

Friendly Favors

By Sergio Lub

I am the designer of Friendly Favors (FF), www.Favors.org, or www.Favores.org, our webmaster is Victor Grey, author of "Web Without a Weaver". FF is a web based software meant to create and enhance community by providing 4 unique services.

1. FF allows people to remain connected by having participants servicing their own profiles.
2. FF allows people of similar interests to find each other. We search not only by name but also by location or keywords (skills, interests, resources, needs).
3. FF allows participants to measure generosity by acknowledging the favors they received from others. FF unit is the Thankyou (Ts for short), and 1Ts is equivalent to US\$1 SAVED because of a favor received. Ts accounting is open and on the web. Ts are voluntarily given, they are not redeemable and therefore non taxable. Ts do not measure wealth nor income but accumulated goodwill.
4. FF interconnects the members of an organization through independent and secure Online Directories powered by FF and accessible from the group's own site. Directories allow each participant to service their own profiles, to access other profiles in the group and the option to participate in the larger FF network.

March 2000 - Tom Greco write up for his book: "New Money for Healthy Communities"

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Friendly Favors is the creation of a team of experts associated with Sergio Lub, a successful California artist, craftsman, and entrepreneur, who for several years has had a keen interest in community economics in general and community exchange in particular.

Friendly Favors is a voluntary web-based association of people who acknowledge one another by awarding THANKYOUS. It resembles a mutual credit system in its essential features. Membership is free and open to all, but a new member must be sponsored by an existing Sponsoring Member, thus building a chain of trust. Each member services their own data page, which includes a picture and a description of their skills, interests, products and services. The idea is to offer members access to the resources made available by all other members at the maximum discount that can be sustained by the members offering them. Discounts vary from 10% to 100% (free). Prices and discounts are visible on the web and can be modified by the member offering them. This service doubles for members as free Internet advertising for their products or services. Discounts among members are given as freely as favors. Members are expected, but not obliged, to acknowledge the generous act they receive with THANKYOUS. The accounting of those THANKYOUS is hassle free, is kept openly on the web for each member to see and represents the favors that members had acknowledged for each other. The idea being that recognition promotes further desirable behavior. Friendly Favors network uses THANKYOUS as a way of measuring generosity. Members give THANKYOUS to each other for the favors they receive. One THANKYOU is equivalent to one U.S. dollar saved because of the discount received. THANKYOUS can also be assigned to someone simply to express one's gratitude for the various contributions they've made to the community. They are not redeemable, and according to professional accounting advice, they are NOT TAXABLE. THANKYOUS do not measure wealth but good will. They can be transferred electronically or given as a written Thankyou Note to be entered later on the web by a trained Host Member. Members issuing THANKYOUS are morally committed to reciprocate, in turn, with someone else who needs their gifts. This reciprocity allows for favors to spread as "ripples in a pond." Account statements are maintained on the web. A 10% "tithing" of the total THANKYOUS received each month goes to the non-profit Cause Member and to the volunteer Host Member of each member's choice. A 1% demurrage fee on monthly balances above 100 goes to acknowledge Friendly Favors' services.

Friendly Favors was launched on the web on August 1999, having Victor Grey as its webmaster, a veteran Internet strategist and author of "Web without a Weaver". As March 2000 the network had over 900 active members living in 38 different countries. Friendly Favors has been prized by its easy of use and the willingness of its developers to consider suggestions to improve it sent by the members that use it. The commercial development of a complex interactive software of this magnitude by a corporation was priced by Wired Magazine to be in the neighborhood of \$3 million dollars. Most remarkably, all the development, service, equipment, office and server spaces have been contributed by members as favors and have been acknowledged with THANKYOUS. Because of its unique structure, Friendly Favors has no bank account and therefore cannot accept monetary contributions. Friendly Favors freeware should be available in mid-2001 for other developers to improve on it. Anyone wishing to be included in this pioneer program can apply on-line at www.favors.org. See the Sources and Resources section for contact information. The motto of Friendly Favors is: "A friendly way to account for the favors we do for each other".