

Robert Fiveash and Danny Rosin co-founders, Brand Fuel

When Danny Rosin and Robert Fiveash cofounded Brand Fuel (*asi/145025*) in February 1998 (then called Clockwork Advertising) they couldn't have imagined that in less than three years the firm would climb to the top 4% of the promotional products industry in terms of revenues. They attribute their success to three factors: industry experience, a sound financial basis and a team of creative professionals.



That team, in the last year alone, has grown by 20%, commensurate with Brand Fuel's revenue growth. The staff additions were made to reinforce a Web services department, fulfillment division, sales/sales support teams and accounting. "Brand Fuel has taken a more focused marketing approach to Internet opportunities and to our existing larger clients," Rosin says. "The approach is working, and with the added sales, especially to the larger clients who expect more than 'just a price,' we have carefully chosen to enhance those departments."

Though technology has replaced the need for staff in some firms, Brand Fuel uses it as an opportunity to free staff for more relationship-building activities with customers. Rosin and Fiveash alleviate their staff's workload by adding new technology, but have never used increased efficiency as a reason to reduce personnel. "We have never had to downsize, fortunately," Rosin says. "Hiring the right people has made all the difference."

Keeping work in-house to maintain control over quality is also very important to Brand Fuel. "Occasionally, we do nominal outsourcing and we do so because a department is overloaded or there is a challenge that we know is not our core competency. We do this with our art, IT, fulfillment and marketing/PR departments," says Rosin.

The approach is nimble and savvy for a demanding client base – a good example of smart management of resources. – TCK

