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Ufomind Web Site: Another Titanic?

From: campbell@ufomind.com (Glenn Campbell, Las Vegas)

Date: Mon, 23 Mar 1998 11:54:16 -0800

The world's largest UFO and paranormal website -- www.ufomind.com -- appears to be the finest ship on the seas. It's sleek, fast and state-of-the-art. It can accommodate thousands of passengers, and it is certified 100% unsinkable.

We've got just one little problem: Ufomind is still losing money. This is like more water flowing into your ship than being pumped out of it. It can't go on forever.

Honestly, UFOMIND MIGHT HAVE TO SHUT DOWN IF WE DON'T RECEIVE ENOUGH FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM OUR READERS.

Contributing to Ufomind is easy. Just buy something occasionally from our extensive on-line catalog of UFO and paranormal books (See <http://www.ufomind.com/catalog/>). We stock the best books in these fields, and we ship orders faster than anyone to anywhere in the world. We do not usually discount the books we sell, but unlike the big Wal-Mart's of the internet, we provide honest reviews and do not encourage you to buy books you don't need. When you order from us, you get your money's worth, plus you have the satisfaction of supporting the most valuable paranormal research tool on the web.

If people don't buy enough books from our catalog, then Ufomind will go away. Simple as that.

THE FACTS OF LIFE

Here's the straight poop on who we are and where we are headed:

-- Looking at our massive site and its tens of thousands of documents and connections, you might think it is run by some big organization with a staff of dozens. Not true. It's just me and the wife, operating out of our home in a suburban subdivision of Las Vegas. Our "warehouse" is the garage. Our "programming center," in which I currently sit, is the 5x5' vanity area upstairs. (I share it with the mascara.)

-- Seeing the huge number of hits on our site -- consistently 50,000 to 80,000 every day -- you might think we are doing an enormous volume of business in our catalog section. False. Those thousands of hits translate into only a handful of orders each day -- sometimes only three or four. The stable hit numbers prove that people appreciate

our site, and we have received no lack of email messages praising our work. However, praise alone doesn't pay the bills.

-- We do this for love, not money. If I wanted to make money, I'd be back in the software business, where you can make obscene fortunes selling out to Bill Gates. At the least, we could be selling a lot of tacky alien souvenirs on our website. Everybody wants them, and the profit margin is high, but we refuse to engage in commerce that we regard as frivolous or distracting.

-- We are dedicated to the concept of open information. Although Ufomind is more valuable than most subscription services, we have no intention of charging people for access to it. We don't mind giving away our best material for free as long as we have enough income to keep going. We believe that Ufomind can work only as an interactive site that anyone can contribute to. Personally, I feel that maintaining this site is a public trust that has fallen into my hands. Monk-like in my vanity area, I will jealously guard its principles. If I cannot maintain the high ethical standards I have set for this site, then I will shut it down rather than turning it over to the Microsofts of the world.

-- People often ask us, "Where's the Desert Rat?" Unfortunately, our free on-line newsletter is still in hibernation until the Ufomind site is on a stable financial footing.

DIRE PROSPECTS

Regrettably, I am forced to issue this ultimatum: If sales in our catalog section do not improve, I will have to get a job.

Ponder for a minute the terrible implications. As moderator, programmer and webmaster, I currently spend 8-14 hours a day, 6-7 days a week, working on this website. Without my input, the site would quickly slide into chaos. Although anyone can add links and comments to our pages, someone has to review those additions. Otherwise, the spammers will take it over, and pages will be swamped with irrelevant information. No one will be there to remove dead links, create new pages or provide new systems for linking records together. No one will provide free customer service, which currently occupies about half of my time. The site will cease to have a soul and will become a chaotic mirror of usenet.

Another alternative would be to freeze the site so that no one could make any further additions to it. Then it would cease to be alive. Information would start getting stale, and old links would stop working. People would eventually stop coming. At that point, I would consider shutting the site down altogether to save the monthly operating costs.

Ufomind tries to be as efficient and professional as possible and doesn't plead for support very often. We don't ask for donations. We don't hold annoying fund drives every few months like public radio and TV stations. The ads we insert on our index pages are unobtrusive, and we don't try to actively "sell" you anything. If you consult one of our index pages, we want you to know if there is a useful book available on that topic, but we won't try to force it on you. The only problem with this low-key approach is that it doesn't sell many books.

Our next step -- prior to my getting a job -- will be to get more aggressive about pushing our products. No one likes this, especially us. Our primary goal is to assist serious research, and that's how we want to spend most of our resources.

As Ufomind seems to become an internet institution, please don't take us for granted. Institutions aren't always as invulnerable as they seem to be, and sometimes they run into things. Underneath all that apparent complexity, there has to be something keeping them afloat.

Glenn Campbell
Ufomind Webmaster

Access to our catalog...

Our Top Ten Recommendations:

<http://www.ufomind.com/catalog/subject/top10/>

Ufomind Bestsellers:

<http://www.ufomind.com/catalog/subject/bestseller/>

Books by Subject:

<http://www.ufomind.com/catalog/subject/>

UFO books:

<http://www.ufomind.com/catalog/subject/ufo/>

Parapsychology Books:

<http://www.ufomind.com/catalog/subject/para/psi/>

UFOMIND MAILING LIST - Supporting the Ufomind Website

<http://www.ufomind.com/misc/> - Glenn Campbell, Moderator

Submissions to: ufomind@lists.best.com

"unsubscribe" (in body) to: ufomind-request@lists.best.com

RELEVANCE OF THIS MESSAGE: Paying the rent

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PO Box 30303, Las Vegas, NV 89173 Glenn Campbell, Webmaster & Moderator

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Send corrections to webmaster@ufomind.com

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