



PHOTO BY TONY ESPOSITO

SCOTT PIPITONE

TITLE: CREATIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO, SCOTT PIPITONE DESIGN (SPD)

EDUCATION: ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, COMMUNICATIONS DESIGN PLUS A STINT IN SWITZERLAND STUDYING WITH SOME OF THE INDUSTRY'S BEST MINDS

WHERE DID YOU GROW UP? ROCHESTER, N.Y.

CURRENT RESIDENCE: THE OBSERVATORY HILL NEIGHBORHOOD OF PITTSBURGH, JUST DOWN THE STREET FROM WHERE SPD'S NEW 12,000-SQ.-FT. WORKSPACE IS LOCATED. IT'S A GREAT COMMUTE!

UP CLOSE WITH SCOTT PIPITONE

Rochester, N.Y., native grows progressive business in Pittsburgh

WHAT'S IT LIKE RUNNING A TECH-INTENSIVE MARKETING AND DESIGN FIRM IN PITTSBURGH?

As this region continues to embrace technology, we've seen an increase in competition, which makes us all work harder and smarter to provide solutions that make sense.

Our technological offerings really came out of the needs of our clients. While the vast majority of our client list—local, regional and national—are involved in more “traditional” businesses, they all have tremendous needs in the area of technology.

And it's more than just making a Web site look “pretty.” It's making sure we leverage technology in a variety of forms to help clients achieve their business goals. We provide software design and development for the desktop and database applications to aggregate data and provide analysis, including surveys, on-line membership and direct marketing e-mail campaigns. We create Flash presentations for recruiting efforts, provide Web hosting services, even content management software so that keeping copy fresh and interesting isn't technologically or economically taxing for clients.

In addition to keeping up with the latest trends in technology, SPD keeps up with changes that affect how technology is used to best advise clients. For instance, our technology department recently released a white paper on the topic of search engine optimization that's available on our Web site (www.spdesign.net). In it, we explain the need for a holistic view in the construction of sites for optimal search results. From the actual HTML implementation to the way the copy is written and how often

it's submitted and where, there are countless considerations to make sure your site doesn't end up 3 million-plus pages deep on a search.

Similarly, whether you think they're a good idea or not, we're going to be seeing more and more “Can Spam” laws. For some clients, it won't make sense to continue with current e-marketing tactics. For those for whom it still makes sense, SPD will help them work within these constraints, not around them, to provide the desired outcomes.

SPD HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS AS A TOP COMPANY AND A GREAT WORK ENVIRONMENT. TELL US MORE ABOUT THOSE AWARDS AND WHAT THEY MEAN TO THE COMPANY.

Thanks to hard work, great clients and an even better staff, we've been fortunate to have been named to the *Inc.* 500 List of Fastest Growing Private Companies in America for the last three years in a row. We're really proud of this accomplishment, which is really difficult to pull off. We probably won't make it for year four because a lot of our resources of time, energy, capital, etc., were focused on building the business this last year, investing in new, bright people, new equipment, opening the new office space, etc.

We've also been listed for the last three years in a row on the *Inc.* 100 List of Fastest Growing Inner City Private Companies in America and for the last two years in a row on the 2002 and 2003 *Pittsburgh Business Times* Top 100 List of Fastest Growing Companies in Pittsburgh.

Part of what has gotten us this recognition is SPD's philosophy of

Intelligent Energy™. It's the way we work with each other inside SPD, and it's the way we work with clients to achieve mutual success. Intelligent Energy basically states that no one person, organization or entity holds all the answers. Both SPD and the client each bring certain expertise and unique experience to the table. Working in collaboration with clients as true partners, we arrive at unique solutions that leverage all aspects of marketing communications, including design, strategic planning, public relations, advertising and technology.

WHAT'S THE TOUGHEST ASPECT OF YOUR JOB?

As the business continues to grow, I'm less and less able to be as hands on with my staff and their individual projects. I always find time, though, to stop by workstations and ask, “How's it going?” and “What are you building today?”

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE SOME OF THE REGION'S GREATEST ASSETS?

The Pittsburgh work ethic and its values.

FAVORITE THING ABOUT PITTSBURGH IN THE SPRING AND SUMMER?

I'm a snowboarder/ski bum, so I love the snow. But in the warmer weather months my family and friends and I don our water skis and hit the Allegheny River. It's funny to think that if my business existed 50 or more years ago, most of it, in one way or another, would depend on the very waterways I now use for recreation. I guess that's what I love most about Pittsburgh and this region: there's always an opportunity, you just have to look for it. ●