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NEW BUSINESS MINNESOTA



Photography by Paula Keller

Special Report

Resource Heroes

New Entrepreneurs Often Need the Resources of Key Business Professionals to Succeed. New Business Minnesota Brings You Stories About **Resource Heroes** You Should Know and How They Helped Clients Reach Their Goals: Russ Simatic and Joe Konrardy of Insperty with client Dan Cady of Cady Business Technologies; Jim Davis, Mind*Spark Creative, with client Dr. John Ness, Ness Plastic Surgery.

Resource Heroes

Nobody
Succeeds in Business
Alone, Especially Not New
Businesses. They Often Rely on
Professionals with Specific Skills or
Services They Need to Launch and
Grow Their Enterprises. They Turn
to Their **Resource Heroes:**
Business Professionals Who Have
Made a Significant Difference In
the Success of Their Clients.
Here We Present Two Such
Examples.

Photos by Paula Keller

RESOURCE HERO



Russ Simatic and Joe Konrardy of Insperty and Dan Cady (Right) of Cady Business Technologies.

Insperty

Providing the New Owner of a Struggling Business with a Solid HR Foundation for Sustained Growth.

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When Dan Cady bought a struggling company, his first priority was to move quickly and start turning it around. Unfortunately, the business' embedded problems kept him from pursuing his priorities.

Once he took over operations of his new acquisition, he soon discovered a human resources (HR) nightmare. "It was in complete disarray with regard to HR," said Dan Cady, president of Cady Business Technologies, a voice and data communications company. "Nothing was set up, nothing was there. We were starting from scratch."

Business Challenges

Hiring was a challenge. Without any HR processes in place, Cady was worried about being in compliance with laws he knew very little about.

"I had no one to turn to and ask questions," says Cady.

The bookkeeper he inherited had "handled" the HR duties, but without any training.

"We were flying blind," says Cady. "I'm a technician-sales guy. I certainly think I could have figured it out, but I really needed to spend my time on the core business to be successful."

Cady's struggles soon came to the attention of Russ Simatic, Insperty district manager, and Joe Konrardy, Business Performance Advisor at Insperty, an HR services and business performance solutions provider. Konrardy reached out to Cady to see if Insperty could help.

In their initial meeting, Cady described his immediate needs: HR

documents, hiring and terminating some personnel, employee benefits administration and payroll processing....for starters. There were problems everywhere and minutia that was bogging him down.

"Dan was handling crisis management," says Konrardy. "He was jumping from one fire to the next. He wanted to take care of his employees to the best of his ability, but he was also concerned about having cost controls in place. Dan needed someone else to manage those problems areas, so he could focus on growing the business."

A Trusted Advisor

That's where the business relationship between Insperty and Cady Business Technologies began; a series of meetings to share ideas, set goals and build the trust needed to move forward with the right solutions.

Simatic says that Insperty helps clients like Cady quite often. "They come to us when they are overwhelmed. We work with each business to improve performance. We're proud to see the great number of success stories like Cady Business Technologies and know that we played a role. It all goes back to Insperty's mission: to help businesses succeed so communities prosper."

Insperty helps businesses manage the administrative tasks, so business owners and managers can focus on running the company. They offer a comprehensive suite of products and services to deliver administrative relief, better benefits, reduced liabilities and a systematic way to improve productivity. Additionally, Insperty provides human capi-

Insperty *Continued from Previous Page*

tal management, payroll services, time and attendance, performance management, organizational planning, recruiting services, employment screening, financial services, expense management, retirement services and insurance services.

Before joining Insperty, Simatic had been a client twice with businesses he ran. “I’ve been there. I know how this service helps you to see beyond the trees.

“By handing off the back office responsibilities, you gain the time to think about the business without distractions. I experienced that and I see our clients benefitting from that today.”

That’s exactly what Cady needed.

Instant HR Infrastructure

“Once Insperty came on board, we had competence,” says Cady. “They took care of our insurance issues, payroll, benefits, and helped us find top-notch employees.”

When they needed to hire another bookkeeper, Cady asked Konrardy for help. Insperty screened resumes, conducted preliminary interviews and then scheduled meetings with the top three candidates and Cady – taking the guesswork and time out of recruiting.

“The time it saved me was significant,” says Cady. “I didn’t have to look at 50 resumes and interview 20 people. They just said, ‘Here are the three best.’ They did a great job.”

Arguably, the greatest HR issue affecting businesses today is health care reform: the Affordable Care Act (ACA). “Employers know it’s important but they aren’t equipped to deal with it,” says Simatic. “It’s especially clear when the open enrollment periods arrive and the crisis phone calls spike.”

What many small business owners do not realize is that there are alternatives to the health insurance exchanges. Insperty has negotiated a plan through UnitedHealthcare® so it can offer desirable pricing under its umbrella for its clients regardless of size.

Health insurance was a major concern for Cady Business Technologies as well. After buying the company, they were facing a renewal period that threatened to take a huge bite out of their bottom line. Cady just didn’t have the time to investigate.

Simatic and Konrardy suggested putting Cady under Insperty’s umbrella for health insurance. “Insperty isn’t a broker, but we can offer multiple plans to choose from that range from the traditional to high deductible and in between.”

In the old days, employees got the plan the company offered. “Now, to remain competitive and retain top talent, an employer needs to offer choices so employees can find a plan that’s right for their needs,” said Simatic.

“We have base plans where the employer can offer a fixed contribution and the employees can add to it from there,” says Simatic. “The employee is back in control of his or her decisions.”

Konrardy suggested that option. Cady loved the solution because it took care of his immediate needs for the current year. Additionally, it ensured that he wouldn’t see huge increases the following year because he was now part of a large pool of employees through Insperty.

Taking the Business to the Next Level

In the beginning of the relationship, Cady called on Insperty as issues came up. As services were added, it eventually became clear that Cady should take the next step and sign up for the Workforce Optimization® solution for full-service HR support, which includes a dedicated service team of HR professionals to help with HR functions.

With the comprehensive plan in place, Konrardy and Cady talk more often. The range of topics has broadened from pressing problems to higher level concerns, like building a better benefits plan.

Benefits are all about taking care of employees, says Simatic, and you’ll never reach your business goals without the right people.

“Human capital is the most important asset you have,” says Simatic. “How do you attract top talent and take care of your best human capital? With the right benefits and services, you will be rewarded with greater loyalty and higher productivity.”

Cady knew he had to do something about his company’s benefits. The most common complaint was about the lack of dental insurance. He had to do better.

“It’s hard for small companies to offer a great benefits package on their own,” says Cady. “Insperty offers a variety of packages with robust benefits. We could never have gotten that on our own. Employees noticed it right away. If you try and do it ad hoc, it’s nearly impossible.”

It has been much easier for Cady to attract people from other companies, including some big ones. And other competitors are finding it more difficult to lure staff away.

“When discussions with a job candidate come around to benefits, it’s a non-issue,” says Cady. “Insperty makes it possible for us to compete.”

Employment Administration

The very nature of having employees means there will be questions that deserve prompt answers. Once he had Insperty to turn to for employment administration, Cady was freed from the loop. Insperty fielded all employee questions, ensured that job descriptions were correct and updated, kept payroll in compliance with state and federal regulations, and saw that ERISA was handled properly.

“If mistakes are made in this area – especially payroll – the penalties are stiff,” says Simatic. “We help manage the liabilities.”

Conclusion

It’s been more than a year since Cady first brought in Insperty. He talks to Konrardy once or twice a month on a wide range of topics. Konrardy attends a lot of local networking events and has convinced Cady to come along to get in front of prospects and help grow the business.

“I rely on Joe as a trusted advisor,” said Cady. “I tell him what I’m concerned with or where I might need help and get his thoughts. If he or Insperty doesn’t have a solution, he usually knows someone who does.”

“When I first started with Insperty, I never expected what the relationship would become. It was a nice surprise, not to mention a great business decision.”

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Russ Simatic is a District Manager and Joe Konrardy is a Business Performance Advisor for Insperty located in the company’s Minneapolis office. Insperty, a trusted advisor to America’s best businesses for more than 28 years, provides an array of human resources and business solutions designed to help improve business performance. Insperty® Business Performance Advisors offer the most comprehensive suite of products and services available in the marketplace. Insperty delivers administrative relief, better benefits, reduced liabilities and a systematic way to improve productivity through its premier Workforce Optimization® solution. Additional company offerings include Human Capital Management, Payroll Services, Time and Attendance, Performance Management, Organizational Planning, Recruiting Services, Employment Screening, Financial Services, Expense Management, Retirement Services and Insurance Services. Insperty business performance solutions support more than 100,000 businesses with over 2 million employees. With 2013 revenues of \$2.3 billion, Insperty operates in 57 offices throughout the United States. For more information, call (800) 465-3800 or visit <http://www.insperty.com>.

RESOURCE HERO



Dr. John Ness of Ness Plastic Surgery and Jim Davis of Mind Spark Creative.

Mind*Spark Creative

Using Branding, Marketing Strategies to Help a Plastic Surgeon

New Business Minnesota

It was a delicate challenge facing Jim Davis of Mind*Spark Creative when he was asked to help build a brand for Ness Plastic Surgery in Wayzata.

All the design elements had to address the needs of Dr. John Ness, his staff and, most importantly, his patients. That's a lot to demand of color, fonts and text. And those elements had to work in print, online on radio and on billboards.

Fortunately, Mind*Spark Creative had done some work for Dr. Ness in the past, so they already had a good working relationship. When Dr. Ness started his own clinic, he knew that Jim was the creative talent he needed to help communicate his vision for the practice and his brand.

"We just hit it off," says Dr. Ness. "He is a great listener and quickly learned what we wanted to accomplish."

That personal connection proved a key part of their successful business relationship. It provided the framework where questions and ideas flowed freely about how to best communicate with present and future patients.

"Building a brand is tricky in that you can't do it alone," says Jim.

"It's really the customers who create the brand. It's not something you create and then let loose."

He says a brand emerges from a business' interaction with its customer base over time. The brand is the experience of the entire process from the first phone call, a visit to the web site, how the service is delivered and the quality of the customer service.

When they started the process, all Dr. Ness had was his medical license, a good reputation and a book of clients he could invite to become clients at his new clinic.

"John had specific ideas about how he wanted his brand to look, feel and sound," says Jim. "He really liked powder blue. It's a tranquil, soft and calming color. That's all the direction he gave me."

Dr. Ness wanted something stylish, elegant and feminine. "I chose a series of fonts and type face structures that portray elegance, femininity, fashion and beauty. Out of 20 or so sample logos, Dr. Ness chose the one with a soft arc of powder blue floating over his name in lower case letters," says Jim.

Dr. Ness gratefully deferred to Jim's skills with fonts, color, paper weights and texture. "He found this perfect paper that is smooth and satiny. I had no idea that even existed," says Dr. Ness. "As soon as people pick it up and feel the paper, it just reinforces our whole message."

Mind*Spark Creative *Continued from Previous Page*

The branding and marketing pieces were created in anticipation that that person would become a customer. “With the logo, we wanted a specific PMS color and shade,” says Dr. Ness. “We wanted something warm, friendly and professional. It couldn’t be too girly because we have men as patients, too.”

The detail of the logo reflects the attention to detail that makes Dr. Ness a successful plastic surgeon. To accentuate that, Jim created a curved business card to accommodate the logo’s arch.

Part of Jim’s research included looking at plastic surgeon web sites from all over the country to see how other doctors presented themselves in the marketplace. Dr. Ness wanted his web site to reflect sensitivity toward women.

The next phase of Jim’s research was talking to Dr. Ness’ patients about what they expected in a marketing message and about what issues were important to them.

“I was under the impression that women had procedures to get noticed or did it for someone else,” says Jim. “That wasn’t the case at all. Many did it solely for themselves. There were private, sensitive reasons: confidence, self-esteem, a desire to feel beautiful when they look in the mirror.

“Having plastic surgery is a very personal decision. From a marketing standpoint, we have to make it as comfortable and easy for them as possible.”

The messaging also had to address the fear many have of the surgical procedure itself. Jim created brochures and instructional literature to educate patients about what they can expect at every step from surgery to recovery and accurately present the risks.

“The biggest challenge for me was the subject matter,” says Jim. “How to talk about it and market something that is very personal. To do that, the focus needed to shift from the ‘thing’ and introduce them to the person they needed to trust. So we market Dr. Ness, his name, his practice, who he is, and how he thinks. And do it in a way that is easy to understand and grasp.”

Dr. Ness says it was important for marketing themes to connect with regular people. “There is misperception that plastic surgery is only for LA and New York City.”

To keep it real, there is no photoshopping or stock photos of professional models. “We intentionally didn’t want any high-gloss presentation. That’s not who we are,” says Dr. Ness. Any photos at the website, on the clinic walls or in marketing material are of actual patients.

To counteract the misinformation women encounter on line, it was important that the Ness Plastic Surgery site provide accurate, trustworthy and accessible information.

“We have to address their concerns, whether it’s a fear of dying on the operating table or of a ‘botched’ outcome,” says Dr. Ness. “I want them to be able to appreciate the results.”

To maintain and perpetuate a brand, you need a plan, says Jim. That is usually in the form of a brand style guide he prepares for his clients that explains what the company stands for, the language to use when talking with customers, what you wear, etc.

“Look at Apple and how its brand is permeated in everything it does,” says Jim.

The guide book needs to be used and requires diligent training of employees to ensure that the use of the logo, language and color are consistent.

“Some business owners can manage the brand over time,” says Jim. “Others just can’t fit it in with other critical aspects of their business and they turn it over to us.”

After the branding strategy was in place, Jim started to work the marketing plan, beginning with a series of billboards whose goal was to make Ness Plastic Surgery the dominant player in the western side of the Twin Cities.

Talking about plastic surgery, especially high above a busy highway, was a challenge.

“If you use beautiful women, some will see that as unattainable,” says Jim. “If you use pictures of actual women with issues, you can come across as insensitive.”

They decided to use more conceptual, metaphorical concepts that really speak to the target audience.

“We focused on what our research says women are thinking and feeling and we wanted them to know we empathize,” says Jim.

They went with tasteful humor. The vinyl front of one billboard was visibly sagging in full 3D with the words “Need a lift?” Another featured a deflated beach ball with the question “Deflated?” And another had fruit dressed in bikinis with the line “Ness Plastic Surgery for Every Body.”

“We heard from a woman coming back from the cabin when she saw the beach ball billboard,” says Dr. Ness. “She said, ‘That’s how I feel.’ And she came in the next day.”

Since the campaigns began, Dr. Ness says there has been exponential growth. Now his business is getting into skin care lines, a spa for medically directed non-surgical procedures, BOTOX®, filler enhancements and other techniques that his patients value.

Mind*Spark has been working on a full advertising campaign for radio, print, and for the first time, TV, says Jim.

“We’re creating a media plan that targets the right demographic, which means picking the station, the frequency of the spots and time of day. The creative concepts and story boards are being tested to select the right message,” he says.

Having a marketing professional like Jim to work with has been invaluable. “He always brings ideas to the table and he understands who we are,” says Dr. Ness. “And he has really helped me and my staff to understand what our brand is and how to best present it.”

NBM

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*Dr. John Ness is the founder of Ness Plastic Surgery, which provides plastic surgery as well as aesthetic services that include medically directed non-surgical procedures, microdermabrasion, medical spa, BOTOX® and filler enhancements that can take years off your appearance. He can be reached at (763) 559-4500 or
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