



A laptop computer and a comfortable chair are often enough for Frederick Young, founder of Creative Business Systems, to do the job. Paul Lorenz / Register-News

Hard work, easy chair

Web designer finds he can handle business remotely

By PAUL LORENZ paul.lorenz@register-news.com

MT. VERNON — Check the local Yellow Pages, and you'll find two listings for Web Page & Site Design.

A Google search turns up sites which offer Web-site design — but not based in Mt. Vernon.

In essence, that's how Frederick Young wound up in Web-site design about two years ago. He was looking for someone to create a Web site which was more than just "text on a page" for his stationery business — and he couldn't find anyone with the know-how.

So Young, a graphics designer and onetime COBOL programmer, taught himself how to do it.

"I found out it was more profitable to build Web sites than to sell stationery," he said.

But the founder of Mt. Vernon-based Creative Business Systems has moved beyond just building Web sites; now he's teaching other people to build them.

"This is my first month of taking my developers into business," Young said. "It's exciting for me." One of those developers is Ben

ON THE NET:

Creative Business Systems:
www.wantwebsite.com The
Flash Web Master:
www.theflashwebmaster.com

Martin of Mt. Vernon.

Martin, 42, has been in business for himself for more than 25 years. He still runs a cleaning service which serves as "supplemental income," he said, and he worked in concrete construction for 19 years.

But the physical demands of that job were getting to be too much, he said. So with Young's help, Martin and his wife, Nancy, have launched their own Web design business, The Flash Web Master.

"It's a viable way to make a living, and it's interesting," Ben said. "And it's something you can do from home."

How does someone with no computer programming experience — like Martin — learn to develop animated Web sites which look like they might be complicated to put together? Web sites which feature interactive pages, graphic transitions,

prerecorded personal audio and video messages, and music soundtracks?

Young developed CD-based tutorials which show how to create the Web sites using JavaScript, the scripting language which "puts the life into" the site, he said.

And he gives the tutorials away to anyone who shows an interest because he wants to pass what he's learned on to other Web site developers, Young said.

"With the tutorials I've written, a person with limited computer skills can learn to build quickly," he said.

So far, three Web-site developers in this area, including the Martins, have learned the skills using his tutorials, Young said.

"I'd like to establish a team of programmers who can use JavaScript," he said.

Martin said The Flash is designing Web sites for three New Jersey-based businesses and is working with five other potential clients.

And that's another aspect of the Web design business. Young noted, its customer base is not limited by geography.

Another of his objectives,

Young said, is to "not just teach people how to build, but how to market." He's tried everything, he said, attending trade shows, going door to door to businesses, sending out e-mails, postcards and even CDs with sample Web sites on them.

"We've got a coupon campaign coming up in St. Louis," he said.

And how does Young make a living if he's giving away his tutorials?

In return for his tutorials and help, Young asks that his "students" invite their Web-site clients to host with him, he said. Web sites require "host" computer servers which are connected to the Internet, and Young is the administrator of one such Pennsylvania-based server.

Ever-faster computers and Internet connections are a big factor in Web-site design. In the Mt. Vernon area, Young said, a lot of people are starting to use broadband connections "even though I'm kind of working in the middle of the road so people with dial-up can use the sites, too."

"My ideas came first," he said, "and I'm hoping the technology can keep up."

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