

Pinkerton South: A New Brand-Driven Agency Opens in Myrtle Beach

MYRTLE BEACH, SC - (April 10, 2007) Two former directors from LHWB Advertising & Public Relations have opened their own Myrtle Beach-based branding, advertising and communications agency under the name Pinkerton South, Inc.

Pinkerton South co-founders and industry veterans David Benardo and Bonnie Rodgers made their startup official this week, announcing their young agency's newest client: Firefly Cove, an exclusive community being developed by Exciting Adventures, Inc., on the banks of Lake Lure, North Carolina. Print & interactive campaigns are in the works, with national and regional ads rolling out into carefully targeted media.

"We're out to create an agency that fully leverages the power of creativity on behalf of its clients. There are untapped opportunities for Carolina businesses to create buzz, to build brand equity and gain market share...particularly in the hospitality, real estate and financial services sectors," said Rodgers in a recent statement. "When the ad isn't memorable to begin with, media saturation can actually backfire. Research has shown that effective creative content can deliver up to a 500% better response."

The partners say they've set their sights on servicing clients with agile, experienced teams that will focus on a limited number of accounts. Benardo says the time was right to launch their own shop. "There's sort of a shift going on in the industry, combined with unprecedented growth along the Grand Strand," he says. "Although it used to be enough to simply get the word out, our clients are looking for ways to differentiate, to out-think their competitors rather than outspend them."

David Benardo was recently selected as a judge for the 2006-2007 Savannah, GA, Addy Awards. Sponsored by the American Advertising Federation, Benardo was one of three experts asked to determine the best among the advertising and marketing campaigns from the area's top creative firms including the Savannah College of Art and Design's senior students.

Partners Rodgers and Benardo have been an award-winning creative team for two decades, since their 1987 launch of Rodgers Benardo Design in Berkeley, California. The couple moved to Myrtle Beach in 2004, accepting creative and senior art director positions with Lesnik, Himmelsbach, Wilson and Hearl Advertising & Public Relations.

"Our experience at LHWB gave us the opportunity to get to know Carolina businesses, and for that we'll always be grateful," says Rodgers. "But once you've had your own firm, it's difficult to think any other way. We like to work very closely with clients, and needed to get back to what we do best." While on staff locally, they developed campaigns for the Burroughs & Chapin Company, HTC/Cingular, McLeod Health and Centex Homes.

When Kerry MacInnes, Director of Marketing for California-based Neon Software, learned that the two had reformed their own agency, she immediately tapped them for project work. "Rodgers and Benardo are one of the best creative teams out there," MacInnes said. "They welcome collaboration, and routinely come up with outstanding business-building solutions."

About Pinkerton South, Inc.

Pinkerton South is a branding and advertising consultancy that partners with companies to increase market share through strategic and creative thinking. Our focus lies in creating vivid brand-anchored communications that resonate in the heads and hearts of people who matter. With the expertise of 20+ years

experience each, Pinkerton South principals have helped build the success of clients including Exclusive Resorts, Microsoft, Wells Fargo, Adobe Systems, Il Fornaio Restaurants, Creative Kingdoms, LucasArts, PeopleSoft/Oracle, Electronic Arts, Fireman's Fund Insurance, Retrospect Software, Alhambra Water, and America Online.

Contact:

Bonnie Rodgers, partner
Pinkerton South, Inc.
843-455-2626
bonnie@pinkertonsouth.com
<http://www.pinkertonsouth.com>

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