

By [Jeff Alpen](#)

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Dear friends of Blink,

I love this time of year. I'm full of gratitude that Thanksgiving brings and excited by the energy of the holiday season. 2013 has been truly phenomenal for Blink - we have flourished by every measure. Because you have been such an important part of our year, I am eager to share a few highlights (it was hard to pick!).

2013 began with a trip to Sao Paulo, Brazil to start work with a wonderful group of people at Zap, a real estate portal owned by Globo, the largest mass media group in Latin America, founded in Rio de Janeiro in 1925 by Irineu Marinho. I was very fortunate to spend time on a couple of occasions with Alessandro and his colleagues who reminded me of the importance of human connection - the Brazilian way. We enjoyed time together over great food and wine and became good friends.

Domestically, we were engaged by Mike and his colleagues at Viverae, a group in the health management space, driven by their purpose of supporting employers to have healthy employees. It really is a privilege to work with a well-established organization, hustling like a startup to create the next generation of their product, while continuing to serve their customers. We can tell the same story about our work with Chris B. and Chris P. of LogRythm in Boulder who make the Internet more secure.

Our work with Wizards of the Coast (Hasbro) has been particularly inspiring to me. The company is great, the product is great, and the people we work with are great. The true inspiration though, comes from seeing Brian, one of our newer researchers flourish. Brian is a long time Wizards customer and Magic player and we've been able to put him in the business. With such deep product knowledge, we've seen his research insights have impact, and I believe this is a key reason we continue to work in partnership with the Wizards team.

As you know, business can be challenging, and we were faced with a hurdle last summer when Gilmore Research announced they were closing their doors. Gilmore was our primary recruiting partner, and we were their biggest client. It was incredible to watch our executive team; Kelly, Karen, and our CFO Randy, move into action. They kept the business alive by acquiring the qualitative division of Gilmore Research and re-branded it as Northwest Insights (NWI). Donna Glosner remains in charge of NWI's business and continues to serve Blink and many other clients across the nation.

In order to serve awesome clients, we need an awesome team. In 2013, we hired 12 new full time team members. They are outstanding humans and world-class contributors in their practice areas (research, design, and business operations). We are fortunate to have: Sarah M., Sarah A., Jessica, Michi, Siri, Brigitt, Jake, Lauren B., Laura, Tristan, Tim, and Greg working (directly or indirectly) for you. As I write this we are a collaborative and cooperative team of 41.

Our team travelled to some awesome locations this year. We worked in: Washington, DC, Boulder, Dallas, Raleigh, San Francisco, Orlando, Sacramento, SaoPaulo, Chicago, Cincinnati, Baltimore, Belleville, London, Birmingham, Leeds, Toulouse, Toronto, Edmonton, Hannover, Berlin, Cologne, Lyon, Paris, Edinburgh, and Tokyo.

In those cities we were serving some great new clients including: Raytheon, NASA, LogRythm, AAA, Market Leader, Shure, Pentaho, Procter & Gamble, Unilever, DEFENDER Direct, FiftyThree, Razorfish, Booking.com, Intel, Genentech and Starbucks (to name a few). True to my mission - all of my energy is directed towards ensuring our clients remain clients for life.

To our new clients - THANK YOU for the trust you have placed in us. To our existing clients - THANK YOU for your ongoing partnership and friendship. Our goal in 2014 remains unchanged: deliver exceptional value to our clients.

With that, I wish you peace, happiness and well being in 2014. And I offer my deep gratitude for your support in 2013.

Jeff Alpen (Client Services & Partner)