

By Jim Brumm

LINK Creative

*Santa Rosa-based Web development firm
LINK Creative brings experience,
expertise, and passion to their clients*



The LINK Creative team: Jimi Conners, Ron Marcell,
and Wayne Ingraham

It has been said that when it comes to business, the Internet is the great equalizer. On the Internet a small business can look just as impressive as a large business and have the opportunity to compete on equal footing. But in order to compete and stand out in the hearts and minds of potential customers, a business needs a strong website, one that is highly visible to search engines, catches the eyes of visitors quickly, and is easy and intuitive to use.

Enter LINK Creative, a website development company in Santa Rosa, California that is not only leading the way into the future of Internet commerce, but improving it as they go.

Founded in 2002, LINK Creative is the brainchild of Wayne Ingraham, a talented artist and designer who understands that a great website is about more than flash and gimmicks—a great website needs to serve the owner as well as the visitors; it needs to authentically reflect the business it represents and welcome visitors in an attractive and interesting way; it needs to offer solutions and make it easy for people to make buying

decisions. It needs to tell the story of your business in a compelling way.

Ingraham, along with partners Jimi Conners and Ron Marcell, understand all this and more. They are experts at seamlessly incorporating design and technology into visually stunning, highly effective websites.

Ingraham may have been born into his destiny as a Web designer. His mother was a computer programmer back when that job title seemed futuristic. Ingraham's father was a craftsman. The combination of those two, said Ingraham, made him what he is today. "My mom taught me the logic and the structure; my father taught me the aesthetics." Ingraham got his first paid web design job in 1999 from a construction company and since then has amassed a long list of happy clients.

Ron Marcell, LINK Creative's lead programmer, shares Ingraham's vision for what a great website can do for a business. "We pride ourselves on being innovative, modern, and well-versed on current technology and trends," he said. "We always knew we didn't want to do average sites and we've worked hard to go above and beyond for our clients. Our designs are high quality and with our ability to do advanced programming we can offer clients things they didn't even know were possible."

Ingraham agrees: "There's the website the public sees, and then there's the website that's invisible but is just as important," he said. "This is an area where some other web design companies drop the ball. We can design a beautiful, interesting site *and* incorporate hidden features that greatly improve its functionality."

Jimi Conners is LINK Creative's project and marketing manager, and the critical third leg in the LINK Creative structure, bringing a background in graphic design and plenty

of enthusiasm. Conners left a position as program director at the Boys and Girls Club in Sonoma to Join the LINK Creative team. "I knew Ron and Wayne were the best in the business and I wanted to be a part of it. I could see they were making a better product than anyone out there."

Today LINK Creative has over 100 satisfied clients and business is growing as their reputation is passed by word of

with LINK Creative was an amazing experience," he said. "They helped us brand our online presence and created menus on our site that were easy to use, interactive and fun. LINK Creative not only made the experience easy, but created a user interface that is fantastically easy for our guests to use."

David Scott, of Scott Technology Group is another satisfied client of LINK Creative. "I contacted LINK Creative with a laundry list of fixes that we needed for our site. I'm extremely pleased with how quickly they accomplished what we wanted done, and with their level of professionalism. They were very responsive, knew exactly what we were talking about, communicated with us on every item every step of the way, and



content work with search engines, making it easy for customers to find the sites.

The team sits with each new client before starting work, to learn the client's vision and needs for their new website. The team members all agree that this initial meeting is one of the most important parts of the process. "Clients often don't know what is possible in a website. We help guide them through that; we show them what's possible, and let them know if they don't need something," said Conners.

LINK Creative can produce anything from a beautiful but simple brochure site that presents clients with information, to an interactive ecommerce site, capable of processing online payments, tracking visitors, selling products, updating inventory, scheduling and appointments. And they'll wrap it in a beautiful, original and innovative design that reflects the client's company, its image and goals.

"We always give our clients what we promise," said Ingraham, smiling. "Then we give them something better."

LINK Creative is located at
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mouth. Their downtown Santa Rosa offices are designed with an open floor plan in a room that blends modern equipment with rustic exposed wood beams and skylights. It's relaxing, but you can feel the creativity humming beneath the surface. Ingraham's enthusiasm surfaces when he talks about what they have created. "I love the challenges," he said. "Every day we're presented with a new and creative challenge, and every day I ask the question, how can I incorporate everything to best serve my client?"

The team at LINK Creative works hard to make their clients' experience as easy as possible. For example, they decided early on that instead of billing hourly for services, they would evaluate each project and work on a flat fee rate. "It's simpler for us and our clients," said Conners. "The client knows up front what the final cost will be, and we don't feel pressure to turn in a job before we are happy with it just to save money. Also, we won't sell them something they don't need."

Josh Silvers is the owner of The Three Squares Café in Santa Rosa and a client of LINK Creative. "Working

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made the process absolutely painless. Their pricing was very reasonable and we will definitely be working with them on future improvements."

Much of what LINK Creative automatically includes in each website they create—such as optimizing each site for mobile devices—is billed as a "special feature" by other companies. "The features others bill as extras are things we feel should be automatically built into every site," said Ingraham. "We consider them to be basic and essential, not expensive add-ons." The LINK Creative team also understands search engine optimization, and builds each site so that the structure and the

