

# it's all about the e's

WE'RE SALUTING AND ENCOURAGING ENTREPRENEURIAL, EMERGING AND EXPANDING TECHNOLOGY BUSINESSES IN THE LEXINGTON AREA.

For Bill Dotson, owner of the Lexington-based software and internet services company TransDigital, a career in internet technology started with a simple desire to stay in touch.

While teaching English in Japan, the UK grad first signed onto the then-emerging World Wide Web to e-mail friends and family back home in Kentucky. When the Carlisle native returned to his home state, he brought with him a new appreciation for the web's budding potential.

Today, Dotson's eight-year-old internet services business has grown from one computer tucked under a desk in his Lexington apartment to roughly 4,000 square feet of office space in the downtown First National Building. But Dotson still uses the technology for essentially the same purpose—to help people stay connected: to their clients, their business goals and their e-commerce opportunities.

With 10 employees and an additional three full-time contract workers, TransDigital specializes in custom web site applications, web site hosting and design, and e-commerce applications for new and growing regional businesses. The company has worked with clients in a variety of industries, including real estate professionals, office product suppliers, national associations, health care organizations and online commerce companies. Its

client list includes well-known names such as Cardinal Office Systems, Central Baptist Hospital, Fayette County Bar Association, the Lexington Legends and Lexington-Bluegrass Association of Realtors.

Despite the ups and downs experienced by many internet companies in recent years, TransDigital has managed to maintain a healthy, long-term client base with no outside investment and is currently working to increase its sales force and expand its service area into Louisville.

Dotson credits TransDigital's success to the company's longevity in the industry, its concentration on client satisfaction and its speedy customer service.

"Most of our clients have been with us for four years or longer, and we have a 99 percent closure rate on support requests within the first 24 hours," Dotson said.

While TransDigital primarily develops and markets its own software to meet the custom needs of its customers, the company has also expanded its capabilities recently by coordinating product development with overseas software companies for highly specialized applications. According to Dotson, the overseas relationships help TransDigital shorten the overall development time of new products for its clients while shielding them from

the difficulties and potential risks of working across international borders.

Although the interaction with foreign software firms has been advantageous for TransDigital, almost 90 percent of the company's research and development is still conducted in Lexington. "The city's low cost of doing business, its size and its location have offered benefits for the company," Dotson said.

"I believe Lexington has a climate where it is easy to do business, because it's easy to meet the people we need to meet," Dotson said. "And it's a centralized location for our clients who are not in Lexington."

Although most of his company's clients are established regional businesses, Dotson has also served as a valuable partner and mentor for emerging technology-based start-ups.

TransDigital has forged integrated partnerships with young local companies such as API, which markets research compliance management software, and Artemetrx, which offers web applications for medical and prescription claims analysis. For Dotson, who started TransDigital as a one-man company, the quest to find innovative ways to bring new ideas and technology to the marketplace is still the most exciting part of his business.

"While that start-up period is the most chaotic for an entrepreneur, it is also the most fun," Dotson said. "What we're able to do is to help



Bill Dotson, president and owner

those entrepreneurs concentrate on their business while we focus on the operations and technology."

Bob Quick of Commerce Lexington noted: "Reliable and innovative technology partners are essential to the growth of our local knowledge-based businesses. Bill Dotson and TransDigital have made a difference for Lexington's economic growth by taking an active role in the development of many promising new ventures and opening new worlds of technological opportunity and efficiency for existing businesses."



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