



Profiles of Technology
IN TENNESSEE

Technology Transforms 120-year-old West Tennessee Clothing Store into Booming Online Success...While Allowing it to Maintain its “Mom and Pop” Sentiment

Name:

E.T. Reavis and Son

Internet:

www.etreavis.com

Products/Services:

Clothing, including hard-to-find and specialty items

Location:

Dresden/Weakley County

Leadership:

Tom, Martha, and Carol Reavis, Owners and Operators

Reach: National

Innovative Insight: *“The Internet has relieved me of competition locally. Instead of having to rely on the local economy for sales, I rely on the whole United States.”*

The Importance of

Broadband: *“People’s shopping habits have changed dramatically over the last five years. A few clicks and two or three minutes and a person can have just about anything they want.”*

Impact of the Web site:

90% of their revenue comes from online sales.

Dresden, TN - When E.T. Reavis first started his small clothing store on the Dresden town square back in 1890, the words “World Wide Web” didn’t quite have the same significance that they do today.

Fast forward nearly 120 years, and those three words have helped his quaint family-owned business reach beyond the 2,800 people that live in Dresden to the more than 300 million people that live across the United States.

These days, the store is run by E.T.’s great-grandchildren, Tom, Martha and Carol. Tom admits taking the family business online originally started as just a sideline to the store itself, but when they saw how their hard-to-find and specialty items caught the attention of Internet shoppers, an entirely new business was born. “People’s shopping habits have changed dramatically over the last five years,” says Tom. “A few clicks and two or three minutes and a person can have just about anything they want.”

One particularly popular item E.T. Reavis and Son has to offer is, in grand Southern tradition, overalls. The store features unique styles and sizes (sizes range from 6 months to a 74 waist) that the larger, well-known department stores don’t carry anymore. “I get calls all the time from people saying ‘Wal-Mart used to carry these, but they changed to another brand,’” says Tom.

The store’s distinctive items have caught the attention of everyone from the History Channel to the Minnesota Timberwolves. And with 90% of their revenue now coming from online sales, the company shows no signs of slowing down. Transitioning with the times by moving his business to the Internet literally changed the course of Tom’s entire business. “The Internet has relieved me of competition locally,” he says. “Instead of having to rely on the local economy for sales, I rely on the whole United States.”

And the United States delivers. “We have customers from Maine to California, Alaska to Hawaii,” says Tom.

Their popularity comes as no surprise. Just one visit to the E.T. Reavis and Son website and their number one motto is clear:

“If you are ever in the Dresden area of Northwest Tennessee, please come by and visit. We would love to meet you.”

About TN 95:

Citizens across the state are using technology in innovative ways to ensure that Tennessee remains the place of choice to live, work and raise a family. Connected Tennessee is profiling businesses and Tennesseans in each of the state’s 95 counties to identify lessons learned on the path to successful innovation. For more information visit our Web site at www.connectedtn.org or call 615-242-9508.