

FROM ASHES TO DOT-COM

Former Newberg chimney sweep finds his niche on the Internet: **Business**



COURSE GIVES TIGERS FITS

Willamette Valley Country Club gives not only Tigers but rest of Pac-8 conference trouble: **Sports**



THE NEWBERG GRAPHIC

Serving Newberg, Dundee, St. Paul, Eastern Yamhill County and Northern Marion County since 1888

PAGE A12

WEDNESDAY

April 12, 2000

BUSINESS

Former Newberg chimney sweep finds his niche on the Internet



Newberg resident John Bertoglio, vice president of technology at PulsePoll.com, recently won a national award for the company's software design.

Chiyo Takeda /
NEWBERG
GRAPHIC

Rising from the ashes to dot-com

By AMBER STAHR
NEWBERG GRAPHIC REPORTER

The story of a former chimney sweep turned computer program developer is not necessarily a rags to riches tale, but an epic of ashes to dot-com.

Newberg's John Bertoglio cleaned chimneys in the 1980s. Now he is the vice president of technology at the Portland company PulsePoll.com.

Bertoglio's software programming, coupled with the innovation of the company's designers, won them the first-place award at the InterSystems' Cache Innovators Awards, held March 21 in Orlando, Fla.

"I'm sure the company who gave me this expected it to be in some boardroom, not a living room in Newberg," Bertoglio said.

He said for now the award will stay at his home, at least until the company has a boardroom with a glass case to display awards.

PulsePoll.com is an offshoot of Pulse Research, one of the largest newspaper researching firms in the country, Bertoglio said.

But the Newberg resident and four other employees of the parent company decided to take the idea and launch an online version and in October they started their own company.

The PulsePoll.com software allows visitors to create their own poll and post it on their own Web sites. The product also allows customers to trace results and viewers participating in the survey can also see up-to-date numbers after casting their vote.

The company recently worked a great deal with the presidential

primary elections, and Bertoglio said that its polls successfully predicted the outcome of the New Hampshire primary.

While there has been much distrust of Internet polling data, Bertoglio said he believes that online polls will become more popular as other data sources become more fallible.

The dot com product uses a database software called Cache, produced by InterSystems. The international software company recently hosted a competition for businesses using their product and awarded the winner a \$5,000 prize. Among the competitors were the Department of Veterans' Affairs, Quest Diagnostics and Johns Hopkins University.

PulsePoll.com, with its five employees, was given the top award and Bertoglio said his

company was much different than the others competing.

"I think their budget for plastic coffee spoons exceeds my entire operating cost for the year," he quipped.

But Bertoglio said that in this competition, company size didn't matter — the award was given to the company with the most innovative design.

Competing against large, experienced companies was a privilege for Bertoglio, he added.

"It's a very humbling experience to be in the company of people who are so much more accomplished," he said.

So the Newberg man now works among big companies instead of ashes and soot. Bertoglio was self-employed as a chimney sweep until 10 years ago when he joined Pulse Research.