



## **Docking Station in Green Bay offers alternative to home office**

When Peter Nugent, owner of Enlighten Financial, was working at his home office, household chores often sidetracked him. At a recent SCORE seminar on Innovative Options for Locating Your Business, he told attendees that he would notice things like grass that needed cutting and found himself taking housework breaks. For Nugent, a home office was filled with distractions.

"Working from home is exactly why I started considering a space like The Docking Station" ([www.thedockingstation.net](http://www.thedockingstation.net)), Nugent said. He wanted to know if other home office professionals were having similar experiences, and along with partner Dana VanDen Heuvel, owner of Marketing Savant, started conducting groups meetings about two years ago.

To assess demand and refine the concept, the pair met with interested parties, OnBroadway, the city of Green Bay and Downtown Green Bay Inc. Carol Karls, who is actively involved with several downtown initiatives and has strong business experience, provided hours of assistance.

The result was The Docking Station, an innovative co-working space located at 111 N. Broadway and slated to open in a few weeks. The shared office space addresses not only the issue of home distractions, but also the feeling of isolation that many entrepreneurs experience at home.

"Coming from a corporate setting and breaking out on my own, I didn't realize the social aspect that helps drive ideas and work," Nugent said. "I essentially went from working in a team setting to working by myself. I tried coffee shops, but it was not the business-oriented setting that I needed to conduct meetings or have professional telephone conversations."

The social and collaborative aspect is a driving force behind The Docking Station. It is unique in that space is available by day, month or year and no long-term leases are required. Options include a private office, resident desk, co-worker space, nomad space or drop-in. There are 25 workspaces in the 2,400-square-foot space.

Costs start at \$20 per day, and amenities include a receptionist, high-speed Wi-Fi Internet, furnished office and lounge space, a conference room, teleconferencing line, professional mailbox address, a kitchenette, access to general office machines and special co-working events.

Nugent stresses the community aspect of working together and learning from other professionals.

"When I left my home office, I decided to try working at a local office building," he said. "Unfortunately, I went from isolation in my home office to isolation in my professional office. The collaborative effort was just not there."

Collaboration with other entrepreneurs is what helped Nugent and VanDen Heuvel develop a business plan that was recently awarded top honors in the Northeast Wisconsin Business Plan Contest. The feedback from the community and entrepreneurs has been great and membership applications are flowing in. Nugent sees The Docking Station growing into a vibrant community.

"It will become a springboard for ideas and collaboration, which will have a significant impact on the individual businesses or our members, as well as the community as a whole," he said.

**Tina Dettman-Bielefeldt is co-owner of DB Commercial Real Estate in Green Bay and assistant district director for SCORE, Wisconsin.**