

## kriskringle.com calls it quits

North Pole - After two years of losses, and increased difficulty raising capital, the Kringle Internet subsidiary called it quits prior to the 2000 gift-giving season.

"We hate to shut it down", CIO Babbage T. Elf confessed "It's been a really hot site, the business model was sound, and we were close to the breakeven point" Revenue was beginning to solidify from banner ads, partnerships with amazon.com, and the increased profitability of coal delivery.

The site has been plagued with technical difficulties since its inception. In its first incarnation, young hackers found ways to crash the site's "naughty / nice" customer profile database, resulting in exactly one name on the "naughty" list: Microsoft founder Bill Gates.

"William may have engaged in predatory monopolistic practices the past few years", an anonymous Kringle spokesperson leaked "But we're not ready to call that naughty without careful legal department review"

Industry insiders have quipped that the Kringle team had Gates on the "Naughty" list until mid-1999 when they finally switched from NT to Linux based servers.

Other technical snafus have included a Denial-of-Service attack initiated from the Kringle servers towards *nstorm.com*, later attributed to a Kringle employee upset at the portrayal of Kringle workers in the popular "Elf Bowling" game.



Insiders say the ill-fated web site was on wobbly legs throughout 2000. The death knell came when Kringle CEO Claus stopped taking the infamous "wish lists" in Access format. "He insisted we print them out using fonts that replicated a child's hand-writing" Babbage lamented. "At that point, I threw in the towel. This thing was supposed to save time and money!"

## Kringle Corp. Avoids Pilot Job Action

In a labor dispute reminiscent of those experienced by United Airlines and Delta, The Kringle corps of crack sleigh pilots has signed a three-year contract, avoiding CHAOS. CHAOS, short for Create Havoc Around Our System, resulted in flight cancellations and delays as pilots refused to work overtime and randomly called in sick.

Kringle pilots do not actually fly the toys on Christmas Eve, but test the Santa Sleigh, train reindeer and deliver subassemblies and bulk material prior to the actual holiday.

No details of the contract were released, but inside sources indicate that additional cookies, domestic partner benefits, and new thinsulate elf costumes were key factors.

## North Pole Resident Receives Texas Death Row Pardon



As one of his last official acts as Governor of Texas, President-elect George W. Bush has pardoned Icky P. Elf, former Kringle employee, and long time troublemaker.

In a surprise move that can most likely be attributed to the Christmas spirit, Bush signed the executive order sparing the errant elf's life.

Long known as a bit of a rabble-rouser, Icky was captured in June of this year breaking into Houston homes via the chimney, and stealing watches, jewelry, and VCR's. Normally not a death penalty offense, the elf was sentenced under the strict Texas immigration laws. "We normally send convicted felons back to their country of origin" an anonymous Austin source reported "And since Icky was clearly not of this world, we thought it best to just off him"



Kringle sources said that the situation had grown tense in recent months, with Kringle lawyers threatening retaliatory sanctions and an embargo against gifts to key cities in Texas.

Kringle spokesperson Kelly O. Elf denies, however that there was any linkage between this case and Mr. Bush's 2000 Presidential victory. "I'm not an expert at the electoral process, but I am not sure that even Santa Claus could have shaken loose any electoral votes for either candidate."

Contrite, Icky Elf promised to maintain the positive attitude he had found in the Texas Department of Corrections. I've seen the dark side, and I came as close to the final midnight sleigh ride as I ever want to."

## Kringle Corp. Issues Warning: Holiday Fireplace Usage

North Pole - Kringle Corp. issued a warning today regarding the increasing use of fireplaces and wood stoves around the holiday. With increasing energy costs and shortages of electricity, natural gas, and heating oil, more consumers are turning to wood for heating. Unfortunately, this often impacts the Kringle delivery route on December 24<sup>th</sup>.

"Kris's suit is as sophisticated as a NASCAR driver's when it comes to protection" Kringle outfitter Nordstrom Q. Elf reports "But we'd still like to minimize his exposure to direct fire and flame."

Most experienced wood burners have taken to leaving a window or door unlatched to provide access on Christmas Eve. However, newcomers to wood burning may not have picked up on such "tricks of the trade" around the holiday.

"He'll get in one way or the other" Kringle spokespersons promise "But if he hits a roaring fire once too often, he tends to get a bit perturbed." While no negative impact on gift delivery has been recorded, one can never be too safe around the holiday.



## Kringle CEO Stands Firm

Kris Kringle, better known to the world as "Santa Claus" for his beneficent business practices, has released a statement indicating he has no intention of stepping down in the foreseeable future.



Unlike several other corporations which have had well watched power successions over the past few months, Kringle Enterprises remains firmly in the control of its founder and sole executive.

### Kringle CEO

One problem industry insiders have noted is the lack of a suitable successor within the Kringle management team. "Every one at Kringle is diminutive - well under 4 feet tall and built like a fence post" one source reports "The CEO position carries a bit of stature - Kris is well over 250 lbs." While he is kindly called "the big Elf" some biologists believe that Mr. Kringle is in fact not elfin at all, and in fact may have a unique chromosomal make-up.

Balancing the downside of the succession question is the remarkable health and stamina of the CEO, despite years of rich foods, egg-nog, and bacchanalian summer trips to "recover and recharge". "He's like the Eveready Bunny" sources say. "He just keeps going...and going...and going..."

## Wal-Mart Invades North Pole

Global retail giant Wal-Mart announced that it would open a second store in the commercial area to the south of the famous Kringle operation at the North Pole.

Kringle spokesperson Dorothy W. Elf welcomed the retailer, a reception unlike that in some small communities where Wal-Mart has been vilified as a destroyer of downtown retailers.

"We're happy to see them come!" Ms. Elf proclaimed, "Kringle makes toys - just toys. We're tired of flying down to Ketchikan to get simple things like shampoo, Diet Coke, and socks."

With a captive audience of over 200,000 elves, the North Pole stores expect to do well. "Our product mix may seem a little strange" store manager Gillian Louise commented, as she reviewed shelves of reindeer feed and racks of clothes in shorter and petite sizes. "But these elves are great customers, and we expect to be here a long time"

## Spring Trip - Viva Las Vegas!

After the long pre-holiday crunch, Kringle employees are invited to join our annual spring get-away to Las Vegas!

We're chartering a fleet of planes to take us to "Sin City" where we'll spend a week of relaxation. Call (203) 757-0790 for details.

Kringle employees are warned to stay away from the roulette wheel and craps, where elfin telekinetic abilities have proven to provide an unfair advantage. Casino security teams will be enforcing a minimum height requirement on such games of chance. Otherwise, the famous Las Vegas hospitality prevails. Come on down!