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Marietta-based Web design firm doing well

By Paul Kita, pkita@mariettatimes.com

Though Firebox Studio employs just two people, the Web design firm has become an Internet powerhouse based in Marietta.

Andrew Jones, 34, and Ryan Swaney, 25, have created more than 15 Web sites since Firebox's launch in 2004.

"The name is actually a railroad term. The firebox is where you throw in the wood and coal — what drives the engine," Jones said.

Firebox Studios has churned out Web sites for Lafayette Hotel, the Marietta/Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Peoples Bank and recently crafted designs for the River City Film Festival.

"It can get pretty busy sometimes," Swaney said.

Firebox Studio's Web pages pop with color. Jones said they strive to be simple, yet powerful and the Web sites sometimes take months to create.

"It's a job where you have to wear many hats," he said, adding that he and Swaney will frequently have to act as designers, publicists, marketing representatives and photographers.

Despite the perception among many that younger generations are leaving the city to find work, Jones and Swaney have decided to build their business from Marietta.

"We've got pretty much everything we need right here short of a Starbucks," Jones said.

Swaney graduated from [Marietta High School](#) in 1999 and from Washington

About Firebox Studios

n Address: 131 Scammel St.

n What: An award-winning interactive Web design firm.

n Founded: 2004.

n Employees: Two.

n Created Web sites for: Discover Ohio, Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department, Marietta Aquatic Center.

n For more information: www.fireboxstudios.com.



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State Community College in 2002. Jones is self-taught and a 1990 graduate of Waterford High School.

“I get an offer maybe once a year with an opportunity to leave (Marietta). It’s always tempting to think I can move and get bigger accounts,” Jones said, but added it is his friends and family who keep him in Marietta.

“I think it’s much more important that you are good at what you do. If you’re good, you’re going to get the work even if you live in a small town,” Jones said.

But Firebox Studios has had trouble competing with firms in Columbus and Cleveland who have more employees, Jones said.

“What’s funny is we live and die by our Web site (www.fireboxstudios.com). If we were to move to Columbus tomorrow, with a new office, we’d still have the same Web site,” Jones said.

Web sites by Firebox Studios have a start-up cost of \$2,000 and most of the prices are based on hourly rates.

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