

USE THE WEB TO YOUR ADVANTAGE:

ONLINE HELP FROM ROMA MOULDING AND ART-AND-FRAMING RETAILERS

The Internet can be a great tool for companies wanting to increase their exposure and find new ways to showcase their products and services. Today's consumers expect that they will be able to research something before buying it, so having an online presence is more necessary to a

clientele includes customers from across the country, as The Framer's Workshop recently received an order from a Boston resident who wanted his wedding photo framed with a frame he saw on the store's Web site.

Bennett says The Framer's Workshop Web site also serves as a great tool for educating her customers before they come into the store. "It gives our customers a frame of reference to begin with," she says. "It acquaints them with our products, services and staff and lessens the intimi-

to visit and drive them to our retail locations."

Alex Pejic, president of Sonic Boom Creative Media, a full-service interactive agency in Toronto, believes that art-and-framing companies who can connect with customers in the most timely and personalized manner have a distinct advantage. "Within the art-and-framing industry, we have come to learn that

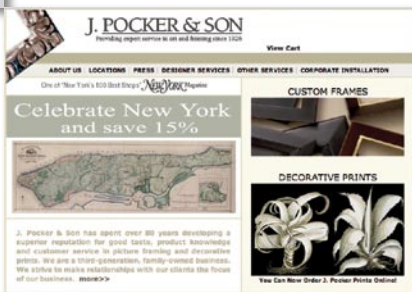
the consumer base is quite diverse in nature. The Internet gives all companies a real-time solution to ensure that customers get accurate, relevant and up-to-date information. It is a very cost-effective medium, especially in a catalog-based business such as the framing industry."

Roma Moulding is also using the Internet to better serve its customers. The company announced the official launch of its new interactive Web site at the West Coast Art & Frame Show in Las Vegas in January. After months of development, both Roma and its customers are thrilled with the new site's fresh look, user-friendly interface and easy navigation. The site also lets visitors view the entire Roma product line, register to become Roma customers, order corner samples and catalogs online, access an Advice Center with instructions on how

to join and care for frames and use an online store locator to find where they can purchase Roma products.

"The site was designed after consultations with many customers and extensive dialogue with our sales team to clearly define what our customers' needs were," says Mark Appleton, marketing manager for Roma. "For us, a Web site is not about flashy images and gimmicks; it is about using the latest technology to help make it easier for our customers to do business with us. The site was created to help bridge the gap between our retail customers and their clients."

Tony Gareri, vice president of sales and marketing for Roma, adds: "This is phase



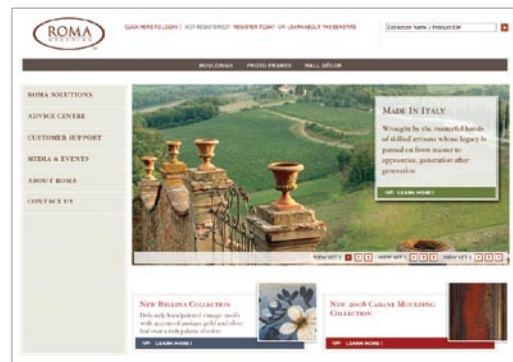
business' success than ever before. This is especially true for art-and-framing retailers, who are finding that Web sites are the perfect way to market and promote their visually oriented goods.

Kirstie Bennett of The Framer's Workshop in Berkeley, Calif., has seen a dramatic increase in her store's exposure and image since starting its Web site a decade ago. "The Web site gets about 400 unique visitors per day, and it's our most important marketing tool because most new visitors to our shop find us on the Internet," she says. "We also refer to our Web site in every issue of our monthly e-newsletter, and about 40 percent of those who open our newsletter click through to our Web site. The response is huge. With the use of these tools, we have built a solid, loyal customer base." This

dation factor of entering an unfamiliar store."

Robyn Pocker of J. Pocker & Son, a small chain of art-and-framing retailers with five locations in the New York City area, says her company's Web site allows people outside of its primary markets to access J. Pocker & Son's large framed-print inventory.

"The site lets customers see if they like our look and gives a taste of our inventory; it lets a customer see that we have been around for 80 years and have loads of industry knowledge," Pocker says. "We can give clients an open invitation



one of the site's development. Phase two will bring more easy-to-use features because the site is designed to continue developing, allowing us to add new features as necessary."

For more information on Roma Moulding's new interactive Web site, call 800-263-2322, or visit www.romamoulding.com.