



Mimi Dinh honored with 2008 Savvy Sister Award

by Kim James

Early in her career, Mimi Dinh was determined to break through the glass ceiling into a career where she could use her knowledge and skills to fill a growing need in the marketing industry.

Dinh is the recipient of the Savvy Sister award for making an innovative change to her workplace.

She was nominated by Deborah Nguyen. Nguyen says, “Mimi Dinh has always been the kind of person that thinks outside the box, personally and professionally.”

Dinh’s career includes a stint as a marketing director for a telecommunications company as well as a promotions manager and a public relations director for two top agencies in Houston. Even though in the upper ranks, she sought a career where she could use the skills in all areas of her expertise, choose projects she truly believed in and express her own creative vision.

These factors, combined with a desire for a flexible schedule so she could spend time with her daughter caused her to set out on her own. Mikel Marketing opened its doors for business in 1999.

Mikel Marketing serves clients who place a high value on image and aesthetics. Dinh has defined a target market that reflects and expects her company’s style. She prefers working with a small group of clients who share her taste rather than trying to satisfy everyone.

“Style isn’t abstract,” Dinh says. “It’s a direct manifestation of your attitude and image. I am proud of our style, which is modern and a bit on the cutting edge, and through it, I try to show an honest expression of the values and substance of my company.”

This approach comes from Dinh’s personal philosophy of incorporating excellence into everything she does. The company prides itself on providing excellent services to its clients.

Much of her early work went into creating Mikel’s corporate identity package, including the company’s logo, letterhead, website and press kit.

“I wanted our corporate ID to project the right image and show people how professional, creative, experienced, and innovative we were,” she says.

Within a few months of completing the package and promoting Mikel’s services, she had a list of clients who filled the niche she was trying to establish for her company.

“We started with a bang and really set the tone for the reputation of my company,” she says.

Dinh designed the five-paneled press kit herself to reflect a clean, modern feel. Clients can log on to the flash animated website and learn everything they need to know about Mikel Marketing. Dinh stays in touch with her clients each month through an electronic newsletter that includes information about Mikel’s events as well as recommendations of professional and personal development seminars and workshops.

Dinh’s success hasn’t come without its share of challenges. Six months after Mikel Marketing was in business, Dinh’s husband announced he had accepted a fellowship in Gyn-Oncology at Massachusetts General Hospital and the family was moving.

Dinh didn’t want to close down the business, so she found a way to run the business from Boston. She had a space in Houston where she continued to see clients once a month. Two assistants, and a host of other contract workers, were key in helping her business stay operable.

Operating from a remote location did not affect Mikel Marketing’s productivity. She has been back in Houston (full-time) for three years, and the business continues to grow and exceed the expectations of clients.

Dinh says through this, she has learned to be an effective leader by trusting her staff, showing them the respect they deserve and being flexible, giving and receiving input from others.

She is proud of this leadership award and wants “to continue to strive for excellence, inspire and help others through my work, my personal friendships and my volunteerism and community involvement.”