

# Vector makes motivation major business tool

## Women-owned firm finding success

By Yolanda Curry  
Special to the American

**F**or Laura Godwin and Jessica Perkins of Vector Communications, bringing people together is more than just a dream—it's a reality. It also is their specialty.

Vector Communications is a public engagement and communications consulting firm that helps build relationships for its clients by bringing people together to discuss and resolve public policy problems.

When asked how they are able to motivate people to come together, Perkins responded, "You don't motivate people—they motivate themselves. What we do is create the environment for them to get involved. We help them to understand the complexity of a social problem that works best for them and break it down in very simple terms."

Says Godwin, "We create an environment where people are empowered. We're empowering residents so that they're in charge of their own destiny."

In addition to involving citizens in decision making through dialogue and community and strategic planning, Vector also provides media relations, event planning, and video production services.

Vector Communications is as unique as it is diverse.

According to Perkins, the diversity of the four-year-old company has its advantages. Says Perkins, "...it's given us a



Laura Godwin and Jessica Perkins of Vector Communications both owned businesses before partnering in their current firm.

diversified portfolio...if any one area falls off, we feel it, but we don't have to close our doors."

Prior to starting Vector Communications in 1998, Godwin and Perkins owned and operated

media relations firm.

Perkins, who specializes in financial planning, marketing, sales as well as public policy analysis and organizational development, owned Out-of-the-Box Thinking, a strate-

clients an exceptional product and service.

Perkins says that their partnership has been successful in part because their skills are "complementary" and because they possess the same val-

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—Laura Godwin

their own respective businesses.

Godwin, whom was an award-winning broadcast journalist, owned Godwin Communications Corporation, which was predominantly a video production and

gic and organizational development consulting firm.

The team says that combining their strengths and prior experiences to create Vector Communications has enabled them to offer their

ues and work ethics.

In addition, the partners say their attention to detail has helped them produce a phenomenal rate of customer satisfaction, which they say is a number one priority.

Says Godwin, "We've received excellent customer feedback which is important since 85 percent of our business is from client referrals."

Vector Communications currently has five employees and according to Perkins, "we could not have asked for a better staff—we're like a family." Both Godwin and Perkins say they value their employee's opinions and have a flexible and open work environment.

In fact, the emphasis the partners place on people is not only evident in their work with clients and employees, but also in the projects on which they choose to work.

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Says Godwin, "One of the projects that we are most proud of is our involvement with the Dollar-Help program which is a home heating program that helps pay the heating bills of the poor in St. Louis and the surrounding counties." Godwin says that in the last two years, Vector Communications has handled the publicity and fundraising for the program and increased its donations by 63 percent. Says Godwin, "That's a real accomplishment for us and very satisfying—because we're helping people."

The partners say that helping people is a priority and is something they try to do both on and off the clock.

Says Perkins, "It's all about giving back. We believe if we do well in the community it will come back to us."

Says Godwin, "It's the right thing to do. To whom much is given, much is expected."

And when it comes to giving back to the community, both Godwin and Perkins put their money where their mouth is. They say they give their employees 96 hours of paid time to

do community service—which is equivalent to about 1 day per month—and that they're happy to do it.

What future plans do the dynamic duo have for Vector Communications? Generally, both agree that Vector's future looks bright. However, one specific change that Perkins says they plan to make is to integrate more technology into their public engagement presentations.

More importantly though, says Godwin, "We plan to keep growing as human beings, spiritually and intellectually and to keep doing work that makes a difference in the community."