



Inspiring Creativity

Case Study Unicom Services

Industry: IT

Company: Unicom Computer Services

Website: www.unicomsvcs.com

Application: Serif PagePlus and WebPlus

Company Profile: Entrepreneur Bruce Kullberg founded Unicom Services in 1991 as a business hub offering computer and online consultancy services as well as a variety of e-commerce ventures aimed at changing the way people shop for the better.

Summary: Using several Serif solutions, including PagePlus, WebPlus and DrawPlus, Kullberg is able to easily design, develop and maintain Websites for his customers and manage his own business.

Entrepreneur Uses Serif WebPlus and PagePlus to Bring Small Businesses Online

Having embraced the Internet from its inception, Bruce Kullberg has always sought to help small businesses maximize their marketing potential by offering Website development as well as consultancy services. An entrepreneur balancing several online ventures, Kullberg understands the challenges faced by the small business owner when looking to build and maintain a visual identity with limited time and resources. Kullberg has been able to build a business around servicing these needs, and using several Serif programs including PagePlus, WebPlus and DrawPlus, Kullberg is able to easily design, develop and maintain Websites and other collateral for his customers, while additionally managing his own business.

Simple Solutions to Develop New Opportunities

Kullberg was determined to bring people together using technology years before the Internet changed the world. In 1988, Kullberg founded Strictly Business!BBS, a pre-World Wide Web message board aimed at delivering advice and developing an electronic community for small business to succeed.

The service was available through a dial-up connection and later led to the development of Kullberg's umbrella company, Unicom Services.

Known for his computer repair skills as well as his early knowledge of HTML, Kullberg was approached by local businesspeople in Lewis Center, OH, looking for a Website designer. Over time, Kullberg realized that to keep pace with the volume of business he needed to find a faster and more efficient way to build Websites. The prohibitive price tag and deep learning curve of most professional-grade programs did not make them attractive options.

"As a small business, we couldn't afford to spend several hundred dollars on software packages that would take a significant amount of time to learn. Having already integrated Serif's PagePlus into my marketing workflow, I learned about WebPlus, and it was a godsend," explained Kullberg. "WebPlus was, and still is, a simple solution to creating fully featured business Websites. WebPlus has allowed me to work faster and expand my business."

Serif WebPlus Tears Down Fences

Using WebPlus, Kullberg selects from a wide range of existing templates and has also developed his own library of templates. This ensures that each client who comes to Kullberg receives a unique Website that speaks directly to customers while also integrating necessary features, including intuitive navigation and search engine optimization. By utilizing existing formats, Kullberg is also able to develop Websites quickly and get businesses up and running on demand. E-commerce features available in WebPlus easily enable Kullberg to connect his clients' Websites to PayPal merchant accounts, making online payments simple and secure for customers.

The program became such a time-saver, Kullberg has put it to work for his own residential community. When Kullberg's neighbors on the Oak Creek Association (www.oakcreekassociation.com) elected Kullberg to be its communications vice president, one of his first initiatives was to create a neighborhood Web site using WebPlus. This site has become an online home for residents, new and old, seeking community news as well as maps and documents.

"Using an existing template as a starting point, I used DrawPlus to create the Association logo and utilized a number of features in creating the various site elements. The e-commerce feature enables neighbors to pay their dues through the Website," said Kullberg. "Everyone appreciates the easy navigation and because WebPlus is so simple I am able to update the site on a weekly basis. In a time when it's become commonplace to know a select few of your neighbors, the Oak Creek Association utilizes technology to help bring us together."

PagePlus and DrawPlus Polish Companies' Identities

While Kullberg's business is focused on developing online presences for other companies, Kullberg also manages a number of his own ventures. When starting a new business, Kullberg knows he must develop a unique identity to set it apart from the competition. To create his marketing materials, such as letterhead, newsletters, logos, and PDF documents Kullberg turns to Serif PagePlus.

"I've used PagePlus for more than 10 years because it's just so easy to use and affordable but still incredibly powerful," said Kullberg. "All of our materials have a refined, polished look and are ready for a professional printer, but the really nice part is that we're able to produce these professional materials in literally minutes. It's really like having your own internal design department."

By developing design skills using Serif products, Kullberg has been able to expand his business to offer graphic design services as well. Using DrawPlus, Serif's vector drawing program, as well as PagePlus, Kullberg creates banners, animation and HTML emails for clients. Examples of Kullberg's work can be viewed online at: www.unicomsvcs.com/art.html

Between the daily use of PagePlus' PDF converter to manage documents for all his ventures and the use of WebPlus to create and maintain Websites, Kullberg estimates 95 percent of his business depends on Serif products.

"Serif desktop publishing, design and Website development programs have been by my side for years," said Kullberg. "Not only have they helped me do my job but I've been able to grow Unicom Services into new areas of business."

For more information on Serif and its range of design and creative software products, visit:

www.serif.com