

PCNY Luncheon  
Why the Web Matters  
April 23, 2003

**Ruth Sarfaty, Moderator** – Thanks very much. Before I introduce everybody I thought it might be worthwhile going through a couple of stat's. An estimated 50 or so million Americans peruse the Internet while they're at work; 34 or so million visit women's websites typically, on a typical month; last holiday season roughly 20 million AOL member browsed or bought online, and according to a survey we recently did at AOL, 77% of online consumers go online to learn more before they shop. The Internet is the top source of information for everything from travel to entertainment to tickets to cars and real estate. So online is clearly a place people are looking when they're buying things. Online is also the place they go for news, as we've seen during the war. So PR people need to figure this out, and by the way so do the websites, I think, or portals. So in addition to telling us a bit about their own areas, I'm hoping the panelists, like Peter pointed out, will help us figure out how to help them.

First, I'd like to introduce Elizabeth Shepard, we'll start over there, the editor-in-chief of Epicurious.com, one of the most visited food destinations online, and the home of Gourmet and Bon Appétit magazines and Concierge.com, the home of Conde Nast Traveler. Elizabeth joined the company in October of 2000. Before Epicurious, Elizabeth served as General Manager of Halo 46, a multimedia, upscale lifestyle brand that launched Content and Commerce on the Internet, there she did a range of things from positioning and marketing to launching a web magazine and an online store. Her journalism experience includes writing for magazines from Parade to others and she's the recipient of 3 journalism awards, she has a novel, too, **H**, which is a New York Times Notable Book. Elizabeth has a B.A. in English Composition from Vassar -- my alma mater, too, I'm proud to say -- and an M.F.A. in writing from Columbia University. Elizabeth?