What I’m thankful for this Thanksgiving

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It's that special time of year when we all get bloated from eating too much turkey, get into fist fights at Best Buy over that last doorbuster sale, and enjoy Christmas music that started in June. But there is much to be thankful for, and it goes far beyond my propensity for Holiday-induced mayhem.

Here's what I'm thankful for this Thanksgiving....

• **Incandescent lighting**. Due to a merchandising error, I snagged a deal on an A19 60W LED equivalent [1] (note: the link is not where I purchased it). The bulb emits a slight buzzing sound, and the

lumen output lags slightly behind incandescents, but it’ll last me nearly 23 years! (Now, whether I can put up with the buzzing for over two decades remains to be seen.)

• **Being out of retail**. Every time I hear about die-hard bargain hunters camped out in front of Wall-Mart or Best Buy, the 8 PM Thanksgiving/Black Friday openings, or the general pandemonium that occurs when tensions are high, gift lists are long, and patience is at a premium, I thank (insert whatever deity you believe in) that I’m out of retail. 11 years was more than enough, thank you very much.

• **CES**. The Holidays – despite the holly, jolly gift wrap – are incredibly stressful. The weather turns south (except for those of you lucky enough to live in warmer climates … I hate you, by the way), production picks up, and we all dream about the summer. The Consumer Electronics Show – which occurs in the beginning of January – is a welcome respite from the madness. With its flashy lights, cool tech, and, well, *Las Vegas*, CES is something to look forward to through the rough Winter months. And one month after CES, baseball’s spring training begins, which conjures visions of the encroaching summer months (and baseball, of course).

• **My PlayStation 3**. Had it for 3 years, and it’s never conked out on me (*knock on wood*). All the while, it’s been a great gaming platform, Blu-ray player, and entertainment device.

• **Football**. OK, so my team – the Philadelphia Eagles – has taken an extended lease out on the basement. And my Fantasy Team clearly hates me – their 3-8 record shows their contempt for good taste and decency. But what else can so effectively bring together family, friends, and copious amounts of alcohol (more so for Eagles fans)? And at least it gives me something to complain about on Monday.

• **The Avengers**. Director Joss Whedon can do no wrong.

• **The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey**. It’s finally here!

• **Our nation's military**. Read more here [2] for ECN's proper tribute to our men and women in uniform. But it's worth remembering now – as it is throughout the year – the endless sacrifices they make in defense of our country and, in particular, the time they spend away from their families on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and other holidays and special occasions.

• **Friends and family**. Didn't think I'd forget them, did you? (Hi, mom!) After all, what are the stressful holiday months without friends and family to commiserate with? OK ... and to spend quality time with, too.

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