

## Business

## Road

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Elliott accepted a job offer from one of his clients, which brought him to the Midwest. However, the corporate downturn, which struck all businesses about six years ago, eliminated his position within the firm. Suddenly, the man with multiple jobs had no job.

Armed with an extensive resume, a cell phone and a bedroom office, Elliott began his own company. "My first client that I landed was Honeywell in nearly a million-dollar deal," he said.

Soon Elliott was able to move the business into a 10-by-10 space in a converted nursing home in Geneva. "I found out later that our office was the former DNR (Do Not Resuscitate) room," he said. So in a room where life was allowed to end peacefully, InteloQuence was born.

The name of the company was originally a term Elliott had coined for a client. "The client wanted a word for the right idea and the right way to say it. I came up with 'IntelQuence' but the client didn't like it. I did, though. I wrote the word on a napkin and stuck it on the refrigerator. After a year of looking at it, I decided it was the right name for my company," he explained.

When 2001 rolled around, InteloQuence was ready for more space, and the staff moved into a new location on State Street in Geneva. Elliott prefers to call the work space a studio instead of an office, since many different creative tasks are performed there.

"Fifteen days after we moved into the studio, I got a call from my mother who was at the studio doing some decorating work," he recounted. "She half-whispered to me, 'There is a woman here from DreamWorks who wants to shoot a movie in the studio.'"

Elliott hurried over and 90 days later, he saw his studio turned into a seedy boarding house, circa 1930, for "Road to Perdition."

"I looked at the office and could see how far I'd come but how far things had gone back in time," he joked about the 30s' period set. The InteloQuence staff crowded into smaller back offices while the filming took place.

"One morning, I found Daryl Zanuck, Sam Mendes and Jude Law all sitting in my office eating Krispy Kremes watching Jenny Jones on television," Elliott said, recalling one of the many moments he got to spend with celebrities. "Another time, I came in and Jude Law was sitting at my desk shaving his head."

When things got back to normal, Elliott was able to



Photos courtesy of InteloQuence

**In 2001, InteloQuence owner Dan Elliott of Geneva, saw his studio turned into a seedy boarding house, circa 1930, for "Road to Perdition."**

share his celebrity moments with the whole community by playing host for a grand opening of the studio, which he dubbed "The Road to InteloQuence." He rented stretch limos, sent out invitations to town officials and merchants and organized a gala event. He also presented Oscar-type awards, such as "Best Performance of a City Official in the Production of a Major Motion Picture." His staff put together their own DVD of the filming experience and gave it to those who attended the event. The company Web site also incorporates several film clips from the filming of the movie.

## Thinking 'outside the PC'

Although its celebrity status helped InteloQuence become known in the community, Elliott feels it is the quality of his staff's work that has won them clients. "It is our belief that there is a blurring of the lines between conventional marketing and electronic marketing," he said. "We purposely think outside of the PC."

Staff members at InteloQuence don't limit their approaches; rather, they integrate media to create the most effective marketing campaign. While for some clients that could mean direct mail campaigns or ads in print, others may benefit more from the additional use of electronic media.

According to Elliott, companies are turning to electronic media as a more cost-efficient way to market products. "We have done virtual trade shows," he said. "We can show products and provide a guide without the cost of a hotel room or cocktails or the loss of livers and wives."

Online catalogs are another way InteloQuence helps clients save marketing dollars.

"Corporations often have goals bigger than their staff can handle," Elliott noted. "We can work one-on-one with them to change those goals into zeros and ones with online seminars and other tools."

"They are my right arm," said Denny Lawson, vice president of marketing for the Glendale Heights-based Auth-Florence Manufacturing Company. "They have done everything for me from Web integration to launching direct-mail campaigns."

"I feel that Dan and his organization maintain a close

one-to-one relationship with me," Lawson added. "They are fast on their feet and can react instantly to changes in the marketplace. When identity theft became an issue, Dan's group was right there with me, working on this."

Being able to communicate to all types of audiences is one of the company's strengths according to Matt Hanson, vice president of sales and marketing for Bison Gear and Engineering in St. Charles. "Being an engineering business, there are technical aspects to the work," Hanson said. "IntelQuence does a good job communicating to all the different audiences. They've done our Web site and graphics for five years now and they do a good job. Very innovative all the time."

One of the company's newest products is the InteloSoft, a Web-based lead-tracking software application, built by InteloQuence and hosted by its own Unix servers. Elliott described it as a Customer Relationship Management tool that can identify the most promising sales leads. By keeping track of all visitors to a company Web site and also tracking if a visitor engages in certain parts of the Web site, InteloSoft can help that company determine what its online visitors are interested in.

"It allows us to see what's keeping them there and what's being effective (as a marketing tool)," explained InteloQuence intern Nate Winter, a Geneva college student. "It includes a sign-up sheet for visitors, asking them if they want to see more information or subscribe to a company newsletter."

"The InteloSoft enables suspects to be turned into prospects," Elliott added. "Anyone suspected of being interested in a product can be prospected by the salesperson and converted instantly into a Web-based sale with only a few clicks."

The 45-year-old bachelor is pleased with how far his company has come in six years, which he attributes to hard work and a customer-focused approach. "A lot of agencies get this too-cool or veiled arrogance," Elliott pointed out. "We follow the simple rule of putting on the hook what the fish likes to eat rather than what we like to eat. We may not be the smartest, but we work the hardest."

"I love my work," he said simply. "It's taken me 25 years to be an overnight success."



**Dan Elliott presents a "mini-Oscar" to Geneva Mayor Ken Burns during the grand opening gala titled "The Road to InteloQuence," which was thrown by the company after DreamWorks finished filming "Road to Perdition" in its new, downtown Geneva office space.**