

HOME-BASED VENTURE SCORES IN CYBERSPACE.

S.C.O.R.E. ANNUAL REPORT

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Lougheed's endeavor began with LockHeed Guidance, a Web design and marketing firm. A need to show clients the advantages of using the Web lead Lougheed to form IndyLinks, a searchable online directory of all Web sites in her hometown of Indianapolis, Indiana. The site now comprises between 600 and 700 listings and has won awards including "Alive USA Web Site Picks '96."

Business is moving at lightning speed for Lougheed; she recently joined forces with another firm to create Advanced Marketing Technologies, L.L.c. (AMT). AMT is structured as a marketing company that combines domestic and international marketing expertise with the latest in Internet technologies. It now owns and manages IndyLinks, provides retail clients with completely turn-key Internet shopping operations and has created "product-focused" shopping malls such as 1st Stores, an international shopping mall devoted to the distribution of books, games, software, movies and music; and 1stLibrary.com, a site where authors can publish and sell their work around the world. In addition to fresh products, the merger connected her with partner Tim Jacobs, former president of an international reinsurance company and consultant to troubled European financial institutions. Jacobs is president of AMT, and Lougheed, vice president.

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SCORE, and specifically Bell, was instrumental in getting her Web-focused business off the ground and into cyberspace. She sought help, in particular, with marketing IndyLinks to other companies throughout the city. Lougheed says attending the Indianapolis SCORE Chapter's business start-up seminar put her on the right track.

Bell reviewed Lougheed's business strategies and provided her with useful contacts and business leads from his days as senior vice president of Indiana Gas, a natural gas utility. "Every week Bill had a new idea for a lead for me to check out," Lougheed said, adding that he handled publicity for IndyLinks and secured advertisements for the business in the local newspaper, which brought in numerous new clients. "The thing that impressed me about Bill was that he wasn't just another entrepreneur, he has a wonderful business background and credibility that made me feel secure. The caliber of his knowledge and support dealing with me was outstanding," Lougheed said.

The SCORE success taught both client and counselor something new. Lougheed learned how to use the marketing education and experience she had in a different way—gained in small business. And, Bell now knows about the Web. "This was very much a learning experience for me, too, and I appreciate what April can do for other business owners," Bell observed.

Lougheed will analyze business progress and discuss adjustments with Bell on a regular basis. "The encouragement I was getting from Bill, I wasn't getting anywhere else. He told me I had a great plan and a great idea in a great industry. I don't know if I would have stuck with it if I didn't have Bill with me."

April Lougheed runs her internet business out of her home. She credits SCORE counselor Bill Bell with getting her started. (Photo reprinted with permission of the Indianapolis Star, Gary Moore, staff photographer.)

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