

# *Exclusively*<sup>®</sup> S E R I E S

Harford  
County  
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Benefiting  
Community Foundation  
of Harford County

Developing a website in today's business world requires knowledge and expertise across multiple disciplines. Creative graphic design, precise search engine positioning and skillful marketing must all work together to keep up with the nuances of a continually evolving World Wide Web. The goal is two-fold: (1) drive prospects to the website and (2) convert them to paying customers.

WSI WebSpecialist, part of the world's largest provider of Internet services to small- and medium-sized businesses, opened its Harford County office in 2006. WSI is a global company with 1200 franchise offices in 87 countries. Local owner Jeff Harrison looks at the entire process of website creation with an eye toward bringing maximum return on investment (ROI) to the client. "We are not just website developers or website designers," he says. "We are Internet

*"We are not just website developers. We focus on driving ROI, and...work with clients after the site is built to make sure that happens."*

marketing consultants. We focus on driving ROI and continuing to work with clients after the site is built to make sure that happens."

WSI uses a technique called "conversion architecture" to analyze a client's target customers and create profiles based on their behavior and objectives. This information is then used in the layout, design and content of the website.

"Conversion architecture says, 'Let's create a site that no matter what page somebody lands on, they will be encouraged to take the next step—make a purchase, sign up for your newsletter, contact you or whatever you want them to do,'" Mr. Harrison explains.

WSI provides hosting services for both email and websites, as well as professional management of pay-per-click advertising, social media positioning, email

marketing, and YouTube video optimization. The Harford County office specializes in search engine optimization (SEO).

Customers who contact WSI appreciate minimal wait times and top-notch customer service. While the WSI network offers an extensive array of service providers, Mr. Harrison likes to support local businesses and sole proprietors, frequently bringing in talented Harford County graphic designers and copy writers for a more personal touch on these critical project components. Abingdon programmer Pam Hardy provided such exceptional value in terms of expert trouble shooting and programming—and customer support—that she is now an integral part of the WSI team.

Looking into the next decade, Mr. Harrison predicts a trend toward more mobile applications. People will increasingly access websites and company information through their mobile devices instead of their computers and laptops. This trend is already evident with social media websites, and web developers are called to come up with more products that work well on small devices.

Being part of the WSI network includes access to proven technologies and an extensive pool of knowledge that is not typically available to the average website developer. "If I come across a project that is unique to a particular industry or otherwise unfamiliar to me, I know that I have plenty of tried and true resources close at hand," Mr. Harrison says.

Because of this relationship with the WSI franchise system, Mr. Harrison's team is uniquely positioned to provide clients with a web presence that works—one that drives qualified traffic to their website and then turns those visitors into buyers.

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