



Client Name: Rex PR
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TULSA – Facebook is no longer just for college kids socializing online.

“Facebook is a tool that is absolutely working to generate business,” said Ryan Rex, chief executive of Rex Public Relations. “It’s a great networking tool, a great way to catch up with old friends and a great way to drive business.” Rex said that concept was confirmed during the recent opening of Dave and Buster’s, the Dallas-based restaurant and arcade chain, in January. Launching a new restaurant is never an easy feat, especially during a time when economic conditions have forced people to reduce spending.

While preparing for the grand opening, Jen Clark, senior account manager with Rex PR, said their market research showed Facebook could generate an increased interest. Clark said the company’s national Web site was lacking the personal touch. So Rex PR encouraged Dave and Buster’s to launch a Facebook profile. She said they received instant responses ranging from people interested in menu items to those asking about job applications. Prior to the official opening, Dave and Buster’s held a charity event. Rex said tickets sold faster than any other opening in the company’s history, as well as for the VIP night.

“They have a niche, and that niche resonates with folks,” he said. “They used some of the social media tools, which are part of all the pieces of the puzzle that came together for the successful results.” In tough economic times often a company will reduce its marketing budget as it reduces its expenses. Rex said smart companies haven’t stopped marketing, but are utilizing the Internet more. “They are investing in tools that are a bit more cost-effective like mass media,” he said. “It’s the efficient and economical way.”

Dave Winders is principal at Blue View Inc., a marketing company that aims to leverage the shift from traditional media to new media. Many of his clients are in the

business-to-business realm. In the past 24 months, Winders said several executives have come to his company interested in new media marketing, Winders said.

“We are at a table with CEOs who are very concerned about what their competitors are doing online and what traction they are doing online,” he said. “In a new media environment small businesses can have a large reach, and large businesses can have a direct reach at the competitive level.” In economic uncertainty, Winders said he advises local business owners that going online provides a lower-cost model. New media also allows more direct communication with customers, he said. “For a retail business, Facebook isn’t just for fun – it’s a serious business,” said Winders. “By leveraging Facebook, clients can connect and create dialogue that is customer-based. They are realizing ‘I need to take Facebook seriously.’”

Though the Internet provides a free portal for anyone to access, Winders said it’s still relevant for companies to outsource their marketing. He said while new media is a fresh venue, it’s easy to get lost in the Web. Regardless of the platform, the basic marketing principles remain the same, Winders said. “Still have to start at the brand level and discuss who they are in terms of target market and segments,” he said.

“What we do is help people stay with their strategy, but with a digital focus.” Rex said there always will be a need for marketing. “You can do anything for free,” he said. “But to have the time and resources to get it done in an efficient, knowledgeable manner will always be a business that exists.”