

All the firm needed was an in-your-face name

Growth spurt followed fast for company doing websites and marketing

By VELVET SPICER

Jeff Heveron has proved that a catchy name can be a shot in the arm for a business.

In 2004 Heveron had a computer repair shop in Palmyra and was running a website design company, Pros Plus. On his Internet travels he stumbled across a domain name for Badass Builders and thought it might be interesting to use it somehow.

"I bought the domain name. I built a website for it and put it up there, but we

put all our advertising dollars into Pros Plus," says the 35-year-old owner of Badass Builders. "Within the first year we were getting more calls about Badass Builders than we did for Pros Plus. It was marketing itself."

When Heveron saw what the company name could do for business, he dropped the name Pros Plus.

The newer name has attracted a varied clientele, Heveron says. In its early days, Badass Builders catered to a more alternative crowd, but recently it has built websites for accountants, X-ray imaging companies and commercial cleaning companies, among others.

"Our typical client and our ideal client are small to medium businesses looking for creative and professional websites," he says.

PROFILE

Badass Builders

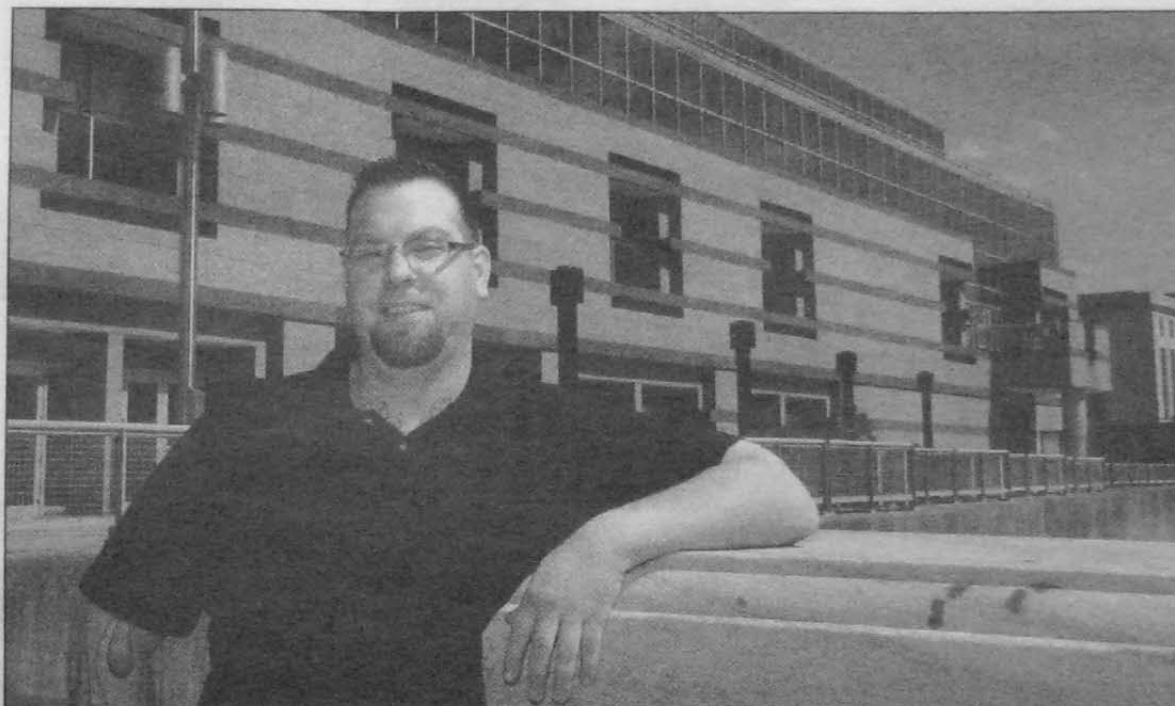


Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Jeff Heveron says a passion for the work allowed him to devote the effort required, and an emphasis on good project management has helped the business run smoothly.

While development and setup costs vary, Heveron says the average customer might pay roughly \$2,800 for the company's services. Prices can range from \$500 to \$30,000 for custom services.

Heveron has one full-time employee and seven contractors. Working out of his home in Fairport has allowed the company to keep overhead low and pass on the savings to the customer, he says. Besides, the nature of the business and the distribution of more than 200 clients across the country make a bricks-and-mortar location unnecessary.

In addition to website development, application development and custom administration systems, the company offers

search engine optimization, branding, marketing, social networking and various print services such as brochures, business cards and calendars.

Heveron declines to discuss revenue, except to say that business has quadrupled for the past two years. He is working on increasing his staff and expanding the business significantly in the next few years, he says.

What makes the company successful is having processes for all of its business, Heveron says.

"We use project management systems, we have proposals that are mostly set up as templates, we've got all our forms in place," he explains. "Just having all those

things all set up shows professionalism, and they keep us fluid."

Heveron says one of the toughest lessons he learned as an entrepreneur was to develop those reliable processes. Being able to delegate also plays an important role in small-business success, he says.

Having those systems makes the job easier, Heveron says, and there is not much about the business that keeps him up at night.

"It's a pretty stress-free environment," he says. "Things run smoothly."

While competition in the field can be fierce, Heveron says that is healthy.

"It helps to drive our bottom line up a bit," he says.

A passion for the business gets Heveron up every morning.

"I wake up, I get out of bed and I can't wait to get to work. The thing for me is it is my company," he explains. "We work with a lot of startup businesses. I love the fact that we're actually helping people."

If he were to pass along a piece of advice to other small-business owners and those contemplating opening a business, it would be this: Set goals for yourself and have a good business plan.

"One of the biggest things is there's a lot of hard work and a lot of dedication," Heveron says. "If you don't have that drive or passion, you're not going to do it."

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Small Business is a weekly feature focusing on entrepreneurs. Send suggestions for future Small Business stories to Associate Editor Smriti Jacob at sjacob@rbj.net.