

Digital Times is a "for eCommerce newsletter reporting on the development and/or availability of interactive products and services."

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## \*The International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas! [Continued]

Well, this is my continuing coverage of CES, where the EYE CANDY is as blinding as the 'Strip' in Las Vegas.. Closed to the public since its inception in the late 1970's, this show is NOT just hype, but the kick-off point for numerous products & services that consumers ultimately proved willing to spend their \$\$\$ on.

This year there were more than 2,500 exhibitors; what I and the other 110,000 attendees were able to see was limited by the sheer volume of choices!!! In the next issue I will cover some of the products 'uniquely' CES...

## THE STORY OF HARO [Help A Reporter Out]

On the heels of CES, the timing could NOT have been better to interview **Peter Shankman**, the founder and CEO of **HARO**, one of the fastest growing media network services in North America. **HARO** brings nearly 30,000 reporters and bloggers, over 100,000 news sources and thousands of small businesses together to tell their stories, promote their brands and sell their products and services. To use this *free* HARO service, you can be a journalist OR a source; journalists register at <http://helpareporter.com>

### The Interview:

**Me:** How did you become a social media VISIONARY? And what is your favorite thing about HARO?

**Peter:** I'm excited that I can help people. **93%** of all journalists that have used HARO, come back to use HARO again.

**Me:** How did you get started?

**Peter:** **I started it in 2007 as a FaceBook Group.** I talk to everyone – reporters would call and ask me who do you know? ...I'm doing a story...

**Me:** Did you read Steve Fishman's hilarious foray into Internet Entrepreneurship, called **Karaoke Nation**? [My review of **Karaoke Nation** in 2003 is **HERE.**]

**Peter:** Yes ... very very funny.

**Me:** What is your tie to **NASA**? [other than your cat named NASA]

**Peter:** I consult for NASA's social media group.

**Me:** How interactive is HARO, and why the re-launch? From Mediabistro.com I learned that reporter emails will be masked. For example, "instead of joe@theoprahshow, sources will now send queries to 34531@haro.net, or something similar..." Also, reporter emails will "self-destruct" after their deadline.

**Peter:** In the future, fun, fun stuff --help with iPhone and Blackerry apps – whatever the journalist and source reporters want...

Scroll  
Down for  
Page 2

## Cont'd -- THE STORY OF HARO [Help A Reporter Out]

Me: How do you engage reporters?

**Peter:** Reporters come to us – we have a phenomenal word-of-mouth network.

Me: How do you make money \$\$\$?

**Peter:** By selling advertising.

Me: How do you set advertising rates? ...and how has that changed?

**Peter:** It's an Open Rate – higher than normal. Whatever the market bears. Talking to individual people, seeing what they are doing.

Me: What is the inspiration behind all of your start-ups??

**Peter:** Richard Branson, and the guy that launched CNN with Ted Turner.

Me: How many smartphones do you have, and what are they?

**Peter:** 3 – Me: fav? **Peter:** All beneficial--BlackBerry, Droid, Iphone.

Me: What's the greatest take-away with your service, HARO?

**Peter:** How easy it is to connect to resources and give everyone the same playing field.

Me: How much of your time do you spend on speaking engagements?

**Peter:** Speaking engagements are about 50% of my time.

Me: Who takes care of your cats when you are on speaking engagements???

**Peter:** My assistant Meagan takes care of them. :)

Me: What *is* your new, fun, **iPhone app**???

**Peter:** It will allow you to see queries as they come in.

**It will be free.**

### **More on Peter Shankman:**

In 1995, the same year that Digital Times® launched, Mr. Shankman launched his website, [www.shankman.com](http://www.shankman.com). The site became a blog on which he both comments on and generates news and conversation.

Peter is also the founder and CEO of **The Geek Factory, Inc.**, a Marketing and PR Strategy firm located in New York City, and has clients worldwide.

HARO is currently the largest free source repository in the world, sending out over 1,200 queries from worldwide media each week. HARO's tagline, "**Everyone is an Expert at Something**," proves over and over again to be true. Since its inception, HARO has published more than 75,000 journalist queries, has facilitated nearly 7,500,000 media pitches, and has marketed and promoted close to 1,500 brands to the media, small businesses and consumers. Peter is the author of **Can We Do That?! Outrageous PR Stunts That Work and Why Your Company Needs Them** (Wiley and Sons 2006) and a frequent keynote speaker and workshop presenter at conferences, and tradeshows worldwide.

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