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Web Design That's Easy, Effective & Affordable: A Case Study of Julie Duriga, CPA

It was easy. Right out of college, Julie Duriga landed a job as an accountant at Highland Brewing Company. She progressed in her career, accepting a position as controller of a regional airport. All the while, Julie was moonlighting doing tax preparation, bookkeeping and other accounting-related tasks for small businesses. But something was missing. The entrepreneur in Julie wanted to branch out and launch her own firm.

In May 2007, Julie swallowed hard, quit her job and became her own boss. A frightening and equally thrilling venture as any small business owner will confess.

Understanding that marketing would be vital in the success of her new enterprise, Julie immediately took after the tasks of creating logos, reserving Yellow Page listings and developing a website. Everything was chugging along beautifully until her web designer turned unresponsive.

With just three weeks until her Yellow Page listing would be published (which included the URL to her yet-to-be-created website), Julie panicked! What kind of website could be created in three weeks? She didn't want to sacrifice quality for speed and she wasn't in a position to pay exorbitant amounts of money for a rush job. What's that old saying about fast, good and cheap?

Enter Mustang Web Designs.

Using a Template Base to Create a Custom Site

Mustang came to the rescue with one of our Express Sites. Based on a template, these sites quickly take on the unique character and personality of the website owner. Because the template is only used as a framework, rather than an as-is product, customization is key to success. By adding pictures, graphics, logos and professionally-written copy; these templates turn out not to be so "template-like" in the end.

After interviewing Julie so that we could better understand her and - more importantly - the clients she wanted to communicate with through the site, work on her project commenced. After only 3 weeks, Julie's site was launched and was met with immediate success, receiving repeated compliments from peers as well as clients and prospects.

Your Website is a Team Member

Since Julie began her business solo, she needed all the help she could get. For her, a website was not only a marketing tool; it was also a team member. Julie posts her fee schedule on her website. This is useful for qualifying potential clients and also aids existing clients in determining what the charges will be for various services.

The website is also an enormous timesaver when working with new clients. For instance, when meeting clients for the first time, Julie requests that they visit her site and print out driving directions. She also requests that they review the fee schedule and then sign a letter of agreement. This helps avoid surprises when invoices arrive.

The latest addition is something that she found in the book *Firm of the Future* regarding questionnaires for potential clients. By directing people to the site to download or print questionnaires and other forms, Julie is able to collect vital information that paints an accurate picture of a new client's financial standing. Prospects have been impressed with the online forms which tell them that this young CPA has her act together. Julie makes time to review new client questionnaires and issues before they meet and, as a result, the meetings are very focused, productive and efficient.

The Results

Challenging doesn't begin to describe the process of launching and growing your own business especially for those who go it alone at first. But, as the old saying goes, the greater the risks, the sweeter the rewards.

Whether prospects funnel to her site from her Quickbooks listing, referrals or another source; Julie's website has proven itself to be a valuable player that converts visitors to paying clients on a regular basis. In addition, it saves her countless hours each month by performing administrative tasks that she would otherwise have to execute herself.

From 2007 to 2008, Julie has posted some amazing figures. Revenues are up by more than 2000%. Her business value has increased by 25% and she has added to her staff. Julie's firm is now comprised of two part-time employees, one accountant and one "Director of First Impressions" charged with handling marketing, branding and the firm's Internet presence.

Most people know the cliché "fast, good, cheap: pick any two." But with Mustang Web Designs Express Sites, the saying becomes fast, good, cheap: you can have it all! Does Julie agree? "I save so much time because I can refer people to my site for all sorts of information. I get A LOT of compliments on my website from people who tell me it is approachable and easy to understand. I am grateful that I found Mustang Web Designs!"