

CentricSource is spanning the globe with its Web designs

From the September 9, 2005 print edition: Trade Talk
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When it came to doing business overseas, Langhorne entrepreneur Joe Witte, didn't go looking for it. It found him.

In 2003, Witte launched an online design firm, LogoDesignGuru.com, providing logo and graphic design services over the Web. Before long the business was expanding to provide print needs and Web site design and attracted the attention of former client Zaheer Dodhia, who was looking to expand his Pakistani Web and graphic design firm into the United States.

The two combined resources --

Witte provided the sales, customer support and administrative support, and Dodhia provided the design team for the end products -- and Witte renamed the firm CentricSource. The name change was to better reflect the wide range of services the firm was now offering, Witte said.

Doing business online has given CentricSource access to the widest client base possible.

"You name the country, and we were doing business there," Witte said.

Within the United States, the firm has done work for Holy Ghost Preparatory School, Texas A&M and the Federal Communications Commission Inspector General among others. Malaysia, Costa Rica, Kenya and the Middle East are all part of the long list of areas where CentricSource has provided design needs for businesses.

To smooth operations and communicate in a market with varying time zones, the firm stays in touch with clients by phone, e-mail or instant messaging, Witte said. Language barriers aren't a problem, because the Web site is in English, so those who seek out its services generally speak English, Witte said. Cultural differences, however, must be taken into account to avoid miscommunication.

For example, a request for a football advertisement from a firm in Europe would mean using a photo or graphic of a soccer ball, not an American football.

"There can be confusion unless you've been around the block a few times," Witte said.

To avoid problems posed by cultural differences, a quality control manager oversees the work of every design group, Witte said.

The next step for CentricSource is the launch of a service that will allow U.S. firms to "lease" the firm's designers in Karachi, Pakistan. The designers are qualified to handle all elements of graphic design, such as brochures, logos, magazines, advertisements and illustrations, as well as Web design, including flash design, html, DreamWeaver and

Front Page.

Among the advantages of leasing the designers for six-month, one-year or two-year contracts is eliminating company overhead, such as new salary and health insurance costs, Witte said. The designers also work on a six-day, 48-hour or more work week, have fewer holidays and no sick days. In addition, the designers will be available to work around the clock, not just during U.S. operating hours, Witte said. That means work can get done not only when a firm wants it, but as quickly as they want it, Witte said.

"The reality is, our goal is not to take jobs away from people here, but to help companies expand, help companies to grow their business," Witte said.

Source: Philadelphia Business Journal (<http://www.bizjournals.com/philadelphia/>)