

Virtual Tour

Highlights Second-Place Web Site

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Designing memorable images for clients is Edge Communication by Design's forte, and that attention to detail in its Web site has earned the company second place in *The Northern Colorado Business Report's* annual Cyberstars competition for best Web sites. Theresa Fogle, principal and creative director, said the Web site *think-edge.com* has helped increase awareness of the company and conveys its brand and passion. Fogle founded the branding design firm in October 2001.

"Our primary focus is in creating corporate branding," she said. "Edge tends to attract technology clients. They're peppered around the U.S."

The company's Web site is only four months old, launched Aug. 1.

"It was quite an undertaking," Fogle said. "It was in production for several weeks."

In the last three months, it has averaged 2,700 hits per month. The site will cost under \$500 to maintain annually, she said.

It was designed by Michael Selto, a Web designer and developer in Denver.

"When I select talent, I choose the person who I think is the best fit, and then let them go," Fogle said. "I had worked with Michael on a few assignments, so I left much to his interpretation. He did a fabulous job."

Edge's Web site is very interactive. "There's a lot of stuff to play with," she said. "When people visit the studio, they connect with certain objects—such as a lava light."



GOT THE EDGE — In second place in this year's Cyberstars competition is www.think-edge.com, the Web site for EDGE Communication by Design.

An image of a lava light becomes a button to take the visitor deeper into the site. "It's a virtual tour of the studio," Fogle said. "There's a vase of flowers that functions as a button to take you to a different section. I always like having beautiful things around."

And the site was designed to be a very playful place. "I wanted it that way to help clients feel comfortable," she said. "A lot of business people stop practicing creativity when they're kids so they don't trust their judgment. The web site and studio help

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them to know it’s OK to have fun and enjoy themselves.”

A laptop computer image on the site leads to frequently asked questions, while a conference table image leads to the portfolio section with examples of corporate identities that the company has crafted.

Technologically, the site is large and requires a heavy download. But the company’s clients and potential clients are corporations that can handle that increased download, according to Fogle.

“There is a lot of Flash,” Fogle said. “We shot the studio with a digital camera and Michael built the site. It’s code-intensive and makes excellent use of the technology.”

“We create brand images and those images need to communicate the spirit of our clients’ organizations, so a lot of thought went into our Web site,” Fogle said. “Designing your own collateral is always the hardest.”

Before launching EDGE Communication by Design, Fogle was most recently Senior Design Director with Duke Communications International, (now Penton Media, Inc.) in Loveland, Colo.

Selto said the EDGE Communication by Design site was constructed in Flash. “It’s a plug-in that’s used with a regular browser to display animated content,” he said. It has more dynamic moving elements.

Flash is being increasingly used on Web sites according to Selto. “It’s unbeatable for dynamic content and is more respected by users,” Selto said. “It’s becoming a standard now. I use it in pretty much everything I do.”

The Flash site requires a plug-in for browsers, but about 90 percent of browsers now run it. “It’s independent of browsers,” Selto said.

“The idea was that Theresa is proud of her studio. It tells a lot about her personality. We wanted to convey that in the Web site, so we used the studio as the



GAYLON WAMPLER

Photographed in the EDGE studio, Theresa Fogle, founder and creative director, said the Web site *think-edge.com* has increased awareness of the company and conveys its brand and passion.

main actor in the site,” he said. “One of the first things she mentioned to me was that she wanted a virtual tour.”

Selto decided to be creative and make the tour the main element of the site, not just a sideline.

“The tour itself is the main interface of the site. Objects within the studio represent dimensions of the site,” he said.

Selto, who’s been designing web sites for about two years, said he used a digital camera and software to photograph the studio and then used Flash to build the site.

“In this site the interface work is on objects in the studio and you can move around and click on them. That’s an easy, fun way for the tour to operate.

The main idea was to let the user in on Theresa’s personality,” Selto said. “She likes to have clients come into the studio and hang out and drink coffee. It’s a big part of her.” ■

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