buyers.

Marketing Daily

BUSINESS

- [When PCI Compliance Isn't Enough](#)
High-profile data breaches continue to spotlight the growing risks consumers face of identity theft and credit card fraud. Four highly visible data breaches disclosed in the last 18 months are particularly worrisome because they show a systemic failure in the procedures that both the public and regulatory agencies expect companies to get right.

TechNewsWorld

- [Live Chat Strategies for E-tailers](#)
Using live chat can help improve customer relations, and sales, and is becoming more common, but most e-tailers have it located in the wrong place, according to a recent

study, and many are not using it effectively.

eCommerce Guide

- [Welcome to the Know-How Era](#)

Somewhere in a company's growth phase, the repository of know-how about a product or service transfers to the customer, who then develops the know-how of what the next iteration of that product and service should be.

CRM Buyer

INDUSTRY

- [Yahoo, Google Strike a Deal on Paid Search](#)

Yahoo is outsourcing search monetization to Google in a 10-year deal, the companies officially announced tonight. But advertisers see less competition and higher prices.

Advertising Age

- [Ad Spend Up A Tepid 0.6%, Internet Leads Major Investments](#)

The U.S. advertising economy managed to eke out a tepid 0.6% growth during the first quarter of 2008, according to data on measured media spending released this morning by TNS Media Intelligence, but concerns about the economy are continuing to drag on ad spending in most of the major media.

Marketing Daily

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

- [Overstock and Patrick Byrne sue New York over Amazon Tax](#)

A month ago, Amazon sued that Empire State over its so-called Amazon Tax, and on Friday, cut-rate e-tailer Overstock.com filed its own suit, reiterating that the Amazon Tax affects more than just Amazon.

Channel Register

Member Press Releases

- [The Global D.R. Group is now offering unique infomercial production services starting at under \\$30,000 dollars](#)
- [Industex S.L., one of the largest providers of both long form and short form proprietary products to the direct marketing industry announces the appointment of Anders Smedmark as an Export Manager for Europe. \(PDF\)](#)
- [Industex S.L., one of the largest providers of both long form and short form proprietary products to the direct marketing industry announces the appointment of industry veteran Juan Elias as it's Regional Manager for Latin America & the Mideast. \(PDF\)](#)

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Classified Ads [Advertise in ERA's E-News Weekly](#)

Seeking Direct Response Marketing Assistant Manager

Iceland Health is seeking an individual with 2-4 years experience in the DR industry. DRTV experience required. DR radio, print, mail and Internet experienced preferred as well. Seeking an individual who knows their way around our industry and many of the players in it. Candidate should be interested in learning everything about DR from the marketer's prospective and to develop the skills necessary for managerial responsibility at Iceland Health. Should be prepared to handle marketing, advertising and data analysis projects from day 1. This is a full-time position only. Choice of working from home up to 4 days a week or in our office in Purchase, New York. Must live in the NY/NJ/CT area in order to attend weekly meetings 1 day a week in Purchase. Salary plus full corporate benefits package. A great opportunity to learn the business from a successful and fast-growing DR marketer. Send resume and references to mark@icelandhealth.com.

Product Acquisitions Manager

Highly Motivated. Strong organizational skills. Sales experience. Responsible for sourcing new products for overseas distribution through new and existing suppliers. Communicate with current suppliers and handle all customer needs. Excellent communication skills. Please contact deborah.goc@giservices.tv.

Looking for a Sales Executive for EUROPE.

PREMIER SOLUTIONS, www.premiersolutions.com <<http://www.premiersolutions.com/>>, from Miami Florida, is looking for a full time SALES PERSON. **EXCELLENT opportunity to make**

some serious money. The person must live in Europe and have experience in the DRTV Industry. Those people interested please e-mail us your resume at jorge@premiersolutions.com.

PER INQUIRY RADIO, TV, PRINT AND INTERNET CLIENTS NEEDED.

William Sullivan Advertising, specialist in per inquiry / remnant radio, TV, print and Internet advertising is looking for more clients to place per inquiry with us across the country. Presently we have over 50 satisfied clients using our per inquiry radio, TV, print and Internet service paying a specific price per lead. Feel free to read some of Bill's articles on DR Radio which had been published in Electronic Retailer Magazine http://www.williamsullivanadvertising.com/articles_0607.html. We are looking for more clients to place advertising in our per Inquiry program. We have a proven model for over 22 years making direct response advertising work for our large and expanding list of clients. For samples of our radio commercials please visit <http://www.williamsullivanadvertising.com/samples.html>. Our present client categories start from Natural Cures book to acne products to stress and anxiety relief programs to inventions companies to hair replacement and much more. We are dedicated to expanding our clients business and you can be a part of our growth. Contact Bill Sullivan at 973-379-8555 or email bill@williamsullivanadvertising.com.

Submissions

Are you an ERA member? As a membership benefit, you can submit press releases, company/personnel announcements and calendar items to be published in the E-News Weekly. Please contact Peter Howson, phowson@retailing.org.

Advertising Opportunities

If you are interested in advertising, please contact Peter Howson, phowson@retailing.org.

[Please follow this link to opt out of ERA mailings.](#)

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Contact us: Monday – Friday 8:30 am – 5:00 pm ET

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