

What Great Recession?

Focus Media Continues To Grow

Many companies slashed their advertising and public relations budgets when the economy tanked in 2009, but others doubled down and came out stronger with Focus Media as a partner.

"In '09, '10 and '11, we were one of the fastest-growing companies in the country," says Josh Sommers, the company's president and CEO.

"I think that there was such a desire for companies to weather the storm that we ended up picking up a lot of work during that time. We helped a lot of companies survive and grow during the Great Recession."

Focus Media, a full-service public relations and advertising firm serving the Hudson Valley, was named the fastest-growing agency in the eastern United States by PR Week in 2011. The company followed that up by being listed as one of Inc. magazine's fastest-growing privately held companies in the country in 2012.

Sommers, a former radio programmer and executive, started Focus Media in 2002 in Goshen.

"I thought the Hudson Valley was an underserved market for public relations and marketing counsel to companies," Sommers said. "There were other companies that did advertising and PR, but I just felt that it was an opportunity to take it to a new level."

"There's never been a firm of our size and scope in the Hudson Valley before that's in our business. We created a model that was very much needed in the region, to create a firm that brings Madison Avenue quality to the Hudson Valley and I think we filled a major void that was here."

Sommers said his team is comprised of communications experts, including former award-winning journalists, marketing executives and graphic designers. Former television sportscaster Tony Morino is the company's senior vice president of client services and has been with

Sommers almost from the beginning.

"We've had a lot of success with Ulster County Tourism and I attribute much of that to him," Sommers said.

The company now boasts 20 employees and maintains a satellite office in the 721 Media Center in Kingston.

"We think it's important to have a place where we can conduct business in Ulster County," he said.

Focus Media serves more than 40 clients, including Ulster County Tourism, Ulster County Office of Economic Development, Orange Regional Medical Center, Hudson Valley Economic Development Corp. and MetroVac, just to name a few.

If your company needs help with a website, public relations, advertising, graphic design, search engine marketing or social media, Focus Media can help.

"We're a full-service agency," Sommers said. "Whatever a company may need related to marketing, we do it all and we do it all in-house. Because we're a full-service agency, we're able to approach a client's needs in a much more comprehensive and holistic way."

"We're not a PR firm that dabbles in advertising or a marketing firm that dabbles in PR, but we're able to find the fastest way to Point B for a client by working in a diversity of areas."

In today's market, that means a lot of video and social media.

"We write and direct a lot of video," Sommers said. "Video is one of our biggest tactics that we recommend. We have a close, strategic partnership with Ellenbogen Creative Media. Social media and how to best leverage it is integrated into all of the work we do."

Sommers said the feedback he gets is positive and the proof is his continued growth.

"I think [clients] recognize that a marketing firm should

MEMBER PROFILE

"I think the Ulster Chamber is an exemplary organization when it comes to advocating for issues that are important to Ulster County and the entire region."

– Josh Sommers



do a lot more than just make pretty ads," he said. "We really try to understand what adds dollars to the bottom line and what results in success. Then we do our work. I think clients like that approach."

"We're constantly ensuring that we're distributing news about ourselves and our wins and the good success that our clients have and that has resulted in us being at the top of the list when people are looking for any type of marketing help in the region."

Sommers said the Chamber has helped him connect with Ulster County clients and promote his business, but his appreciation doesn't stop there.

"They're always willing to connect us with opportunities that fit our type of firm," Sommers said. "I also have found the Chamber to take very strong stances on important government-relations issues and I think it's very important for a Chamber to do that."

"I think the Ulster Chamber is an exemplary organization when it comes to advocating for issues that are important to Ulster County and the entire region."

Focus Media, at 10 Matthews St. in Goshen, can be reached at (845) 294-3342 or www.focusmediausa.com. The company also has a satellite office in the 721 Media Center at 721 Broadway in Kingston.