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Powermark Fears No Startup, Opens Technology Shop

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After the dot-com bust, going after startup technology companies was low on the list for advertising shops.

Those days certainly are over.

San Juan Capistrano-based The Pow-ermark Group recently opened its doors and is targeting the technology crowd, particularly startup and more established software makers.

President Colleen Edwards said she isn't worried about the risk.

"There is always some risk in working with startups, but we've calculated it," Edwards said. "We're balancing our running game (established tech companies) with our passing game (startups)."

Edwards said she's been part of the Orange County marketing technology landscape for more than a decade, and has "seen first-hand the continuing demand for good, business-minded marketing expertise."

"I knew we could build a profitable business pretty quickly by delivering well on that demand," she said.

Edwards has worked for several local software makers.

She was vice president of marketing for Mission Viejo's Foundstone and Newport Beach's IPNet Solutions. Both eventually were bought: Santa Clara-based McAfee Inc. bought Foundstone and Alpharetta, Ga.-based Inovis Inc. bought IPNet.

Powermark started out with 10 workers and plans to grow.

"Early market reaction has been very favorable—everyone we've met with from large and small corporations to venture capitalists, has validated the need and our model," Edwards said. "Young software companies, who often don't have the budget to hire a marketing executive or team, can get off the ground more quickly."

And she said that more established companies “are often resource constrained” and need “fresh ideas” with projects and services.

Powermark’s services include strategic planning, advertising, branding, tradeshow events and public and analyst relations.

It will maintain a low overhead to keep prices down, Edwards said.

The shop landed Costa Mesa-based FileNet Corp. in its first 60 days. It also has signed up TradePortal Securities Inc., a financial services company in Irvine, Edwards said. Powermark has its hat in six other proposals and is awaiting word.