

10 Minutes to Better **Business**



CASE STUDY

FDR Safety blogs, builds 'expert' status online

For most of the 15 years FDR Safety has been in business, the Brentwood company didn't need much other than customer gratitude to build business, founder and CEO Fred Rine said. But that wasn't good enough as 2009 ramped up.

It's not that the company was about to struggle, Rine said. The poor economy and changes in Washington were about to create opportunities, and the safety consulting company needed to get its name out there in a new way.

"We felt as though we were pretty good at what we were doing," Rine said, but the company wasn't known widely enough.

So the company, which had depended on long-running contacts and word of mouth, went from no marketing to what some consider the cutting edge. The company — with 2009 revenue of \$6.5 million and steady growth — revamped its website in the summer of 2009, launching blogs and content that showed its expertise.

Rine said the company, which

provides safety education, compliance consulting and expert testimony, struck at the right time. More companies were looking to cut costs and outsource things like safety costs, and the Obama administration was talking about beefing up workplace enforcement.

With the help of David Green, head of marketing firms David Green Communications and Alphanumeric, the company moved itself up in the online world. FDR went from No. 39 to No. 2 on its Google ranking — how high you'll land on a search — and increased traffic to its site seven-fold in four months.

While a lot went into it, the basic idea is to provide content that offers expertise, insight and information, aside from other sales and market-

ing pitches. When people do a search for safety-related topics, they may come across FDR, view it as credible, and end up doing business.

"We think the Internet drives a lot of new business to us," Rine said. "We're getting calls ... from people we never contacted."

Traditional ways of building business relationships are still key for the company. But FDR needed a way to increase exposure — and found it.

— Brian Reisinger



Fred Rine is CEO and founder of FDR Safety.