

# Case Study: The Vanishing Web Company

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Guilty Party Catering started out as a little barbecue stand in Naperville. Nearly 15 years later, they've got a booming catering business on their hands. Currently, a large portion of their sales come from pharmaceutical representatives, who take lunches to hospitals and doctors' offices during sales calls. Over 90% of these reps interact with Guilty Party through their website. They can conveniently check the weekly menus and specials, and place multiple orders online easily. But it wasn't always that way.

## **Stranded!**

Guilty Party's original web company started out...okay. But the company wasn't always very helpful and frequently didn't respond to phone calls and emails. Suddenly last year, however, the company disappeared. Kaput. With no advanced warning, no notice of any kind. And when they vanished, they took control of Guilty Party's website with them.

Guilty Party was stranded. The website was still up and running...for the time being. But they couldn't access the site at all. The original web company completely shut down, and no one returned their phone calls or emails. They were stuck.

## **Finding a web solution**

The wife of Fred Greenwood, owner of Guilty Party, had used J&S Tech Designs to design her website, and she loved working with them. Although Fred also talked to two other local web design firms as well, in the end, he decided that J&S was the best fit for his company.

As Guilty Party's main go-to- person Robin Kulawiak explains, "First of all, we liked their personality. They don't talk to you like you should understand all their computer language. We're older, and we don't understand all that. They were easy-going about explaining and putting things into terms that we could understand.

"They brought us into their office for training, and they answered our questions over the phone. Susan actually wrote up a training manual for us – a paper copy, which I use all the time. We really liked that Jim and Susan were accessible when we needed help."

Even with J&S' help, Guilty Party never did get in contact with their old web company, and as a result, they had to buy a new domain name for their website. On the bright side, since they were starting over from scratch, Fred and Robin were able to explain to J&S everything they had always wanted to do with their site but weren't able to, and Jim took that information and ran with it.

## **Great results with new website features**

Now, thanks to the Content Management System on the website, Fred and Robin can easily update their website. They can keep the menu fresh and change their specials daily if they choose.

Reps can also place orders online now. Robin believes this has a big role in increasing their volume of sales. Many of the reps are in their 20's and 30's; they grew up with computers, and online ordering is as natural to them as riding a bike. The reps love that they can visit the website whenever it's convenient for them and place their orders for the whole month at one time if they like, without bothering with phone calls or even emails. The convenience of online ordering is undeniable.

Online ordering has also dramatically reduced the errors involved with order-taking over the phone. It's been a huge timesaver, too, reducing the need to keep the office staffed in order to handle in-coming calls and messages.

### **Still a work in progress**

Of course, Fred and Robin aren't quite done adding features to their new website. Designing a website is more of a process that naturally takes place over several months; as Fred and Robin become more comfortable with the site, they eventually start thinking, "Wouldn't it be nice if we could..." So they are working with Jim to continually improve the site. They'd like to ask for additional data from incoming orders, and to add additional information to their order confirmations. They also want to set up a system of emails that automatically respond to incoming orders (these emails are called "auto-responders."). But hands down, Fred and Robin love the results their new website has generated.

"Jim was able to put together a beautiful website for us," Robin says. "It's been working really well and it's very accessible. We're not computer geniuses. We didn't grow up in the computer age. So it has to be simple for us. And it is."

She continues, "Both Jim and Susan are down to earth. No matter how dumb you may think a question is, they never make you feel like you're not smart enough. They make you feel at ease. Very nice people to work with."

*To see Guilty Party's website, click [here](#).*

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