

As Featured in:



MEDIA FIRM HELPS BUSINESSES PLUG INTO DIGITAL PROMOTIONS



GALENA-BASED **IMAGEWORKS** EXPANDS INTO NAPERVILLE WITH AN EYE TOWARD e-BROCHURES

By **Laura Zahn Pohl**
Special to the Tribune
February 6, 2001

In the old days, like just last year, a company might promote itself with a slick, four-color printed brochure or a flashy videotape, describing its philosophy and services to potential customers and shareholders.

The new promotional medium--motion media on a CD-ROM or DVD--could soon make brochures and videotapes look as old-fashioned as sandwich boards. And Galena-based Imageworks, which is expanding into the Naperville area, is ready to capitalize on the growing interest in this medium.

"It's more entertaining, more engaging and consumers are more likely to view a CD-ROM or DVD," said Ed Curley, an executive producer based in Naperville. "People who get a CD-ROM will put it in their computers out of curiosity."

The industry refers to these informational or promotional discs as "e-brochures," which can be accessed from a DVD player or computer. The same sophisticated images can be delivered via a company's Web site, Curley said.

The motion media product, consisting of video and graphics produced by Imageworks, is described as "spanky" by Curley. "It's the 'Monday Night Football' look that consumers have gotten used to," he said.

Imageworks was founded 12 years ago in Schaumburg as a full-service video production company. Its technical facilities are now in Galena, where employees edit the video and add computer graphics and visual effects like three-dimensional animation. The company also incorporates the music and professional voice narrative. The final product is converted to Web and DVD formats.

With 85 percent of the company's business coming from the Chicago area, the firm's management decided to establish offices in the Naperville area. Last year Imageworks joined the Naperville Chamber of Commerce and is in the process of finding office space. The first employees to be hired will be a writer and an associate producer, Curley said. Eventually, the Naperville location may duplicate the technical facilities and staff located in Galena.

The final product will have three uses, said CPS Sr. VP Jim Doody. "We can send it to prospective customers, and the sales force can also use it in their laptops during a face-to-face presentation," he said. "It'll also be linked to our Web site. With the proliferation of Web-based communication, DVD is a natural for us."

One advantage to the digital format for a company profile is that it allows the viewer to click on a menu to find a particular section, as opposed to the linear access of videotape. And because the information is digital, portions of a presentation can be updated as necessary. "If someone leaves the company, you can pull out a section and change it," Doody said. "With video, you're redoing the whole thing."

Imageworks customers are finding many applications for DVD discs. One company put its message on a DVD the size of a business card to distribute at trade shows. Another company used a DVD to send a Christmas message, Curley said. A firm also can take the DVD or CD-ROM to a trade show and place it into a kiosk for visitors to access at their leisure. The technology is more accessible to small and medium-size companies because costs are coming down, Curley said. "It's becoming more cost-effective for sales and marketing efforts," he said. "And this medium comes at a time when the bar has been raised in what customers expect."

Contact Imageworks at 630-305-3400 or
www.ImageworksOnline.com

