



## ***Halogen Designs***

There are many key factors in the success of a small business, which, when coupled with the challenges of day to day operations may become lost in the details. Robert Brockman at <http://nhvgllc.com> has mentioned in his blog that to be successful in business you need, "Competency, a Mentor, and dumb luck."

Maybe it was "dumb luck" but we know SCORE has helped us, Halogen Designs, develop our competency and play a key role as our mentor.



As two high school seniors we started Halogen Designs with a will and a dream to build beautiful websites; however, we lacked both capital and clients. In June we landed our first job for a couple hundred bucks from a grade school friend with a recording start up. Things were looking up. We spoke with a SCORE member in July that said he could provide free business counseling and had a colleague with experience working in our industry. My business professor and President of the 4-H Foundation had suggested SCORE as a valuable resource to small business as it is a free counseling service that produces great results.

The first month of working with SCORE helped us land 3 additional clients. Each following month we have doubled our income which has provided the much needed capital for product development and marketing. How did we do that? Harry Thompson, SCORE Counselor, explained the concept of an elevator speech, a 30 second summary answering who you are, what you do, and how you do it. He gave us the homework of emailing him a draft of our elevator speech and a short follow up; and then practicing cold calling on new prospects with it. Cold calling prospects is a daunting task for some, but we knew we were now equipped with the skills to succeed.

Beyond marketing skills, Harry and Bud Russell, SCORE Counselor, helped our decision making process. The first step for us was to analyze present and future needs along with their associated costs. From there we have made the decision to adopt project management software (Basecamp), customer relationship management software (Highrise), and accounting/invoicing software (Freshbooks). We kept our monthly costs down while allowing us access to efficient systems that have increased the value we can add to our customers. This strategic move has allowed us to grow while keeping the monthly business requirements low.

Halogen Design's work has been featured on the digital marquee outside Lucas Oil Stadium and also onto the jumbotron at multiple games. Our work has been featured at a Pacer's game and will be used to promote Jeff Saturday's Foundations with 30,000 poster's that can be purchased with a donation on game day. In thinking about our success so far, we feel hard work and great coaching has played the major role in the development of our company. What sets us apart is our attitude toward our clients. We make sure every client is completely satisfied before, during, and after creating the designs. We take corrective action immediately when necessary. Our clients can appreciate the fact that we support their business goals in a mutually beneficial way and that is why we receive repeat business.



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### **Free Tip:**

Social networking and blogs are a very inexpensive way to generate word of mouth and create a new buzz about your business. Writing 1 blog post a week for 4 months can significantly increase your traffic from Google and other major search players. There are many free online resources available that cover how to use the internet for business to consumer and business to business social networking. You can find more information at <http://halogendesigns.com/blog>

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