



**HowDidUKnow**  
P.O. Box 161852, Austin, TX 78716  
512. 402. 5560  
[www.howdiduknow.com](http://www.howdiduknow.com)

### **Holiday Gift Card Recipients Swap, Bank and “Re-Gift” Their Cards *Online Social Network Removes Gift Card Angst***

**AUSTIN, TX (Dec. 18, 2008)** Gift cards have received some bad press in recent months, prompting one online social network site to tackle the issue by removing the obstacles that gift card recipients have faced in the past.

Consumer watch groups have for some time warned about gift card balances expiring before recipients have had an opportunity to spend them. The economic downturn added a new wrinkle: an increase in store closures and bankruptcies by retailers, leaving gift card holders with worthless plastic.

Additionally, recipients have complained about receiving gift cards to establishments they don't regularly shop, and the difficulties, fees or impossibility of trying to exchange unwanted cards. Some recipients even complain that they don't particularly need or want anything badly enough to drive out to the mall to burn off a ten dollar card.

HowDidUKnow.com, an online social networking community, offers its members a quick and easy way to recognize special occasions of friends and family in their network with gift cards, while also offering the recipient the opportunity to painlessly swap a card for another retailer of choice, or even the ability to “bank” gift cards in an online account.

The ability to “stash” gift cards into an account affords a HowDidUKnow network member the luxury of not actually activating a card until needed, thereby avoiding expiration worries. Further, members can consolidate all their card balances into one card for a larger purchase. They can even “re-gift” - using the balance in their online accounts to purchase gift cards for other friends and family in their social network. Gifts arrive via email with personal notes and photos from the giver, within a ‘virtual gift box’ that must be opened in order to receive the card.

“A recommendation from a colleague on LinkedIn is always appreciated. And a ‘virtual gift’ from a friend in your Facebook network can be fun. But, unlike virtual gifts, gift cards are real - they are like cash, although more nicely wrapped. And, if it doesn't fit, it's easy to exchange,” says Raquel Barela, managing partner at HowDidUKnow.com.

“My sister is a doctor and stays incredibly busy, but it’s very important to her that she stay connected with family and friends. She finds it helpful to be reminded of birthdays and anniversaries so she can join in celebrating those life events. So she receives an email notification in advance of an upcoming event (like *my* birthday!) and can jump online and send a card and gift that she knows will always be just what I wanted,” says Mike Chang, also a managing partner in the company.

In addition to purchasing gift cards on the site, members can also shop for gifts from affiliated retailers, post “Wish Lists” to be shared within their network, build a home page and post photos and other information to keep family and friends up-to-date.

**About HowDidUKnow.com:** HowDidUKnow.com is an online social networking site for friends, family and associates that also offers online shopping and gifting. In addition to the standard social network amenities such as home pages offering information and photo sharing, members receive automatic advance email notifications on life events of individuals in their network, such as birthdays and anniversaries, and can then purchase gift cards or gifts through the site to commemorate and celebrate those special occasions. Recipients of gift cards receive a personal email from the giver, complete with “virtual gift box” to open, and can easily exchange gift cards at no charge, “bank” their cards in an online account for use later or to consolidate funds into one card, or even “re-gift” by using account funds to purchase gift cards for other family and friends. With the ease of exchange and the ability to “stash cash” from gift cards, HowDidUKnow.com offers busy professionals and online communities the ability to stay connected and celebrate life events, while mitigating the risks previously associated with gift cards: wrong type of card, card expiration dates, and cards issued to retailers going bankrupt or closing store locations.

**Media Contact:**

Cindy Tincher  
BlabberMouth PR  
512.217.5190  
Cindy@BlabberMouthPR.com