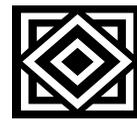




# GIFT IDEAS



## Internet News And Notes: Older Americans Are More Connected Than Ever Before

(NAPSA)—Older Americans are the fastest-growing segment of Internet users. According to recent data collected by Pew Internet & American Life, 22 percent of seniors 65 and older are online, compared with 15 percent the year before. Though they still lag behind the general population—going online at less than half the rate of younger adults, according to AARP/Roper—their numbers are going up. AARP/Roper reports that Internet access has nearly tripled for older adults age 65-plus since 1997. One reason is that older Americans are finding a variety of new options that make getting online easier and less expensive than ever before.

For many older Americans, mastering computer technology has been a stumbling block to Internet access. The majority did not grow up with computers, and many find them complicated and expensive. That's beginning to change as companies such as Microsoft Corp. are making the Internet more affordable and easier to access. For example, Microsoft's MSN Division recently introduced MSN TV service, which brings the Internet and e-mail to a standard television set.

MSN TV uses a small set-top Internet receiver available from RCA for less than \$100 (MSRP). The receiver connects easily to a television set and phone line, allowing users to quickly access the Internet without any computer skills. Users can get online within



**With a new service, the family television can be turned into an Internet and e-mail connection.**

minutes from the comfort of their living room and enjoy all the basic benefits of the Internet from e-mail to surfing the Web. It's a great alternative for older Americans and those just starting out on the Internet.

Microsoft is finding that MSN TV service quickly becomes an important part of customers' lives. Many use MSN TV to stay connected with their friends and family using e-mail and instant messaging. Others also are using the Internet to explore hobbies, research health news, plan trips and even play board games.

Betty Hooven, a 69-year-old grandmother from Pennsylvania, is taking advantage of her Internet access through MSN TV to stay connected with family and friends, particularly her granddaughter who just went away to college. "I chat with friends, exchange e-mail and talk with my niece, and print coloring pages for my 5-year-old

granddaughter," Hoover said. "My granddaughter at college thinks MSN TV is 'awesome,' and it allows us to stay close, even though she's away from home."

Educational resources to teach older Americans how to get more comfortable with Internet technology also are more widely available. SeniorNet, a nonprofit organization that provides education for and access to computer technology and the Internet to older adults, operates more than 220 learning centers across the United States.

"Seniors are just as eager—if not more—to access the communication and education opportunities that the Internet provides," said Ann Wrixon, CEO and president of SeniorNet. "We have been successfully using MSN TV in our learning program for the past three years and found it to be the ideal introduction to the Internet for older adults."

The RCA RM2100 Internet receiver costs \$99 (MSRP) and is available at Best Buy and Circuit City stores nationwide. No additional hardware or software is required. Monthly subscription plans start under \$10.\* To learn more about MSN TV, call 1 (877) 932-8857 or visit <http://www.msntv.com/>.

\* MSN TV services are available as a local call in most areas. In some areas, local and long-distance telephone toll charges may apply. To check local access, call (877) 932-8857.