

Small marketing company makes a big impact

Webster-based Sundance Marketing logged \$1.7M in gross income in 2014

BY KERRY FELTNER

Does a company's size make it wise? Laurie Sagona, president of Sundance Marketing LLC, does not necessarily think so.

The firm, which has three employees, is a strong contender in the area, bringing in more than \$1.7 million in gross income in 2014, ahead of multiple area firms with larger staffs.

This September marks the company's 15th anniversary. Sagona would like to see a 25 percent increase in revenues by year's end.

"We are competitive by nature because that's our background here, but I did not start this business to become like some of the bigger ad agencies in this market," Sagona said. "It wasn't my goal to be at that level. My goal was to share my creative talents, to share my knowledge of this industry (and) to help the businesses grow."

It operates at 430 Sundance Trail in Webster and serves clients such as Van Bortel Inc.; Helendale Dermatology & Medical Spa PLLC; national health care management organization TeamHealth Holdings Inc.'s Rochester Immediate Care and Western New York Immediate Care; Midtown Tire Inc.; and Grossman's Garden & Home Center.

"When your client says, 'I had a great month,' it's really rewarding because we did a really good job and we got the message out," said Mary Pavone, media director of Sundance Marketing.

Under Sundance Marketing's watch, Helendale Dermatology has doubled its business and Rochester Immediate Care and Western New York Immediate Care have expanded to three locations.

"Rather than paying for fancy ad agency offices, overhead and a cookie-cutter approach to advertising, Sundance represents a new model for marketing support services," said Claire Jones, chief marketing



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

"I did not start this business to become like some of the bigger ad agencies in this market," says Laurie Sagona, president of Sundance Marketing, with Mary Pavone, media director, and Paula Ruffell, manager.

officer of Rochester Immediate Care and Western New York Immediate Care. "They deliver value and results.

"In addition to having amazing marketing knowledge and creative ideas, everyone at Sundance is a genuinely nice person—no egos or attitude," she added.

On the most recent Rochester Business Journal list of marketing and communications firms, Sundance Marketing ranked 12th with \$1.7 million in local gross income—a 42.8 percent increase. Sagona attributes this growth to a strong focus on existing clients, new client acquisition and the expansion of current clients.

"I don't really have a long-term plan, per

se—our goal is always to keep moving forward," she said. "To grow the business, to use our talents, to come to work and have good full productive days—that's what we really want. I know that if we do a great job, the business will continue to grow."

Sagona has a team of 10 people she calls upon to help clients achieve their goals. These freelancers include graphic designers, copywriters, production directors and digital partners.

"We have digital partners that can help us look at digital media and (search engine optimization) and social media because we weren't brought up in that," Sagona said. "We may be the experts

in traditional buying, but we weren't the (digital) experts so we learned from our media reps. We learned from digital partners, and then we learned from national research what's happening out there.

"I think that we're all trying to do the best we can to take advantage of the new media and what we know, but it's changing so fast," she added.

During the recession, the business was

able to keep its momentum, officials said.

"There's things that are in your control and there's things that are not," Sagona said. "So what's in your control is marketing your company, networking, calling on new businesses (and) trying to do the best job you can for your existing clients."

Competition is a constant in the marketing industry. That does not mean that the team at Sundance Marketing is looking

over their shoulders.

"I don't really think about (other agencies) too much," Sagona said. "We really are focused on who do we want to work with and calling on those people. Other bigger agencies aren't interested in a lot of the companies that we would call on. They're looking at more out-of-town business, and that's not what we're really looking at."

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