

AllCovered-NEWS

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NOTE: At the end of most stories excerpted within is a link to the full story at its source.

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SMALL BIZ – WHY PROSPECT CANNOT BUY

--- From an article by Jeffrey Gitomer – link at end ---

This article assumes you are talking to the real decision-maker.

If you are trying to sell to someone who can't buy, none of this matters.

What makes people choose is a lot more important than when.

The average salesperson always wants to know when, without bothering to understand the thought process that goes into the decision -- until, of course, the prospect says "no."

--- BIG RULE OF SALES ---

If they like you, believe you, have confidence in you and trust you, then they may buy from you.

--- HOW TO CHANGE "MAY" TO "YES" ---

--- THINK LIKE THE PROSPECT ---

The following factors influence the decision:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. What the prospect knows. | 6. What the prospect believes he or she can afford. |
| 2. What the prospect believes to be true. | 7. The prospect's risk tolerance. |
| 3. What the prospect needs. | 8. How other people influence the prospect. |
| 4. What the prospect wants. | 9. How comfortable the prospect is with the fit. |
| 5. What the prospect understands. | 10. The prospect's gut feeling or instinct. |

--- WHAT THE DECISION-MAKER ASKS HIMSELF ---

While you are making your sales pitch... here is what the prospects is asking himself:

- | | |
|---|---|
| +What do I believe will happen after I buy this? | +Will I be more productive than I am now? |
| +Will I benefit? If so, how will I benefit? | +Am I getting a fair deal? |
| +Will I be better off having made this purchase? | +Will others like my decision? |
| +Will the product be better than I expect it will be? | +Will others respect my decision? |
| +How will I profit? | |

--- WHAT DECISION-MAKER IS PONDERING ---

- | | |
|---|---|
| +Will there be a negative surprise? | +Will this put my finances in jeopardy? |
| +Will I be ridiculed? | +How am I feeling about this? |
| +Will I be blamed if it's not the right decision? | |

The salesperson needs to be aware of these decision-making influences and learn to sense when there is a swing toward doubt. That doubt, often referred to as an objection, is really a barrier caused by the salesperson's lack of understanding of the prospect's decision-making process.

--- YOUR URGENCY IS NOT PROSPECT'S ---

Salespeople are always moaning about people who keep postponing or delaying the decision.

People delay decisions because they feel there's no reason to proceed.

That's not a customer problem.

It's a salesperson problem. You did not provide enough reasons to buy.

Not making a decision is making a decision. The buyer decided "no" or "not yet."

Indecisive buyer? More likely an Unconvincing Salesperson.

The sales cycle is as long as the salesperson is bad. What proof did you provide to create low- or no-risk reasons to proceed? Where are the testimonials? What proof have you provided to create peace of mind and erase doubt and risk?

Decision-makers often ask others for their opinion. Third-party opinion plays a heavy role in influencing the final decision. Any salesperson who does not offer his or her own third-party opinion -- also known as testimonials -- is a fool.

--- REMEMBER ---

Your selling skills are not as powerful as the probable purchaser's buying motives.

MORE: http://www.bizjournals.com/extraedge/consultants/sales_moves/2004/11/08/column423.html

A PROSPECT'S LIST FOR DECIDING

Answer these prospect questions and you should get the sale. Here are the questions:

- 1)- What do you offer?
- 2)- What do you offer that no one else has?
- 3)- What do you offer of value?
- 4)- Does it really fill my need?
- 5)- Is it real-world?
- 6)- Will it work?
- 7)- Will it work in our environment?
- 8)- How will it impact our people?
- 9)- How could it impact our success?
- 10)- Will senior management buy in?
- 11)- Will my people use it?
- 12)- How will we produce as a result of the purchase?
- 13)- How will we profit as a result of the purchase?
- 14)- Do I trust the people I'm buying from both as people and for their ability to deliver what they promise?
- 15)- How will it come together?
- 16)- How do we buy it?
- 17)- Do I have the comfort to sign off now?

SMALL BIZ – MARKETING – NEW EMAIL FINDINGS

A newly released 2004 Consumer Email Study gives interesting insight on how recipients really feel about marketing related emails.

- + 54% would like email to replace telemarketing
- + 45% would like email to replace in-person sales calls
- + 40% would like email to replace direct mail
- + 33% would like to see email replace retail offers and coupons.
- + Tuesday continued to be the most common day of the week for emails sent.
- + Nearly 70% of male respondents are likely to open mails that contain news or compelling information in the subject line.
- + Women were more likely to open email that cited discount offers in the subject line, with 64% stating that this would influence them to open emails.
- + eCommerce marketers are finding that email is the most effective way of boosting customer retention and increasing sales.
- + Around 65% of marketers say they plan to increase their use of email newsletters.

SMALL BIZ HEALTH – BLUES SAY ASSOCIATION PLANS BAD: Blue Cross and Blue Shield say Association health plans being considered by Congress would hurt consumers. Association health plans would allow similar businesses to pool to buy health care cheaper.

MORE: <http://bcbshealthissues.com/relatives/100240.pdf>

UK ECONOMY – WHOLESALE PRICES DOWN 0.1% IN JAN:

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=1518&ncid=1518&e=8&u=afp/20050214/bs_afp/britainconomy_050214113704

GERMAN ECONOMY – CONSUMER PRICES UP: The German consumer price index (CPI) fell by 0.4% in January from December and was 1.6% higher than it had been in January 2004.

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=1518&ncid=1518&e=19&u=afp/20050218/bs_afp/germanyconomy_050218110543

US ECONOMY – PPI JUMPS: A drop in oil and food prices meant the Producer Price Index, a measure of inflation at the wholesale level, rose only 0.3% last month. But the “core index” with volatile oil and food removed shot up 0.8%, the biggest gain since December 1998.

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=568&ncid=749&e=1&u=nm/20050218/bs_nm/economy_dc

TRUCKING – FMCSA SEES TWO-PRONG H-O-S

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration will take a two-prong approach to resolve concerns over the current Hours-Of-Service (HOS) issues.

First, the agency is proceeding with its rulemaking comment period.

Second, Congress has been asked to codify HOS and put it into statutes so that groups cannot keep challenging the rules.

MORE: http://www.thetrucker.com/stories/02_05/0215_sandberg_BTA.html

TRUCKING – US CONGRESS MAY ALTER H-O-S LAW

A bill that would allow truckers up to two hours off-duty time during their work day is now in a US House committee and has picked up 20 co-sponsors.

US Representative John Boozman (R-AR) introduced H.R. 623. Boozman's bill, which has garnered bipartisan support, would permit drivers a two-hour maximum break for food or rest without counting it as part of the 14-hour work day.

"While FMCSA may have thought that giving the drivers more consecutive rest time would be beneficial, the reality is, the rule has actually forced them to push harder to complete their workload," Boozman said in a statement. "This makes for an unnecessary strain on truckers and creates more incidents of driver fatigue."

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=46322>

TRUCKING – EXEC GETS PRISON FOR BRIBE: A 29-year-old self-made millionaire described by a judge as "the personification of the American dream" was sentenced Wednesday to nine months in federal prison for trying to bribe an inspector to ignore trucking safety violations. Dejan Zlatkovic came to the United States from Serbia penniless and struck it rich in trucking and real estate. Zlatkovic admitted that he offered \$10,000 to a federal inspector to increase the safety rating of one of his trucking companies from unsatisfactory to conditional. Inspectors found problems with the company's maintenance of driver logs, drug testing, insurance and truck maintenance.

MORE: <http://www.nwherald.com/MainSection/local/282635983373590.php>

TRUCKING – DIESEL UP: At-the-pump diesel prices rose three-tenths of a cent a gallon during the week ending 14 February according to the Energy Information Administration (EIA). The US National Average price for diesel stands at \$1.986 per gallon, or \$0.402 cents higher than truckers were paying at the same time a year ago.

MORE: http://www.thetrucker.com/stories/02_05/0215_diesel.html

TRUCKING – VOLVO SALES UP 52%: Volvo truck sales in North America rise 52% in 2004 with 26,035 trucks delivered. Volvo ties the jump to high freight demand and carriers' need to upgrade their fleets.

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=46317>

SECURITY - RFID ADVANCES ON TWO FRONTS

--- IN DEPTH ---

How do you know when RFID technology becomes a "must have" for your freight business?

Radio Frequency ID tags, tracking and monitoring are not widespread in the cargo business, but they are coming. Initial tests have been mostly successful. Some large firms are pressing forward.

But "must have" status is likely a year or more off as the technology and standards mature and consolidate.

--- MAKE THE WAREHOUSE 'DO RIGHT' ---

With the discussion around RFID moving past the initial stages of compliance, some of the bigger software and hardware vendors are looking for more of a presence in the industry.

Siemens is looking to close two gaps in its radio-frequency identification middleware, software, hardware and services offerings with new technology with a 900MHz-enabled tag and a reader that comply with EPCglobal's Gen 2 tag standard. The reader, in beta now with about a dozen customers, will close a hole in Siemens' RFID offerings, according to Joe Dunlap, senior business development manager for RFID at Siemens.

When a forklift driver puts a pallet "...in the wrong location, the driver will be prompted with a beep. If he doesn't correct the error in a certain time, he's locked out of the next task. Or if he still doesn't correct, the system notifies the supervisor. That type of real process change doesn't really exist yet, and that's what we're driving toward."

--- MORE INTEGRATION ---

iAnywhere's platform enables developers to integrate RFID applications with existing software and processes on one end, and it manages RFID data collection and control devices on the other end.

MORE: <http://www.eweek.com/article2/0,1759,1764007,00.asp>

WE PROTECT YOU & HELP YOU GROW

Shippers refusing cargo insurance?

If so we suggest you do two things:

- 1)- Make the Shipper sign a document refusing insurance. If there's a claim you are safer.

Sample letter: http://www.allcovered.net/AC-OM-Marine_Forms_Shipper_Insurance_Ltr.html

- 2)- Persuade your Shippers to protect themselves.

Sample reasons at: http://www.allcovered.net/AC-OM-Cargo_You_Need.html

www.allcovered.net we have logistics Allcovered!

SECURITY – GROUP SAYS C-TPAT NEEDS WORK: The Advisory Committee on Commercial Operations (COAC) provides advice to US Customs and Border Protection on trade and security issues. COAC says it gives only "qualified support" to the agency's final draft of baseline standards for companies participating in the voluntary Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism program. COAC has concerns about how the new criteria will be implemented by importers, how CBP intends to administer or ensure compliance with the new criteria, and the consequences for non-compliance and the specific benefits importers can expect to receive based on participation.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20169>

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050215/sections/trade/w24462.asp>

SECURITY – WHAT ARE BENEFITS OF SECURITY PROGRAMS?: Measuring the hourly productivity of an assembly line is a simple exercise. Trying to quantify the effectiveness of government security programs is not as easy. That is the conclusion of a subcommittee to the industry-led Advisory Committee on Commercial Operations of Customs and Border Protection (COAC) tasked by Department of Homeland Security officials with identifying a framework for systematically measuring the success and impact of DHS cargo security programs.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20168>

OCEAN – CHENNAI PORT GO-SLOW

The Chennai Container Terminal Ltd (CCTL) received an injunction from the Madras High Court, staying the labor strike at the port, even as workers began a 'go-slow', demanding reinstatement of four of their colleagues, suspended for 'indiscipline.'

The CCTL workers have also given a notice for strike from February 27 to press for their demands.

The Madras High Court's interim injunction restrained CCTL workmen from going on strike or indulging in "go-slow," but reports from shippers in the area say workers are moving freight far more slowly than normal.

The union is seeking legal advice on its planned strike from next week.

MORE: <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/blnus/09181306.htm>

MORE: <http://news.newkerala.com/india-news/?action=fullnews&id=73697>

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050218/sections/ocean/w13019.asp>

OCEAN – SYDNEY PORT PLAN “TOO BIG?”

Australian planners have cast adrift an ambitious plan to massively expand cargo facilities at the Port Botany container terminal - arguing its size should be reduced by 25% to avoid traffic gridlock.

The Sydney Ports Corporation is arguing at a commission of inquiry for a 63-hectare boost to the existing terminal, which it claims would allow 3.2 million container movements a year by 2025.

This would increase the size of the stretched cargo area by nearly 30%.

Port Botany currently has 1.2 million container movements a year, with movements rising by about 7% a year.

MORE: <http://www.smh.com.au/news/National/Expanded-cargo-terminal-too-big-say-planners/2005/02/17/1108609350147.html?oneclick=true>

OCEAN – CARRIERS SEE MORE CONGESTION: Senior executives of APL and the Transpacific Stabilization Agreement carrier group say they expect severe congestion problems on the US West Coast to continue in the medium term, despite efforts by shipping lines and shippers to look for alternative port gateways and tentative plans to build new terminals.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20177>

OCEAN – MAERSK WITHDRAWS US-GENOA: Maersk Sealand has notified its customers that it will end its direct eastbound service from North American to Genoa on its "MedGulf" service effective 1 May.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20155>

OCEAN – AU-US CARRIERS TO SO-CAL: The five carriers of the Pacific Coast Oceania Vessel Sharing Agreement have resumed calls at Los Angeles on their two joint weekly "Pacific Southwest" and "Pacific Northwest" services. Calls at Los Angeles were dropped in November due to "mounting problems with congestion in the Los Angeles Basin, and resulting delays of several days due to intermodal bottlenecks and shortages of berthing space and work crews."

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20216>

OCEAN – HK BOXES UP 8%: Container traffic at the port of Hong Kong increased 8% to 1.9 million TEUs in January, as shippers sought to move cargoes ahead of the Chinese New Year holidays.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20204>

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AIR – MORE AIR FREIGHT MOVES BY GROUND

The nation's expedited freight flows are increasingly bypassing US airports.

The Collography report points out that airports have been losing cargo business because the nation's supply chain has changed from a national, centralized distribution model that demanded long-haul transportation services such as airfreight, into a regional, de-centralized model that has made trucking and ground parcel services -- less costly than airfreight -- the preferred mode of shipping.

The explosive growth of regional distribution centers and short-haul transport systems to support them poses a serious competitive threat to the nation's airports, the report finds, endangering reliance on air cargo as a key revenue source.

REPORT: <http://www.colography.com/press/pdf/aci%20-%20020805.pdf>

MORE: http://www.sdexec.com/article_arch.asp?article_id=6762

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20050218/sections/air/w34920.asp>

AIR – DIRECT CHINA-TAIWAN CARGO FLIGHTS?: Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian is calling for Taiwan and China to develop direct air cargo links as a concrete step toward better relations, following the success of landmark nonstop passenger flights over the Lunar New Year holiday. "I hope the two sides can reopen the door to negotiations and push for convenient cross-strait air cargo operations," Chen said. A 55-year-old ban on direct passenger air links between China and Taiwan have been temporarily lifted for the Lunar New Year.

MORE: <http://www.etaiwannews.com/Taiwan/Politics/2005/02/17/1108604332.htm>

AIR – CARGO BOOSTS AIR FRANCE – KLM: Air France-KLM says it posted a "satisfactory performance" as a strong showing from cargo operations offset losses on the passenger side that the company attributed largely to sky-high fuel costs. Total cargo revenue grew 15.4% to eur718 million.

MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/indexfull.cfm?newsid=5007>

AIR – CATHAY CARGO DOWN: Cathay Pacific carried 10% less cargo than expected in January because of keen competition among operators. Cathay carried 74,929 tonnes of cargo in January, down from 83,148 tonnes in December.

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1108375072.html>

AIR – EMIRATES & SAS CARGO COOPERATE: Emirates SkyCargo and SAS Cargo are starting two joint freighter services between Dubai/Gothenburg and Dubai/Hong Kong beginning 29 March.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20152>

AIR – USPS PULLS AA & US-AIR MAIL: US Postal Service officials continue to negotiate with US Airways and American Airlines after suspending mail service with the carriers over the weekend. Both airlines have contracts to haul first-class mail for USPS. "We are negotiating with them now to try and get them to produce a strategy of the goals that are part of the contract," USPS spokesperson Jim Quirk told ATWOnline. Published reports cite the carriers' failure to provide on-time service.

MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/indexfull.cfm?newsid=5001>

AIR – SIA CARGO CAPACITY UP – LOAD FACTOR DOWN: Singapore Airlines sold 66.1% of the space available on its planes for passengers and cargo in January, down from 68.3% in December. Cargo capacity rose 20.8% in January compared with the same period a year earlier. Its cargo load factor was 58.9%, down 0.3 percentage points from last year.

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1108463968.html>

AIR – LH-CARGO STUDIES FRANKFURT OPTIONS: Lufthansa's cargo division is considering several alternatives to Frankfurt as its main base in the event of a ban on night flights at mainland Europe's biggest passenger and freight hub. Frankfurt Airport operator Fraport has applied for a night flight ban between 11pm and 5am linked to the construction of a new runway planned for 2009.

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1108409594.html>

AIR – DHL TO GRAB MORE OF ASIAN AND CHINESE MARKET:

MORE: <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/getarticle.pl5?nb20050217f2.htm>

AIR – BOEING UNVEILS 777-200LR: The newest version of Boeing's 777 identified as LR for "Long Range" can fly 9,420 nautical miles (17,466km) and, according to Boeing, fly non-stop from London to Sydney... New York to Singapore... or Los Angeles to Dubai. The cargo version of the 777-200LR will carry 101 metric tonnes.

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=580&ncid=580&e=15&u=/nm/20050216/bs_nm/transport_boeing_dc

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=1518&ncid=1518&e=5&u=/afp/20050216/bs_afp/useuropetransportaircompanyproductboeingairbus_050216110023

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1108546976.html>

(These are shared by readers – Please share yours. Thanks. Mike)

NEW WORDS FROM WASHINGTON POST

The Washington Post's Mensa Invitational once again asked readers to take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting, or changing one letter, and supply a new definition.

Here are this year's winners:

1. Intaxication:
Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts until you realize it was your money to start with.
2. Reintarnation:
Coming back to life as a hillbilly
3. Bozone (n.):
The substance surrounding stupid people that stops bright ideas from penetrating. The bozone layer, unfortunately, shows little sign of breaking down in the near future.
4. Foreploy:
Any misrepresentation about yourself for the purpose of getting laid.
5. Cashtration (n.):
The act of buying a house, which renders the subject financially impotent for an indefinite period.
6. Giraffiti:
Vandalism spray-painted very, very high.
7. Sarchasm:
The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn't get it.
8. Inoculatte:
To take coffee intravenously when you are running late.
9. Hipatitis:
Terminal coolness.
10. Osteopornosis:
A degenerate disease. (This one got extra credit.)
11. Karmageddon:
It's like, when everybody is sending off all these really bad vibes, right? And then, like, the Earth explodes and it's like, a serious bummer.
12. Decafalon (n.):
The grueling event of getting through the day consuming only things that are good for you.
13. Glibido:
All talk and no action.
14. Dopeler effect:
The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.

15. Arachnoleptic fit (n.):

The frantic dance performed just after you've accidentally walked through a spider web.

16. Beelzebug (n.):

Satan in the form of a mosquito, that gets into your bedroom at three in the morning and cannot be cast out.

17. Caterpallor (n.):

The color you turn after finding half a worm in the fruit you're eating.

And the pick of the literature:

18. Ignoramus:

A person who's both stupid and an ***** (jerk?).

WEAK PUNS

1. A vulture boards an airplane, carrying two dead raccoons. The stewardess looks at him and says, "I'm sorry, sir, only one carrion allowed per passenger."
2. Two fish swim into a concrete wall. One turns to the other and says, "Dam!"
3. Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, so they lit a fire in the craft. Unsurprisingly it sank, proving once again that; you can't have your kayak and heat it too.
4. Two hydrogen atoms meet. One says "I've lost my electron." The other says "Are you sure?" The first replies "Yes, I'm positive."
5. Did you hear about the Buddhist who refused Novocain during a root canal? His goal: transcendental medication.
6. A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel and were standing in the lobby discussing their recent tournament victories. After about an hour, the manager came out of the office and asked them to disperse. "But why?" they asked, as they moved off. "Because", he said, "I can't stand chess-nuts boasting in an open foyer."
7. A woman has twins and gives them up for adoption. One of them goes to a family in Egypt and is named "Ahmal." The other goes to a family in Spain; they name him "Juan." Years later, Juan sends a picture of himself to his birth mother. Upon receiving the picture, she tells her husband that she wishes she also had a picture of Ahmal. Her husband responds, "They're twins! If you've seen Juan, you've seen Ahmal."
8. These friars were behind on their belfry payments, so they opened up a small florist shop to raise funds. Since everyone liked to buy flowers from the men of God, a rival florist across town thought the competition was unfair. He asked the good fathers to close down, but they would not. He went back and begged the friars to close. They ignored him. So, the rival florist hired Hugh MacTaggart, the roughest and most vicious thug in town to "persuade" them to close. Hugh beat up the friars and trashed their store, saying he'd be back if they didn't close up shop. Terrified, they did so, thereby proving that only Hugh can prevent florist friars.
9. Mahatma Gandhi, as you know, walked barefoot most of the time, which produced an impressive set of calluses on his feet. He also ate very little, which made him rather frail and with his odd diet, he suffered from bad breath. This made him ...(Oh, man, this is so bad, it's good)..... A super calloused fragile mystic hexed by halitosis.
10. And finally, there was the person who sent ten different puns to his friends, with the hope that at least one of the puns would make them laugh. No pun in ten did.

A STRANGE LADY MOVED IN WITH ME

A very weird thing has happened. A strange old lady has moved into my house. I have no idea who she is, where she came from, or how she got in. I certainly did not invite her. All I know is that one day she wasn't there, and the next day she was!

She is a clever old lady and manages to keep out of sight for the most part, but whenever I pass a mirror, I catch a glimpse of her. And, whenever I look in the mirror to check my appearance, there she is hogging the whole thing, completely obliterating my gorgeous face and body. This is very rude! I have tried screaming at her, but she just screams back.

The least she could do is offer to pay part of the rent, but no. Every once in a while, I find a dollar bill stuck in a coat pocket, or some loose change under a sofa cushion, but it is not nearly enough. I don't want to jump to conclusions, but I think she is stealing money from me. I go to the ATM and withdraw \$100, and a few days later, it's all gone!

I certainly don't spend money THAT fast, so I can only conclude the old lady is pilfering from me. You'd think she would spend some of that money to buy wrinkle cream. And money isn't the only thing I think she is stealing.

Food seems to disappear at an alarming rate-especially the good stuff like ice cream, cookies, and candy. She must have a real sweet tooth, but she'd better watch it, because she is really packing on the pounds. I suspect she realizes this, and to make herself feel better, she is tampering with my scale to make me think I am putting on weight, too.

For an old lady, she is quite childish. She likes to play nasty games, like going into my closets when I'm not home and altering my clothes so they don't fit. And she messes with my files and papers so I can't find anything. This is particularly annoying since I am extremely neat and organized.

She has found other imaginative ways to annoy me. She gets into my mail, newspapers, and magazines before I do and blurs the print so I can't read it. And she has done something really sinister to the volume controls on my TV, radio, and telephone. Now, all I hear are mumbles and whispers. She has done other things-like make my stairs steeper, my vacuum heavier and all the knob and faucets harder to turn. She even made my bed higher so that getting into and out of it is a real challenge.

Lately, she has been fooling with my groceries before I put them away, applying glue to the lids, making it almost impossible for me to open the jars. She has taken the fun out of shopping for clothes. When I try something on, she stands in front of the dressing room mirror and monopolizes it. She looks totally ridiculous in some of those outfits, plus, she keeps me from seeing how great they look on me.

Just when I thought she couldn't get any meaner, she proved me wrong. She came along when I went to get my picture taken for my driver's license, and just as the camera shutter clicked, she jumped in front of me!

I hope she never finds out where YOU live.

If you have curious or interesting or funny or thoughtful items that might be good in "Just For Fun", Email them to mike.miller@allcovered.net . Thanks.

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