

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2007

- Channels**
- Home
- News
- Entertainment
- Book Club
- Columnists
- Carguide
- Fitness
- Tech
- Business
- Lifestyle
- Workology
- Travel
- Sports
- Your Money
- Dream Homes

- Read Today's Metro**
- Toronto
- Vancouver
- Montreal
- Ottawa



METRO FILE

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Site links professionals, training



Louis Trahan, who noticed a niche that needed to be filled, started Last Minute Training, which offers professional training at discounted prices.

In business, some of the most successful entrepreneurial stories occur when someone notices an absence of a product or service in the market and then fills the void.

Entrepreneur Louis Trahan knows firsthand just how well this strategy works.

Four years ago, while volunteering for a year as the president of the Canadian Junior Chamber of Commerce, which is part of the world's largest federation of young entrepreneurs and leaders, Trahan saw a hole in the industry.

"We were a non-profit looking to update our website. We had no budget to pay someone outside so I decided I'd learn it myself and attempt to do the updates," says Trahan, who started out in the business world as a warehouse order puller climbing his way to sales manager for Robinsons Solutions and then becoming vice-president for sales and marketing for the technology solutions company Future Ready.

"I found a company that did Dreamweaver training, tried to negotiate a price (from the original of \$985) but was not happy with what they offered me. I told the company, 'Listen, the only cost to having me attend your seminar is the manual, coffee and cookies so if you've got an empty seat a few days before the seminar and you prefer to get \$500 instead of nothing, call me and I'll attend.' They did and I went."

It was then that Trahan came up with the idea for Last Minute Training, which offers professional training at discounted prices.

"I sat on (the idea) for a few years though until I constructed the business model that would best execute my idea," says Trahan.

Today Last Minute Training uses the same model as Trahan's experience with the Dreamweaver company.

"LMT connects entrepreneurs, human resource managers and certified professionals with highly sought after professional development training while helping training vendors increase their bottom line," says Trahan.

Visitors to the Last Minute Training site can search through 850 categories of training. Once they've made their selection there are two ways to purchase and register for the training.

The first option is to register at the listed price, which is always at least 30 per cent off the regular competitor prices, according to Trahan. Option two puts the power into the customer's hands by allowing them to negotiate a further discount of anywhere from 50 to 60 per cent off directly through the individual vendor offering the training.

"I've taken the concept of last minute discounted travel and have found a way to apply it to the world of training seminars and workshops," says Trahan.

For more information on Last Minute Training visit www.lastminutetraining.ca.

JILL ANDREW FOR METRO TORONTO

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