

The Charlotte Observer



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Web sites help you get the jump on shopping

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Two Charlotte women are using the Internet to increase the coolness factor in the Queen City. Their sites are loosely modeled on DailyCandy.com, the national Web site that sends out daily e-mail newsletters that highlight what's hot in just about everything, including fashion and beauty.

Daily Candy publishes 12 region-specific Web blasts, but the closest is Atlanta. Susu Bear and Brooke Gibson each saw an opening in the stylish Charlotte market and are settling into their respective niches.

There is only one kind of bad sale – the one you missed. Bear hopes to fix that with scoopcharlotte.com. The site was launched in March, with the goal of being a one-stop resource for retail sales, news and events in the Charlotte area. She and her friends were frustrated by missing sales or stumbling upon them after all the good stuff was gone.

“I would like to keep (the site) focused on the local shopping scene,” she said. “I am not trying to recreate a fashion magazine online. I want to be a resource for what is going on in the stores for shoppers.”

Bear, who has a background in retail marketing and advertising, said she's trying to get a feel for how often to send updates without over-saturating readers.

Right now, she updates the site on Thursdays, so you can plan your sale-hopping. Readers can also sign up for the mailing list, which sends out a weekly e-mail. The site also has a Twitter presence. “I don't want to torture subscribers with technology,” she said. Offerings include exclusive deals for scoopcharlotte.com readers and giveaways.

Passion Project

waxMama.com went live on May 18. Site founder Gibson, 32, was working in commercial real estate when she was let go in September 2008. With the encouragement of friends and family, she seized the opportunity to pursue a passion project – helping women find the cool stuff around them in Charlotte while supporting local businesses.

The site is updated Monday-Friday, and signing up for daily “waxmail” will get the content right to your inbox. So what is a waxMama? It's a term Gibson and her girlfriends use to describe a woman who changes or adjusts to make herself or the situation better.