

Learn how a local couple listened to their inner voices
and built a fast-growing advertising studio.

By ANDREW MCNAMARA
Photography by BIG DREAMZ CREATIVE

With the recent popularity of television series like *Mad Men*, advertising and creative development firms are increasingly associated with sleek urban settings and a professionalism only found in big and bustling cities like New York, Chicago or Los Angeles. However, take one step inside Big Dreamz Creative and you'll quickly find that passionate creativity isn't bound by big city limits. Located in historic downtown Prattville, this burgeoning new media design and production studio just might be one of the River Region's best-kept secrets.

Field of D



Nancy and Tommy Fields

An Unassuming Start

Founded in 1999 as a part-time business based out of the spare bedroom of owners Tommy and Nancy Fields, Big Dreamz is relatively young by today's business standards. However, the business has grown by leaps and bounds since its humble beginnings, maturing over the last decade into one of the few fully-integrated design companies in the area. Initially conceived as primarily a videography business, Big Dreamz has seen a score of name changes in its young life, each evolving to reflect the addition of every new creative service offered. The company now offers a distinctive experience for clients, with a broad range of creative services including videography, product photography, copywriting, web design and concept development. The ability to handle all phases of the creative process in-house also helps Big Dreamz stand out within a crowded industry. "We're unique in that we can take it from square one all the way through production and distribution," said co-owner Tommy Fields. "We're able to come up with original art, scripts, concept development and creative strategy."

Though you might not have heard of Big Dreamz before now, you've undoubtedly seen



REAMZ



Top: Each year Big Dreamz Creative films the Montgomery Biscuits on the green screen to create the player intros.

Above Left: Filming medical videos for patient education, virtual tours and online marketing.

Above Right: Capturing breast cancer survivor stories for the Joy to Life Foundation.

Left: B.A.S.S. founder Ray Scott reviews footage of the day's shoot.

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN SCHOOL



www.trinitywildcats.com

1700 East Trinity Blvd. • Montgomery, AL 36106
334.213.2100

Academics

A full college preparatory curriculum is offered to all Trinity students, including programs in technology, foreign language and visual performing arts.



- *Advanced Placement and Honor classes are offered in 24 areas*
- *65% of Trinity students elect to enroll in Advanced Placement and Honors classes*
- *100% of Trinity graduates continue their education at the College or University level of learning*
- *39 Duke University TIP Scholars*
- *2009 Envirobowl Regional Champions*
- *2009 Middle School Scholars' Bowl ASCA District Champions*

Nondiscriminatory statement as to students:

Trinity School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origins to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Trinity School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national or ethnic origins in any of the educational policies, scholarship programs and athletics, and other school-administered programs.

"Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not part from it." Proverbs 22:6



Big Dreamz uses a variety of equipment including HD cameras, the GlideCam Smooth Shooter and the CamCrane 200.

their work already. In addition to working with Baptist Health, the Joy to Life Foundation and Prattville High School's "Every Fifteen Minutes" anti-drunk-driving campaign, Big Dreamz provides exclusive creative work for the Montgomery Biscuits baseball team. They are responsible for all of the player video intros seen at home games, and they also supply creative work for Big Mo's Dugout and the Biscuit Basket gift shop. Tommy even served as the Biscuits' on-field announcer for their first two years.

Not always the proud owners of a creative studio, Tommy's and Nancy's complementary talents were sharpened during their previous careers. Tommy honed his video production and editing skills while serving as the creative services director at a local television group, and he learned much of his audio production and editing skills while serving as on-air talent for local radio station Y102. Working primarily for non-profit groups, Nancy's background is in advertising and graphic design, and her addition as a partner in 2006 saw Big Dreamz truly come into its own as a fully integrated design studio.

Though having Nancy and Tommy as Big Dreamz's only two full-time employees presents various challenges, they appreciate the opportunities their company's size provides them. "We really enjoy creating personal partnerships with our clients and getting them involved," Nancy Fields explained. "It's also nice that our client's message doesn't get diluted by passing through several different channels." Possibly the biggest challenge Big Dreamz has faced so far, according to Tommy and Nancy, is educating the surrounding community about the assortment of services they provide.

High-Tech but Full of Heart

The Fieldses are also quick to acknowledge the role technology plays in leveling the playing field within the creative industry. "The Internet is great," Tommy said. "Because of the Internet and social media, the world has become a much smaller place. Clients don't feel like they have to go to the coast or Chicago, and we're not limited to Prattville." Thanks in part to technology and plain ol' word of mouth, Tommy and Nancy's client base includes businesses from

Houston to Orlando and even Alaska.

With all of the challenges facing small business owners come also ambition and a sense of optimism for the future. "Aside from growing our company and taking on additional projects," Nancy said, "one of our main goals is to assist people in learning how to be creative. We want to show people that they are creative."

With Tommy and Nancy at the helm, Big Dreamz Creative has won numerous awards for work in a variety of categories, ranging from web design and video work to photography, often competing with firms who specialize in only those areas. "Probably one of our most valued achievements," Tommy said, "was in 2008 when a client of ours nominated us for the Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Year Award."

Success hasn't gone to their heads, and the husband-and-wife team never forget their motivation for founding the company. "Working with non-profits is one of the reason we started Big Dreamz," Nancy said. "We wanted to make dreams happen for other people, not just us." The early days of the company often saw them providing services free of charge, and they now offer reduced prices for nonprofit organizations. "Our pricing structure for nonprofits is different than for our commercial clients," Tommy said. "We do our best to work with nonprofits because often the people who need it the most can afford it the least." Assisting nonprofits in realizing their creative message isn't the only way Big Dreamz is giving back to the community. The Fieldses often sponsor local youth sports teams, and 2010 marks the third year in a row Big Dreamz will sponsor a team in the local chapter of the Miracle League, a group that affords mentally and physically handicapped children and adults the opportunity to play organized baseball.

With Nancy and Tommy's contagious enthusiasm and passion for creativity, it's unsurprising they've developed such a loyal client base. Their story, the Big Dreamz Creative story, is a testament to the power of a fierce determination and an innovative spirit. It's hard not to believe all their big "dreamz" will soon come true. ML



Dr. Laurie Weil and Kathy Sawyer reflect on the 20th Anniversary of their program, Camp Sunshine, in the Big Dreamz studio.

Contact **big dreamz creative**
www.bigdreamz.com
www.facebook.com/bigdreamzcreative
http://twitter.com/createdreamz

Churchill

Come Visit Our Facility at
395 Ray Thorington Road



Serving Bright Children With Unique Learning Differences, Grades K-12

ACADEMY

Founded 1996

What Our Parents Say

We feel truly blessed to have our son Spencer at Churchill Academy. He receives specialized instruction by the most dedicated teachers we have ever met. He is allowed to work at his own level and his self-esteem has greatly increased! Last year Spencer hated to get up and ready for school. Now he says, "Churchill is the best school in the world."

-Gayla and Dupree Harvey, parents of Spencer Harvey

At Churchill, Kathryn is provided with every opportunity to realize her full potential. The Churchill environment is one of partnership, cooperation and fellowship for all of us. I could not ask for more than this for my daughter.

-Laura Chew, mother of Kathryn Bowden



Now Enrolling for Fall 2010

Call Today and schedule an appointment with our director,
Lisa Hanlon Schroeder, M. Ed., Director

Churchill Academy was founded in 1996 to educate the many children in Montgomery and surrounding areas with unique learning differences. These children have diagnoses that range from Attention Deficit Disorder to Learning Disabled to Gifted! Each of them are capable of becoming successful students. The Academy is designed for students with average to above average intelligence who are currently functioning at a lower academic level than their estimated potential. We offer a supportive environment and individualized academic programming that teaches to strengths, addresses to weaknesses and encourages strategies for improvement.

Please call 270-4225 for information.
Churchill Academy, 395 Ray Thorington, Montgomery, AL 36117

Churchill Academy affords equal opportunity in education to appropriately diagnosed students aged 5-20, regardless of color, creed, national origin, race, religion or sex.

www.churchillacademymontgomery.com