



The Visionary

One business's journey from the bat cave to the information superhighway

Ricardo Ortizcazarin is more than a web designer. As founder and CEO of Cazarin Interactive, he is a multimedia marketing maverick

From bi-fold brochures to comprehensive branding strategies, Ortizcazarin has positioned his business to be a one-stop-shop print and internet marketing powerhouse—and he started it all from his basement.

Ortizcazarin had already earned a master's degree in marketing and was establishing himself in the corporate arena when he decided to go it alone in 1998. "I was interested in marketing software integration, and in the potential of harnessing the internet," Ortizcazarin recalls. "I did some homework and presented the concept to some executives, but they said no. So I quit and worked from home in my basement—the bat cave."

While bold enough to make the entrepreneurial leap, Ortizcazarin took a more conservative and strategic approach to developing his business, choosing first to define his own niche and branding image. "We combined graphic design, programming, and marketing," he says. "When we put a website up, we built it with a software marketing approach, and we built in multiple capabilities. We are able to provide a complete suite of solutions for both internet and project management systems."

While helping his clients position themselves for growth, Ortizcazarin was doing the same for his own company. "We built a solid foundation, and we used new clients as case studies from a marketing perspective."

Today, Cazarin Interactive is defined by the "quality of the websites we build, our flexibility in design and our prices," Ortizcazarin said. Although the company was building a steady revenue stream, Ortizcazarin was

hesitant about expanding too quickly. "We were very cautious in terms of growth," he says. "In 2000 we had only six people on staff. Now we have fifteen."

Staying organizationally lean helped Cazarin weather the recession. "We experienced a pinch in 2009 and 2010," Ortizcazarin explains. "So we streamlined our workflow so that we could change how we worked with the same resources. We lowered our overhead, and today we are thriving. Innovation and invention are born out of necessity, but you have to stay grounded and focused," he adds.

Cazarin has grown into a full service web development company, responding to demand by providing search engine optimization and needs analysis. Ortizcazarin is committed to delivering the best product possible, and he places a priority on building a cohesive and creative team of professionals. "Our success is the product of dynamic teamwork," Ortizcazarin proudly proclaims on his website.

That team is Ortizcazarin's main focus in 2011. "We have a strategy for the next 12 months to provide the benefits our employees will need. January was a record month, so we are confident and optimistic."

Ortizcazarin also takes pride in the fact that Cazarin Interactive is a certified minority-owned business that supports and promotes collaboration, inclusivity and diversity both internally and with partner organizations. He is also an active philanthropist and the founder of One Act of Kindness, a charitable organization dedicated to promoting kindness, reflection, and gratitude. ■



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