

A HOLIDAY THANKS IN SEMI-IAMBIC PENTAMETER

by [Steve Brown](#)

'Twas the morning before Christmas and we started to think,
That many holiday traditions arose after too many drinks.
With all the eggnog and mulled wine that is often tried,
It is no wonder people cut trees only to bring them inside.
And what is with the flying reindeer, 5am shopping and high holiday CD rates?
We just hope people sober before the caucus in Iowa State.
Enough of these musings and on to these rhymes,
If we don't, we go back reporting on the markets and subprime.
Our story is not about Harry Potter or NASA's crazy Lisa Nowak,
It's not about Larry Craig's foot tapping, steroids or Atlanta's ex-quarterback.
Its not about Obama, Hillary, Gulliani or Governor Mitt,
However if Edwards wins, we will be so mad we will spit.
Our story is about Santa' and his visit here this December,
He has done it every 24th, for as long as we can remember.
In addition to the presents that he keeps in his sack,
He brings his laptop computer, little information he does lack.
You see, aside from Santa being a jolly old elf,
He owns a multi-bank holding company all by himself.
He comes here each year, before North America goes dark,
You have to admire a man that runs a bank while in park.
"I am here to improve performance, Mrs. Claus has concerns,
Our elves, the shareholders, need a better return.
We can do better than a 15% ROE,
A healthier ROA, our directors must see.

I am also concerned with credit quality getting wacky,
Or what will happen to rates if left to Bernanke.
A tougher exam, BSA and implementation of Basel II,
The Fed must sit around and think we have nothing to do.
And the rest of the bank, there is more dysfunction,
Our staff gives away rate without guilt or compunction.
To my point, our deposit managers Â– Donner and Cupid,
Ran a 6% MMDA promotion, their timing was stupid."
We wasted not a moment and showed him the works,
We used peer groups, benchmarked performance and highlighted his quirks.
We talked about loan pricing and risk-adjusted return,
We presented enough math to send his elves to a tavern.
We talked about contingency plans and the future of Prime,
Of a holding company loan and the effects of next year's rate climb.
St. Nick got excited and started bellowing products by name:
"Now CDs, Liability Coach, C&I Loans and interest rate swaps,
We need a Dynamic Sweep, Credit Stress and a High Performance Workshop.
We did a Powerpoint, walked thru demos and plotted cash flows,
Rudolph was impressed, we could tell by his nose.
What emerged was a template on how to make money,
For a profitable bank attracts suitors like honey.
Dear Santa worked us to the bone and I think you will concur,
That working hard on Christmas Eve Day is like eating myrrh.
Nevertheless, we are always up for a test,
As long as we have clients we will always be blessed.
Besides it was lunchtime and Santa is like us in a crunch Â–
Eat at your desk if you have to, but never miss lunch!
But as we invited him out he jumped up and said he must run,
"The children are waiting there is work to be done.

Thank you for your ideas, I am now less perplexed.

We should talk shortly on what to do next.

In fact, I will call you Jan 2, we can talk about FAS 157.

How do you mark loans to market? I have no idea in heaven."

With that, Santa gave a nod and was back in his sleigh,

His new hybrid motor assisted to take him away.

"Goodbye St. Nick" we yelled, but it was a little too late,

We forgot to tell him about our next conference coming up this March 2008.

We will send him an e-mail, that won't be too tough,

For we need to end this letter, as we commercialized Christmas enough,

As this story comes to a close, we wanted to thank you this year,

It is you Â- the client to which we hold the most dear.

We hope to see you all soon at various places and times,

We need some new material to help these ridiculous rhymes.

Until then, stay safe, profitable and feel free to callÂ...

"MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU AND A GRAND NEW YEAR TO ALL!"

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