

2000 Season's Greetings

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Arlington, Massachusetts

While people debate about election legitimacy, whether the dot.com downturn is a market bubble popping, or if 12/31/00 is the real end of the 20th century, we are taking a few minutes to sit back (with a nice Chardonnay) at the end of the year and share with you what can best be described as a **very** busy and event-filled year for us.

Marc experienced non-stop change in 2000. The year started with a home-office remodeling and was quickly followed by his company merging with its chief rival, several trips to Israel and Europe, a new car, a new job... and that's just up to June!

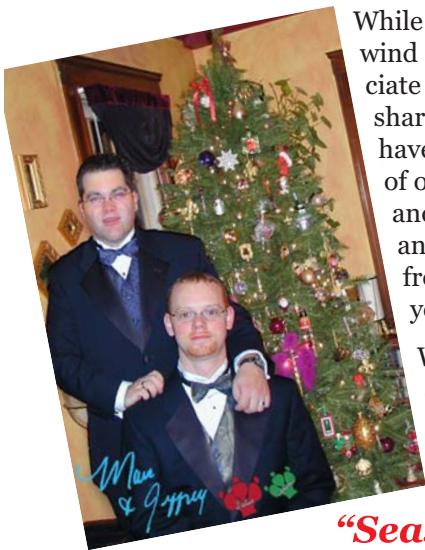
Jeffrey's year didn't include any of the "major" life changes that Marc's did, but he was extremely busy with a multitude of projects at his job, including a much publicized Design Home project in conjunction with Boston Magazine.

While our year has been a whirlwind of activity, we really appreciate the chance to reflect and share at this time of year. We have enjoyed seeing so many of our friends and family (near and far!) during this past year, and we look forward to hearing from and seeing even more of you next year.

We wish you the happiest, safest, and most joyous holidays... and a prosperous and peaceful new year.

From our home to yours:

"Season's Greetings!"



Circle Furniture

MADE FOR REAL LIFE

Jeffrey continues to thrive at Circle. He has been spending much more time in and around the four stores, visiting each one at least weekly. One of the great things about Circle is that you can contribute in any way you are able to. That allows Jeffrey to put many talents to use: designing floor plans (and moving furniture around), training new design consultants, evaluating new lines and vendors, checking out the competition, and helping out with customers. Circle offers such a flexible environment that it's no wonder quite a number of people have been with the company for 4- 5- even 10 years. It also helps explain the unique brand of camaraderie that exists. It's no surprise that many of the "Circle Gang" are close friends outside of work.

The annual Appreciation Event has grown from a cook-out at Rich & cruising the Boston Harbor. An interesting mix of friends, family, and employees share in the fun. It's a day when at some folks are all of the above!



In 2000, Boston Magazine embarked on a project to design, construct, and furnish the quintessential New England home. The magazine worked with a number of companies to make the idea into a home, including three furniture retailers to work with the interior designer and create unique atmospheres. Circle Furniture did the Family Room (shown below) and Children's Bedroom. Jeffrey, Christine, Peggy and Nancy combined their talents along with a lot of help from the warehouse and stores. The result was a gorgeous home that not only helped raise money for the Boston Aids Action Committee through admission ticket sales, but a home that sold for over \$1,000,000. This project took a lot of time and energy, but if you did get out to see it, you no doubt appreciated all the attention to detail, especially in the family room (we still think we're missing some scrabble tiles and a book or two).



Consolidation Hits Home



Marc has often talked about the consolidation that's taking place in the printing industry. That consolidation hit home for both of us in January. As Marc was finishing remodeling his office at home in mid-January with new furniture and lighting, he was called into a conference call that he had been fearing for some time. In the call, it was announced that Israel-based Scitex, a 31-year old company with over 2,500 employees, would sell most of itself to Vancouver-based Creo Products, a 15 year-old company with about 1,200 employees, and Scitex's main competitor for most of the past 4 years.



The merged CreoScitex makes it's debut at Drupa, occupying the combined space of both companies. The combined (and sometime competing) product lines of both are showcased to hoards of crowds. It was a big, and some said, confusing display.

Scitex, and Marc's group in particular, were in the middle of a number of projects and campaigns, so the timing of the merger was less than ideal. During the next several months and after many meetings in Vancouver, Israel, Boston, and Germany, the new company started taking shape. The "debut" of the merged company was in May at Drupa, the largest trade show in the world for the printing industry. The show, held every five years in Düsseldorf Germany, attracts

nearly half a million attendees. It is also a gigantic effort for exhibitors— not only to plan and execute, but to attend as well—it goes on for some two weeks.

The merger festivities at the company's headquarters in Israel may have been a bit premature. Staff reductions and attrition have reduced the number of people employed not only in Israel, but worldwide. CreoScitex is not alone in this area- most vendors in the printing industry have cut-back over the last few years. As the industry becomes more efficient (more automated), fewer people (and vendors) will be able to survive.



Since the merger couldn't be completed until regulatory approval was obtained (U.S., Israeli, and European), the two former companies were in the awkward position of having to still compete from January to March, which made for a very interesting 1st quarter. It wasn't uncommon to have joint, friendly meetings about future direction, immediately followed by sales strategy sessions focused on winning a deal away from our "new friends."

In April, after 8-years with Scitex, Marc came to realize that it was probably time to start exploring other opportunities. In June he accepted a position with another company and embarked on to the next chapter in his career.

Marc left Scitex with mixed feelings- sad for leaving many friends after so many years, but excited at new opportunities ahead. We both hope to maintain those friendships as people move on.



Presstek is a relatively young company at 14 years old. Based in Hudson, New Hampshire (next to Nashua, near the boarder with Massachusetts), it was founded with the idea that printing presses could be made more productive and more profitable if the printing plates used for a job were imaged right on the press itself.

The concept of Direct Imaging, or “DI” was a huge hit, and has proven the company’s initial concept by saving printers time, money, and manpower. Many of the world’s leading press manufacturers (including Heidelberg, Sakurai, Ryobi, Akiyama, KBA, and Adast, to name a few) use Presstek technology.



Marc was approached with the position of Product Line Manager for the “Off Press” imaging products. These products include Computer-to-Plate, digital pre-press workflow, and proofing products.

After some research, soul-searching, and a lot of discussion with friends (and Jeffrey), Marc decided to take the challenge and accept the position. While the products are similar to what he worked with at Scitex, Presstek offered him wider latitude to set and accomplish his goals, increased (global) responsibility, a strong team that he would work to grow, and closer ties with both R&D and manufacturing. Marc also liked the idea of working with a smaller, yet growing, company where he could make a more significant contribution and be rewarded for it.

Marc has been extremely busy in the last six months not only getting familiar with the people, culture, and history of Presstek, but helping to move the company forward by launching a new line of products, building marketing partnerships with press vendors and sales channels, and getting to know and work with the U.S., European, and Japanese sales organizations.

After eight years with Scitex, Marc knew it would be difficult to move to a new company. He hasn’t regretted it for a moment (even with the added miles to his commute - see the sidebar below for his solution to that).

“If I’m going to spend an extra hour a day in my car, at least I’ll enjoy it.”

-- Marc’s sales pitch to himself



When it came time for Marc to turn in his old car, he agonized over what to get. True to form, he researched until he was totally confused, then went for test drives. That settled it- the A6 2.8T won his heart. He loves his new car, and still thinks he can justify it because of the longer commute. At least he’s happy.



Gettin' Away From It All... in February we took some time out to visit London and Amsterdam. It was "off-season" which meant fewer tourists (yeah!). We met-up with Lisa (who was living in Amsterdam), Bernard (who is living in Cambridge U.K.), and by weird coincidence, met-up with Jeff's dad in Chinatown, London. We managed to do



a lot of the "tourist" stuff - Madame Touseaud's, Harrods, and were able to get on "The London Eye" on it's first day open. In Holland, we did the city (yes, it's all true), wind-mills, and cheese. Our next trip will be someplace new (for both of us) and warmer. February can get a bit nippy.





Sweet Home, Chicago... we made it back to Chicago for our Birthdays (a rainy but loved-filled BBQ), which coincided with Pride festivities (a bit sunnier). A great time to get together with families and friends that we don't see enough of. In October we were fortunate to attend the wedding of Marc's cousin Shawn. It was a beautiful ceremony on Lake Geneva, followed by a great reception that did double duty as a reunion- many of Marc's relatives that he hadn't seen in some time were there, and it was also a chance for Jeffrey to meet more of the "in-laws."



We Love Visitors!

Patty and Aunt Evelyn visited us in the fall. The leaves were at peak, the seafood was fresh, and we were able to get down to Newport R.I. for the mansions.



Happy Thanksgiving... the holiday tradition continued, after a brief scare that Jeff's mom couldn't make it (we were ready to pack it up and go north). Excellent food, friends, and kids. It doesn't get any better.



The Cats & The House... No news on the home front. Both of the kids are doing fantastic. The house, ever a work in progress, is also doing well. There are more little (and not so little) projects than we ever seem to have time for. Someday we hope to see it all "done" ... but that's subjective.

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