

Freshman establishes Club Nash Web company

By Allison Slijepcevic
STAFF WRITER

Freshman Andy Tabar's dream is to retire early, and with an Internet business that is so busy he needs interns, his dream has a good chance of becoming reality.

Tabar has been building Web sites since he was 13, and in May he will launch his most inventive site yet. Club Nash is Tabar's version of the Yellow Pages for Nashville. The site is geared to inform users about local hot spots and well-known independent businesses that are native to Nashville.

"Nashville isn't just country," he said. "That's what Club Nash is about. Whether young or old, something is on there that they will like. I'm all about establishing a local deal, and connecting with the community."

Club Nash promotes businesses by listing them for free on the Web site. Venues can boost their listing rank and create a custom business page with information like working hours and specialties for a fee. Tabar said this is a great way for smaller venues to offer coupons and become known in Nashville.

"AOL isn't Nashville and City Search isn't Nashville," Tabar said. "This is an independent source of where to go in Nashville. Club Nash is the most local form of the Yellow Pages, including who to meet and where."

As an entrepreneurship major, Tabar used the Student Business Hatchery to continue developing his multi-faceted business. He works with top-notch clients like a producer from *The Discovery Channel* and *Animal Planet*, Seeker's Coffee House and The Oneders from the Tom Hanks film "That Thing You Do." Tabar said he doesn't limit himself to one area, and does everything from creating unique Web sites to providing server maintenance.

"It's straining because I'm doing everything myself. The hardest part is setting your priorities; I'm doing all right with that now. Nobody can do something as well as yourself," Tabar said.

Tabar gets support from other student entrepreneurs at their weekly roundtable meetings, as well as his professors. Eventually he would like to have about 15 people to work for his company and is looking for people with skills in Internet technologies, design, sales and marketing. Tabar said the most important quality in a co-worker is their ability to step up to the plate, instead of waiting for something to come to them.

"My focus is the Internet stuff; I want to

Getting there

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create the next buzz of social networking online. I'm not afraid of working with people who can contribute cutting edge material in other areas better than me," Tabar said.

While entrepreneurs don't have to go to school for their profession, Tabar said he values knowledge and looks to the chair of the center for entrepreneurship, Dr. Jeffrey Cornwall, for help to perfect his business. Tabar said he wants to position his business as a premium service unlike other businesses that create \$500 Web sites.

"The success rate doubles for [students] who've been educated in the process of entrepreneurship," Cornwall said. "When I first started my business back in the 80s, I had no formal training. We learned from experience, and from help and advice from other entrepreneurs. Now there are things we can teach entrepreneurs to improve their chance of success."

Besides education, Tabar's main key to success is starting early. He said most people say that when they graduate they will start a business, but by starting a business now, they can encounter experiences and fine tune their abilities. He said starting your own business takes great creativity, but he believes good things will happen for people who do, like setting their own salary.

"If you have a dream, start now. Waiting an extra day or week to start something, it will never happen. If you really want something, pursue something, you're capable of getting what you put into it," Tabar said.

Tabar encourages young entrepreneurs to begin their careers as soon as possible, but Cornwall warns new entrepreneurs of impulsive business ideas that are doomed for failure. Cornwall said businesses fail for two reasons. He said some students have the ready, aim, fire syndrome and start up a business without a plan. He said others don't anticipate what a business will need as it grows, and they must devise basic business standards to support their enterprise.

"What I found to be true is that your biggest struggles and temptations to quit happen right before your biggest successes," Tabar said. "You just have to keep running forward, find motivating experiences and eventually perseverance will feel automatic."

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Additional Information

The Web site for Club Nash directs students and others to networking opportunities.