

High School Buddies Create SEO Powerhouse



From left, Aaron Aders, Chief Operation Officer, Kevin Bailey, President, and Jeremy Dearing, Chief Research Officer, of Slingshot SEO

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Slingshot SEO (www.slingshotseo.com), one of the top national companies in the white-hot industry of search engine optimization (SEO), is a homegrown Hoosier measured-marketing success story. The company was founded in 2006 by three former high school buddies—Kevin Bailey, Aaron Aders and Jeremy Dearing—who, instead of delivering pizza, used their after-school time to make up to \$2,500 per month in banner advertising revenue off of automobile websites they designed. In May, Slingshot announced that it will expand its operations in Indianapolis, creating up to 114 new jobs by 2013.

Long before search engine optimization was an industry, Bailey, Aders, and Dearing were building websites that ranked highly on the most prominent search engines of the era.

After graduating from college in 2003, Dearing went to work for his father's business, NewPro, a Zionsville, Ind., plant container manufacturer and distributor. NewPro was still suffering from the 9/11 recession, and Dearing was able to turn the business around using search engine optimization.

Before long, NewPro's business associates were asking Dearing to do for them what he had done for his father's business. Recognizing the potential,

Dearing contacted Bailey and Aders and urged them to "get the band back together" to form Slingshot SEO.

Since then, Slingshot has achieved a compound annual growth rate of 334 percent. Its 2010 gross revenues were approximately \$5 million, with projected gross revenues this year to exceed \$15 million. SEO currently has 71 employees, having added 44 in the last year. Slingshot's 150 clients include Valpak, United Healthcare, Interactive Intelligence, Ingersoll Rand, Exact Target, Wylie Publishing, Career Ed Corp, Volvo and FedEx.

Slingshot President Bailey acknowledges the lure of operating his high-tech

firm on the East or West Coast, but says Indiana offers the best environment for his fast-growing company.

“Operating in Indiana is a significant competitive advantage for technology companies, especially those within the measured-marketing space,” Bailey said at the announcement of his company’s expansion. “Indiana’s tech business environment is world-class, with a skilled workforce, supportive business leaders and growth-friendly policies. There’s no better place to grow a business like Slingshot SEO.

“High-tech companies like ours can start or grow a business anywhere, because our product is virtual. Though there were some draws to moving our business to the East or West Coasts, ultimately, we found Indiana to have the right business climate, cost structure and workforce to serve Slingshot well into the future. We are proud to continue to call Indiana home and are thankful for the support of our state and city leaders that make this place such a draw for business.

“This kind of supportive environment is why Slingshot SEO calls Indy its home.” 



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Kevin Bailey, Slingshot president

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