



One STOP SHOP

Allegra morphs from printing shop to all-in-one creative/marketing service

ALLEGRA MARKETING SERVICES

Formerly: Allegra Print & Imaging – East LLC
Business: Printing, marketing, creative, interactive, sign and mail services
Address: 2680 Technology Drive
Owners: Jennifer Eberle and Denise Spalding
Founded: 1992
Employees: 17
2011 revenue: \$3.5 million |

GIVING BACK

For every 2 percent in sales revenue, Allegra Marketing Services donates free printing and design services to local charities through its Footprint Fund. Over the past nine years, the company has donated \$445,000 worth of free services. |

Jennifer Eberle, left, and Denise Spalding have taken steps to update their business by adding new equipment such as the new half million dollar iGEN 4 Xerox digital press and telling clients about their new marketing emphasis.

BY KEVIN EIGELBACH | STAFF WRITER
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Sisters-in-law Denise Spalding and Jennifer Eberle founded Allegra Print & Imaging – East LLC in 1992 as a printing company. But over the years it has morphed into a company that does much more.

Printing still contributes the majority of the company's revenue — about 60 percent — but creative services now contribute about 11 percent.

The company offers Web site design and optimization services; marketing strategy and research; graphic design and copy writing; production and design of signs; and mailing and database processing.

In a town full of printing shops, Eberle and Spalding said they realized a few years ago that they needed to offer more than traditional printing in order to survive.

Their business model now is to satisfy small businesses' needs to promote products from the conception of an advertising campaign to the delivery of it.

Spalding described it as “one call, one invoice and one contact.”

To reflect the company's growing, diversified mission, Spalding and Eberle changed the business' name earlier this year to Allegra Marketing Services.

Customer testimonial proves point

On the company Web site, www.allegra-east.com, the company has a real-life example of what it can do.

According to the Web site, Kentucky Telco Federal Credit Union asked Allegra to help it market pre-approved auto loans.

Allegra created a marketing campaign that ran from September through November 2010.

Using a list of credit union members with good credit purchased from a credit bureau, Allegra sent a mailing to about 3,000 residents. Each mailing directed the member to a personalized Web page, where the customer could apply for a loan.

Nine percent of the audience visited a personalized Web site, which resulted in 28 auto loans worth \$726,000. It was a 150 percent return on investment.

SMALL BUSINESS SNAPSHOT

Invested \$600,000 in new equipment

But just because the mission has changed doesn't mean the company is neglecting its core business. This year, the company invested nearly \$600,000 to purchase a Xerox iGen 4 printer and other equipment.

Although it's a digital printer, the iGen 4 has the print quality of a traditional offset printer, Eberle said, but the ink dries much more quickly than offset print.

Also, the printer can personalize each flier or piece of mail it prints, she said, which is something that charities and businesses that Allegra does printing for have wanted for a long time.

The diversification of the company has enabled it to have double-digit growth from 2007 to 2010, Spalding said, allowing that 2011 revenue was relatively flat.

But revenue is up this year, and Eberle is confident growth will continue.

The company has added two employees in the past year, she said, and plans to add two more employees this year to handle creative work.

“Our greatest challenge is keeping up with new technology,” she said. “The good news is that we're very agile.” |