

**Press Release****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****CONTACT:**

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**DATE:** September 26, 2000

**Funston Gin Company marks Thirty-Seventh year with innovative Internet Information System for Customers**

**Funston, GA – On September 18, 2000**, Funston Gin Company began its 37th year in operation. On the same day, the company unveiled its **new Online Information Center** where its customers can review information on their cotton grades and loads through the Internet. “We know that farmers are statistically some of the most prolific users of the Internet,” said Tom Stallings, owner and CEO. “Many of our biggest customers review the load summaries and grade information on a weekly or daily basis. By providing it online, we have made this information available when it is convenient for them – often after hours. It also alleviates the load on our staff producing volumes of paper reports and routing them to customers.”

The Funston Gin Company Website ([www.funstongin.com](http://www.funstongin.com)) also has **online information for cotton farmers** including a Daily News column written by Richie DeMott. “This is a way for folks to here what’s going on in the cotton world from someone they trust. It won’t be the longest, most complete overview of cotton. But it is brief, readable and has the information our customers need to have on a daily basis.”, says DeMott.

The system was created by web site design and programming firm, **Bright Ideas, Inc.** of Camilla Georgia ([www.brightideasusa.com](http://www.brightideasusa.com)). Vicki Davis, founder and Ceo, says “Funston Gin Company and the staff are unusually sensitive to the needs of their customers. They see the trend of Internet access to information as a key success factor for businesses serving the agri-business market and have pioneered the way in creating this new system. As far as we’re aware, there is not another system like it interfacing with the software they use to manage their ginning operations – it is quite an achievement for the gin and for my firm. We look forward to improvements in the future to the system.”

Other features of the website include an **up-to-date regional weather satellite** and **regional forecasts** for the counties that they serve as well as real-time cotton market quotes.

Additionally, the company reviewed the most common phone calls with their office staff and put information on the website to alleviate phone calls. This included map information for reaching their central office and warehouses.

The company has been set up within their office to update the website and other information in-house while still using Bright Ideas for special needs. "It is very important that customers do not just implement the web but that they **also integrate the web into their business** as Funston Gin Company has done. They can update their information on a daily basis and call me for major design changes, programming needs, and technical questions. We find that more customers are needing and implementing solutions such as this," says Davis. "I find that customers that update their routine information in-house often have a more successful Internet business than those who do not take formal 'ownership' of their website."

"This is a step into the future for our customers and our gin. We are one of a handful of gins in the country offering our information online for customer access. We are very proud of this accomplishment," says Stallings.