

Marketing head helps make a splash



Dave Carey, The Examiner
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BALTIMORE -

Duane Carey makes little companies have a big impact.

A principal with IMPACT Marketing & Public Relations in Columbia for the last two years, Carey works to help put small local entrepreneurs and companies on consumers radar. And he has plenty of experience working with companies of all sizes, having previously served as the director of the Howard County Chamber of Commerce. That experience, combined with a zest for his job, are what continue to make Carey and IMPACT successful.

(Arianne Starnes/Examiner)
Duane Carey, president of IMPACT Marketing & Public Relations, talks about his company on Thursday.

Q What is the story behind coming to IMPACT?

A I was running my own marketing firm and completing my [master's degree in business administration] at Johns Hopkins University part time. One of my professors was Carolyn West-Price, who founded IMPACT in 1990. After working on some projects together we merged in 2005 with me at the helm.

Q What is the most important thing you learned coming into this job?

A Clever ads and flashy Web sites are a means to an end, not the end itself. Unless we're improving the bottom line or increasing sales, nothing else really matters. You really need a wide variety of out-of-the-box tactics to create an optimal marketing mix that brings results.

Q What is the project you are most proud of?

A One recent success that means a lot to me is the Melting Pot restaurant in Annapolis. Their growth had slowed for a couple of years, so we made some changes to their marketing approach. So far this year, they are up more than 20 percent over 2006.

Q What are your future goals for the company?

A Effectively managing growth. IMPACT is a 17-year old company, but we've doubled our billings year-to-date compared [with] last year. That kind of growth can be difficult to handle, so we need to be a little more judicious and selective about which projects we accept, so we don't grow too fast.

Q What is the most rewarding part of your job?

A Without question, it's working with entrepreneurs and making their good ideas better.

Q What is the hardest part of your job?

A Saying no.

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