

Mountain Valley Center

Date: September 16, 2006

Mountain Valley Center is a brick and mortar store in the Smoky Mountains of North Carolina. We sell gifts and services for Well Being. These include fountains, candles, meditative singing bowls, prayer flags, aromatherapy, and a variety of unique gifts that bring peace of mind to their buyers.

We had used 2 different SEO companies prior to going with eBrandz. Because we live in a rural area, we hoped that an SEO company would increase our website traffic and therefore our revenues outside of store sales.

I did a search on the internet and contacted about a dozen companies, including eBrandz. eBrandz website "just appeared" during my search.

The first SEO company we hired promised to optimize our home page and get one keyword (their choice) ranked as # 1 on 1 search engine. They chose the keyword "feng shui bells" and did get it ranked as # 1. The problem was, "feng shui bells" is a small keyword and the sale of these bells is less than 1% of our inventory. So, even though they did what they promised, we left them and looked around.

The second SEO company we hired required a large up-front fee and a yearly contract - to be automatically deducted from our credit card. They promised a thorough site optimization and to get #1 ranking on 10 keywords. Once we hired them, they optimized our home page and had to be talked into optimizing several sublobby pages. After 6 months, we were ranked # 1 in, you guessed it, "feng shui bells" in 10 search engines. When we spoke with them, they said that the contract said 10 # 1 rankings, but not 10 different keywords, and told us to "quit bothering them" because they were very busy with other clients. It took us another 4 months to get them to stop billing our credit card and refund a portion of our money.

With these first 2 companies, there was no significant increase in our web revenues or page rankings. We remained at a Google PR 2 with both companies. That's when we went on a search for another SEO company and found eBrandz. During the search, I spoke on the phone with about a dozen SEO companies, all who wanted up-front fees and yearly contracts, all who promised a lot but, after the first 2 experiences, I just did not trust them.

I found eBrandz, and signed up for several reasons:

1. At that time, eBrandz did not require a substantial start-up fee or yearly contract. The statement on the eBrandz website was basically "We will work for you and if you do not like our work, just stop paying

us. If you stop before a year, we retain copyright on what we have done". That seem very fair to me.

2. eBrandz offered reasonable entry and monthly fees, with options for expansion as we went along.

3. The first email from Milind asked me relevant questions, as if I were being evaluated by eBrandz to see if they could help us. I was very impressed and glad to answer the questions. An immediate rapport was established and I felt that eBrandz was selecting clients they could help and not just after the money.

After the unfortunately very poor service we received from American companies, I was ready to switch countries. It did not concern me at all that we were outsourcing to IND.

At the time we signed up with eBrandz our website had hit bottom. We had dropped off Google and our pages were not even being cached. Milind helped us problem solve through the situation, discovering that the Googlebot was not being given access to our website. We changed web hosting services to correct the problem. Then Milind and his team got to work. I remember each day saying things like "Wow", "This is great", "I can't believe this" as they looked at our entire site, suggested keywords, optimized pages, and began the link program. Not once did they mention keywords like "feng shui bells", instead they went for the big ones, like "Unique Gifts" and "Feng Shui".

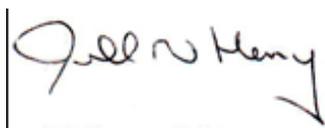
In my professional experience of 25 years in educational and business consulting, this was the first time I could honestly and constantly say "eBrandz exceeded my expectations once again." For the first time, a SEO company was looking at the scope of my entire site, and committed to raising the whole site up to the top. Any questions I had, or still have, are answered promptly and graciously. I feel like I now have an entire company working for my success.

We saw immediate improvement. Google found us again, cached our pages, and our PR began to move up. DMOZ found us again too! We see a continuing increase in web sales each year. Our Google Home page is PR is 5, pushing to go to 6, our sublobby pages are 4's and 5's and our product pages are mostly 4's. Customers looking for our products and services are finding us easily. We have now customized our products to our rankings, selling more fountains, salt lamps, tuning forks, and other products that we did not expect to be found by searchers on the web.

Within 5 months after signing on, our Christmas web sales doubled from the previous year. By June of the first year with eBrandz, (10 months after signing on) our web sales had exceeded web sales for the entire previous year. Our web sales now account for 60-75% of our revenue, depending on the time of year and have enabled us to maintain our store through the non-tourist winter months.

I am grateful every day for finding eBrandz. They have made the difference between our success or failure as an independent retailer. They have taken us from "small pond" to the "big ocean" and have us playing with the "big boys". For example, on a Google search for Unique gifts, Hammacher Schlemmer is ranked # 3 and we are on the same page at # 8. That's quite impressive. Another example: Last year Martha Stewart Living was looking for products to do a photo shoot on Sound Healing. They found us on the web! We shipped our products to New York for the photo shoot and were listed in the magazine afterward as the source for the products. People still are calling to order from the magazine after 1 year.

So, yes, I would and do recommend eBrandz to other companies.
Thank you all for who you are and what you do!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill Henry". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the right of a vertical line that starts at the top of the signature and extends downwards.

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