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Designing woman

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

Business name: Designs by Susan

Type of business: interior designer

Owner: Susan Ginesi

Address: 65 Pippins Way, Morristown

Contact: (973) 644-4688; ssngns@optonline.net

Hours of operation: By appointment only ... available seven days a week

Founded: 2003

Why did you start your design business? This is not my first business, but where I truly believe I was always meant to be. I did start my college years off as a design major at Drexel but was encouraged by an internship boss to switch gears. I graduated with a BS in marketing and took a management position with a major department store. Four promotions later, I was a buyer who designed private label and purchased better women's shoes. The knowledge gained in those six years with that company supplied me with the necessary tools to successfully own my first business ... a nail salon. Years later, I added on a small boutique. Some of the items I purchased for resale were home-decor items, hence the origin of my interior design business. Seventeen years later, I sold my salon, completed a certificate program at Parsons School of Design and opened Designs by Susan. From shoes to nails to interiors ... always designing! Obsession or passion? Maybe a little of both.

If you could do it again, what would you do differently? Absolutely nothing. I truly believe only because of my previous years experience in the business world, I have been able to utilize the education I acquired at Parsons. Many highly creative young people graduate with four-year degrees in design and find themselves stuck working for someone else. Their limited market, purchasing, management and accounting exposure holds them back from truly getting their creativity out there. And if it gets out there, it bears someone else's name on it.

What is the best business advice your parents gave you? You can be whatever you want to be. Follow your gut ... do what you love to do and you will excel at it!

What personality trait helps you the most? Being proactive with enthusiasm and drive!

What is the easiest part of your job? Exploring new resources. I love being in the wholesale market, looking for new trends. Traveling. Meeting new people. Brainstorming uses for new products.

What is the hardest part of the job? First I'd say, pacing myself, because I have a habit of totally submerging myself in new projects, often for 10-12 hours a day. There is so much product to sift through before compiling a few options for a client. Though once I've gathered enough information, chosen key product, communicated with necessary vendors and tradesmen and gotten a handle on where I want to take the project, I settle down.

Then I'd say, second to pacing myself, would be implementing a job, because it is very tedious and demands that you are very organized, patient and ready to make quick decisions.

When you leave the business, what will you do? I don't think you ever stop designing, once you've been taught and spent years looking at your surroundings in a certain way. In my mind, I'll always be transforming environments and envisioning "what ifs."

What's your least and most expensive product or service? I can work within any budget. There are many wonderful moderately priced manufacturers. There are even some low-end vendors offering some pieces that will work into anyone's mix nicely. I am, however, a firm believer in buying better furnishings that will withstand a lot of wear and tear on select items. For example, a den sofa -- den sofas will not hold up as long as you like if they are not of the proper construction. Sofas are not what they look like on the outside, but what they look like on the inside. All items selected for a setting do not need to be the best quality, but some just have to be.



photos courtesy of designs by susan
Susan Ginesi in the office of Designs by Susan.



photos courtesy of designs by susan
A view of a living room before Susan Ginesi of Designs by Susan gave it a makeover.



photos courtesy of designs by susan
Another view of a living room before Susan Ginesi of Designs by Susan gave it a makeover.



photos courtesy of designs by susan The same



photos courtesy of designs by susan
Another view of same room showing the results of Ginesi's creative touch.

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My fees are based on an hourly rate and the estimated hours required to finish a client's needs is always quoted before any work begins. I'm sometimes called in to help with a few quick design-related decisions and, at other times, I'm decorating an entire room from start to finish. All clients are treated with the same respect and all are welcome.

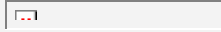
Describe your worst and best customer experience. A client must understand that designing is a process. Clients with open minds will gain from the experience of the professional they hire, allowing them to explore various avenues. Those of another nature will not have the same experience.

Tell us why customers should hire you. Most importantly, my list of satisfied homeowners and design clients. When referrals come in, I know I'm doing something right. Secondly, my unique background. Also I am trustworthy, honest, and always eager to start a new project.

In one sentence, tell us where your interior design service is so important. There should be no place like home.

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