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SERVING THE GREATER TRIAD AREA

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STRATEGIES IN SMALL BUSINESS

Thinking big



JULIE KNIGHT/THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Dynamics Advertising & Marketing Co. President and CEO Mylene Duffy and Customer Service Manager Jorge Maturino look over documents on a laptop at their office in Summerfield. The two-person firm offers sales and promotions services in English and Spanish.

Marketing firm aims for worldwide audience

By **DOUG CAMPBELL**

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SUMMERFIELD — Mylene Duffy says she has 143 ideas — and those aren't even for her main business.

Her brain churns out plans by the minute, and the aforementioned 143 are just for an as-yet unpublished newspaper column.

Duffy is in the second year of piloting her young company, Dynamics Advertising & Marketing. Her office is the study in her Summerfield home and she has one employee besides herself.

Her list of current clients is small, but it's the untapped potential that makes her

optimistic. She has a no-room-for-failure mindset and an inquisitive intellect, and with both she nurtures zero doubts about the future.

"I have ideas that do not exist in today's business world," she says. "I just want to make a difference is what it amounts to."

The linchpin of Duffy's business strategy is bilingualism. You can't tell it from her name, but Duffy's first language is Spanish. She spent her first 21 years in Puerto Rico and didn't speak English with any consistency until she arrived here to attend Syracuse University.

After a 15-year career in sales and marketing, Duffy recently moved to the

Triad with her husband, Andy, and decided she no longer wanted to work for somebody else. She eyed the nation's fast-growing Hispanic community and realized she could capitalize on her natural language abilities.

In a nutshell, Dynamics aims to be a marketing consultant that can do everything traditional consultancies do — but in two languages. Duffy thinks it's a simple way to potentially double her clients' sales, noting that there are about 340 million English speakers in the world to go with 360 million Spanish speakers.

"We can communicate with 700 million people by being bilingual," she says.

Mucho competition

Of course, plenty of people have the same idea.

Locally, there is no shortage of small bilingual marketing firms looking to help American businesses reach out to the expanding Hispanic population.

Duffy understands this. Her approach is to be more global. Rather than limiting her target market to Triad firms seeking Triad customers, Duffy sees greater opportunity in larger companies eyeing a worldwide audience.

Through culturally sensitive translations on Web sites, mailers and broadcast ads, Dynamics wants to be a one-stop resource for bilingual marketing.

"I don't want to be known as just a translator," she says. "I'm a consultant who can do advertising, marketing and management in two languages."

COMPANY PROFILE

Name: Dynamics Advertising & Marketing Co.

Address: 5405 Summerfield Oaks Court, Summerfield 27358

Phone: (336) 644-6705

Web site:

www.dynamics-advertising.com

Year founded: 2002

2003 revenues: Declined to disclose

No. of employees: Two

Biggest challenge: Be ready for growth. "It's a funny problem to have," CEO Mylene Duffy says. "But in our last project we worked 80 to 90 hours a week. If somebody calls, we need to be ready to help."

Solution: Hire an employee and be selective about accepting jobs. "It's not easy. It's one thing to hear about owning your own business and another experiencing it," Duffy says.

WHO'S IN CHARGE

Name: Mylene Duffy

Age: 43

Title: President and CEO

Education: Bachelor of arts, advertising, Syracuse University

Career: Managed sales operation for Piedmont Broadcasting Corp. in Danville for 13 years. Started Dynamics in October 2002.

Family: Husband, Andy; two dogs

Other interests: Writing. Duffy has penned a book, "When the USA becomes home," that is in search of a publisher.

The way Duffy is going about broadening her client base — identifying her niche and shopping it to likely prospects — follows the textbook model.

Tom Ogburn, director of the Angell Center for Entrepreneurship's Family Business Center at Wake Forest University, said successful young firms find niches and then try to get their foot in the door with clients they've pinpointed as needing their service.

"If you're a small business, you will normally go after a piece of the business or some aspect of it that you know you can address uniquely or with particular expertise," Ogburn says.

"You're not going to get all of Sara Lee's business, but you might be able to do promotional stuff for a particular brand or program. You go in, pitch for that business and build it from there. Getting that first shot is key."

Duffy is self-assured that she can get the proverbial foot in the door. Hers is a tale of constantly overcoming obstacles.

She chronicled her personal history in a book, "When the USA became home," which still lacks a publisher. The narrative tells how she arrived at Syracuse in 1981 barely speaking English, met her husband and within years was running the sales operations for a pair of radio stations in Danville, Va.

Sales pitches

After 13 years in Danville, the Duffys moved to the Triad. Duffy opened Dynamics Advertising, working the first eight months mostly with a single client, the *Northwest Observer*, a Summerfield weekly newspaper, helping the publication develop a sales-training program. It was from the *Observer* that Duffy picked up her first employee, Jorge Maturino, a graphic artist who now is being groomed as customer-service representative for Dynamics.

Now, Duffy and Maturino are armed with a list of 100 local companies. Soon, these companies will be receiving a sales pitch from Dynamics.

In the meantime, Duffy has followed the small-business startup play book. She has



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Mylene Duffy, president and CEO of Dynamics Advertising and Marketing Co., talks with Jorge Maturino, customer service manager. The company is hoping to attract clients by offering advertising services in two languages.

put up the money to join the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce and is to begin a small advertising campaign of her own next month.

"We're just starting to tell people, 'Hello, we're here. And we'll do all the advertising in two languages,'" she says.

If only a couple respond, Duffy thinks the rest will be downhill. If she can just get her foot in the door, Duffy can tell prospects about her multitude of ideas.

She needs more clients soon; her last project — a laminated brochure for a flooring company — is done with no immediate word on whether there will be repeat orders.

Even if her career slows down, Duffy is happy. For her, it's an American success story.

"I feel like I just got off the airplane again," she says. "I didn't know how I was going to do when I first came here. But then it hit me all of a sudden. This is just a dream coming true."

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