

THE HIS+HER LOAN AS LOW AS 5.25% APR

yes you can INTRUST

EQUAL HOUSING LENDER | MEMBER FDIC

Search KansasCity.com Archives Historic Archives Web Search powered by YAHOO! SEARCH

Go

Welcome Guest  
Login | Register | Sign in to Classifieds

THE KANSAS CITY STAR  
Manage your account  
Click for special Star rates  
Subscribe to digital E★Star

Business > Emerging Business

Friday, Apr 25, 2008

## Emerging Business

Posted on Mon, Apr. 14, 2008 10:15 PM

email print reprint or license

AIM del.icio.us Digg it

### Best Practices: Event company shows its inventory thematically

By RUTH BAUM BIGUS  
Special to The Star

**Company:** Experiencing Imagination Inc., a theme and special event company, carries a wide array of theatrical and entertainment equipment. Customers include corporations, schools, churches and individuals.

**Telephone:** 816-257-0841

**Address:** 1600 N. Missouri 291, Sugar Creek. The company's main office is just outside of St. Louis in Illinois.

**Web site:**

[www.experiencingimagination.com](http://www.experiencingimagination.com)

**Employees:** Seven in Sugar Creek, plus independent contractors.

**Ownership/top management:** Company president and majority shareholder Robert Hollingsworth is based in Illinois. Mark Emerick, vice president of operations, is based in Sugar Creek.

**Challenge:** Enhancing new space and product presentation.

**Background:** In September, Experiencing Imagination moved into the caves in the Carefree Industrial Park just outside Independence. The move gave the company about 60,000 square feet, much more than its prior location.

"We moved underground primarily because of the consistent temperatures year-round, and it is better for our equipment," Emerick said. And with more than 18,000 items in inventory, the company needed the additional space.

However, the space didn't present well, Emerick said, "and we're big on presentation."

So, with an open house scheduled for January, Hollingsworth told the staff to make the most of the cavernous location.

"We had to figure out how to display our stuff so that people could really see what we do and what our capabilities are," Emerick said.

**Action steps:** The staff decided to make the four offices look like independent buildings, including a two-story home and a general store. The men's restroom entrance was outfitted to look like the outside of a barber shop and the women's restroom like a beauty shop.

Theatrical backdrops on the walls focus on various themes — western, a haunted house, winter with Santa, Wizard of Oz and NASCAR — to show off what the company offers.

"We also used props that go along with the backdrops," Emerick said. "We wanted to immerse customers so that when a client comes in they feel different. It gives you the feeling what you are somewhere else."

The staff painted other walls and ceilings and insulated the area themselves. The changes cost about \$17,000, Emerick said.

**Results:** The renovation was completed in time for the company's January open house.

Emerick said that by displaying what Experience Imagination can do, "it gives us instant credibility when people come into the office. They know what we can do for them."

Emerick said business has increased about 33 percent since the move.

The change also lifted the spirits of staff.

"They're proud to show what we can do," Emerick said.



Event coordinator Cullen Maday (left) and Jeff Johns adjusted one of the Experiencing Imagination displays at the company's location in the caves of the Comfort Industrial Park.

- Top Jobs
- Cars
- Real Estate
- Rentals
- Local Shopping
  - KC Auto Deals
  - ShopLocal
  - Newspaper Ads
- All Classifieds
  - Create an Ad
  - Find an Ad
  - Pets

- News
- Columnists
- Sports
- Entertainment
- Video | Photos
- Business
  - Columnists
  - Companies
  - Consumer News
  - Emerging Business
  - MoneyWise
  - Star 50
  - Technology
  - Workplace
- FYI/Living
- Star Magazine
- Opinion

**EXTRAS**

- Press Release Central
- Past Articles
- The Star's Front Page
- Local Traffic
- Maps & Directions
- Yellow Pages
- Local Coupons
- Discussion Boards
- Visitor's Guide
- Weddings
- Hemingway
- The Star in Education

**SERVICES**

- Commercial Printing
- RSS
- Place an Ad
- Contact Us
- Advertise
- About The Star
- Code of Ethics
- Star Speakers Bureau
- Star Awards
- Star Tours
- The Kansas City Store



Reliability. Quality. Integrity.

Priest PROPERTIES

Office Warehouse for Lease.

Multiple sizes  
Multiple Locations.

Click here to visit our website

Home Equity Line of Credit

4.50% APR THEN Prime  
2-year Fixed Rate (currently 5.25% APR)

No closing costs • No annual fees

nudge SWITCH LOCK

Details UMB Count on more.

CAPTURE YOUR AUDIENCE  
Advertise Here. Align your ad with KansasCity.com articles. Contact 816-234-7900 for details today!

VILLA DECOR  
Furniture & unique accessories for your home