

# puretalentreview

QUARTERLY NEWS AND PROMOTIONAL TIPS

## It's a New Year! Is it Time for a New Direction?



You have finally brought your small business through those difficult first years. You're established with a significant list of loyal clients and are generating a steady level of income to keep you out of the red. For that, you can consider yourself a success. Less than 50 percent of new businesses in the U.S. make it past the first three years. But is it enough? Or, are you ready to go to the next level.

You have a vision for a bigger and better business. With a valid plan and a way to finance your growth, you can propel your company to a higher level.

Set out to make a positive change. Evaluate your current situation – your products, services, customers, prices, marketing practices, customer services, delivery methods, etc. As a business owner, you may be required to let go of the old way of doing things and adopt something new and different. Are you

willing to say so long to people, products, services, methods, and even clients that aren't helping you grow. It may be the only way to achieve new and better results. Develop a plan to change any aspect of your business operation that doesn't help you realize your vision.

Assess your financial situation. You may need to be prepared to increase your investments in advertising, promotional materials and personnel in order to get your business moving in the right direction.

Remember to elevate your brand as well. Now that you're on the move to a bigger and better business, you have to make sure that your brand identity accurately reflects your growth and the new direction you are taking your business. If you want your business to be perceived as better than before, show that by improving your image and marketing materials.

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FreshBooks.com

## A Fresh Approach to Recordkeeping

Being an entrepreneur means wearing a lot of different hats. For some of us, the most dreaded hat of all is the one for record keeper. Keeping track of your time, expenses, invoices, and income can be a pain and an unwanted distraction.

After six years of searching for the right answer to my recordkeeping needs and wasting both time and money trying out different software packages, I've finally

found a perfect solution. FreshBooks.com is an easy to use and unbelievably affordable service. It has all the tools I need to manage projects, track time, send invoices and process payments effortlessly.

Tour FreshBooks.com where you can try it before you buy. You'll be amazed how easy and convenient it is. Spend less time on recordkeeping and more time doing what you do best!

## Recent Pure Talent Projects

**Client:** The Arc of the United States

**Project:** *inSight* Magazine

**Situation:** The Arc is a 50-year-old, grass roots organizations that is committed to providing support services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. The organization works to ensure rights, duties, responsibilities and full participation as citizens in their communities for anyone with these disabilities.

The non-profit organization publishes *inSight*, a quarterly magazine, to provide subscribers, members and constituents with up-to-date information on The Arc and issues involving intellectual and developmental disabilities. The 24-page, full-color magazine includes standing columns, feature stories and advertisements. It is mailed to the homes and offices of 75,000 recipients.

**Solution:** Pure Talent was recently awarded the design and layout for *inSight* and produced the Fall 2007 issue. The magazine design was enhanced to make it a dynamic informative piece that is attractive and engages its audience. It is easy to read and comprehend. The new magazine layout is designed to represent The Arc as a valuable and authoritative source of quality information for their constituents. The improved text-heavy layout gives the magazine more visual substance and professional impact.



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**Client:** Richard Elliott Enterprises

**Project:** Picture Perfect Banners Web Site

**Situation:** Already an established print production company, Richard Elliot Enterprises enhanced their product line with uniquely designed party and event banners that are customized to feature a photograph, the guest of honor's name, a custom message and relevant dates. A web site was needed to effectively present the different designs and to allow for easy ordering of the oversized banners which can be printed and delivered within two days.

**Solution:** Pure Talent designed a fun and colorful web site to represent the excitement the company is receiving over their creative banners. The web site design was targeted to appeal to party/event planners and consumers. This venue has increased orders for the company's unique banners. Visitors to the site at [www.pictureperfectbanners.com](http://www.pictureperfectbanners.com) can pick and choose different sizes, colors and materials for their customized party banner.



## Marketing Focus: Search Engine Advertising

### Google AdWords, Microsoft AdCenter and Yahoo Search Marketing

You're depending on your brand new web site to help grow your business but visitors aren't beating a path to your site. Simply building and launching a web site isn't enough to get the visitors you want. You must actively promote your site in as many ways as possible to get visitors. Over time, your efforts will help bring visitors to your site and improve your ranking in major search engine results.

One way to quickly get listed and drive visitors to your web site is with paid search advertisements. Popular search engines like Google, MSN and Yahoo, all offer search engine advertising where you pay for a guaranteed listings that will appear either at the top or right side on a search results page after a potential prospect types in your selected keywords. Search engine advertising, often called "pay-per-click" or "cost-per-click," allows you to control when and where your text ads show up in search engine results. You pay only when the searcher clicks your ad and is then directed to your web site.

**How it works:** You sign up with the search engine's advertising program and select the keywords or phrases you want your ad to show up with when searched. Next, you create your advertisement and set your spending budget. If you want your ads associated with popular keywords, you may have to out bid your competition for better placement. For instance, if you wanted to be listed first for the keyword phrase "wedding cakes" you can agree to pay 25 cents for that position. If you set your daily spending budget to \$1.00, once four visitors click your ad, it will stop appearing in the search results until the next day. Your competition, however, could easily come back and bid 27 cents to appear higher than your ad. If you're determined to stay on top, you could end up in a time-consuming bidding war.

**Effectiveness:** The effectiveness of search engine advertising depends heavily on a lot of different factors. An advertisement that works

to attract their attention and appeal to them may work effectively to get searchers to click your ad. Your web site must do its part to keep them interested and to entice them to place an order or a call. It is important to closely scrutinize the reports available from the search engines to determine if your spending is paying off with quality leads. If you're paying more to get visitors to your site than you profit from their visit, this type of advertising may not be for you.

**Level of Difficulty:** All of the popular search engines offer easy to follow wizards for setting up your advertising account and creating your ads. You can set your location, language and keywords then write your ad in a matter of minutes. The difficulty comes from developing a successful advertising message and determining an appropriate budget and the right keywords. Additional time and effort will be required for managing your advertising campaign and evaluating reports.

**Cost:** You can get started with any of the top three search engines for as little as \$5 to sign up and there is no minimum amount for your spending budget. As with all advertising methods, premium ad placement and frequency will require higher payments. The more popular the keywords you select the more your click rate will be. Google – the biggest and most popular search engine – is the most expensive but this avenue may provide the best results.

If you don't have a budget for a sustained search engine advertising campaign, you can still benefit from the quick results with a short one to two-month campaign. During that time, collect the names and email addresses of those who visit your site and use the information to continue communications with those prospects at a later date.

For more information and reviews on all the search engine advertising programs, visit [www.payperclicksearchengines.com](http://www.payperclicksearchengines.com).



*Go to Google.com and search on your best keywords. Take note of those sponsored ads that appear at the top and to the right of the page and get a quick picture of your competition. Check out their sites to determine what they are offering and how your products or services are better. Use that knowledge to develop your advertising message.*

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## Be Aware – The Taxman Bites

### Tax Laws that Small Business Owners Should Know

Take it from those of us who learned the hard way, the “I didn’t know” defense doesn’t work well with Federal or State tax collectors. Being in the know and following the rules is the only way to keep your business out of tax trouble.

Small business owners have a lot to worry about in running and growing their businesses with all the rules and regulations they have to follow. Elusive tax laws only add to that stress. Here are just some tax requirements many new entrepreneurs learn about the hard way.

**Self-Employment Taxes:** These are the taxes you pay if you earn more than \$400 as a self-employed individual, a sole proprietor or an independent contractor. This tax is currently equal to 15.3 percent of your revenue and must be paid by filing form 1040 Schedule SE.

**Information Returns:** These include 1099s and W-2s and are required to be filed if you make any “reportable transactions” during the year. Reportable transactions are payments of \$600 or more to any contractor, lawyer, accountant, etc. There are 109 such “reportable transactions” listed at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

**Estimated Taxes:** If you expect to owe more than \$1,000 in taxes on revenues from sales, interest, dividends, rental income, selling assets,

etc., the IRS wants their taxes paid in quarterly installments. Waiting to file on April 15th may result in late fees and penalties. Use form 1040-ES to file your taxes on time each quarter.

**Employment Taxes:** If you have employees, there are many rules for withholding and paying employment taxes. Those taxes include federal income tax, social security and Medicare taxes, and the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) taxes.

**Sales & Use Taxes:** Some states require you to collect and pay sales taxes on products sold within the state your business is located and to pay use taxes on purchases made outside your state. For instance, if you choose to purchase your office supplies online and have them shipped to you from another state, you may still be required to pay your own state a sales tax percentage on those purchases. Where these laws apply, you may need to obtain a “sales and use tax” license and complete and file taxes quarterly or twice a year.

Avoid unnecessary penalties and the wrath of the tax collectors by making sure to research all the tax and legal requirements imposed by federal, state and local agencies.

For more tax information and valuable resources for small business owners and self-employed individuals, visit [www.irs.gov/businesses/small/index.html](http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/index.html). Stay out of tax trouble by staying in the know!



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