

## Framingham companies merge: Nimbit takes over firm serving independent artists

By Craig M. Douglas / News Business Writer

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**F**RAMINGHAM -- Two Framingham companies with ties to the entertainment industry have merged to provide independent artists the tools to promote and distribute their work.

Nimbit, a designer of Web-site software for entertainers, announced yesterday that it acquired Artist Development Associates Inc., a provider of recording, legal and promotional services for artists, in an all-stock deal earlier this month. The agreement's terms were not disclosed.

Company officials said the two enterprises will merge and operate as a wholly owned subsidiary of Trilby Systems Inc., a holding company founded by Nimbit just prior to the merger.

As part of the agreement, Framingham-based Nimbit also acquired CDFreedom.com, an ADA subsidiary that markets music recorded by independent artists.

The company's executives say the deal was prompted by the entertainment industry's rapid consolidation, which has made it difficult for many professional entertainers to earn a living.

"Right now, there's a lot of shake-up in the entertainment industry," said Patrick Faucher, a Nimbit co-founder and the new chief executive and president of Trilby Systems. "What's happening is a majority of professional entertainers are building their careers and making money by doing all of their business functions on their own."

The new company, operating under the Nimbit brand, will now provide all of Nimbit's and ADA's services through a single software package called Nimbit WebTools. In addition to building and managing their own Web sites, customers can ship samples of their work to Live365.com -- an Internet radio station -- and order copies of their CDs, DVDs and promotional materials from Trilby System's headquarters in Framingham.

The company will offer the software and services in a variety of formats, with a basic package available to customers for \$24 a month.

After the merger, Nimbit closed its offices on Concord Street and moved into ADA's 47 Mellen St. facility. The company employs 13 people. Faucher said two workers were laid off after the merger due to improved efficiency and overlap between Nimbit and ADA's existing resources.

Founded two years ago, Nimbit has about 2,500 customers, including several major entertainers and recording artists. Aerosmith, a Boston-based rock band, is among the company's growing list of prominent clients, Faucher said.

He believes more and more entertainers will turn to companies like Nimbit as major entertainment firms like Viacom Inc. and Clear Channel Communications Inc. acquire and consolidate traditional broadcasting and promotional channels for professional artists.

"Everybody's got their fingers in your pie," said Faucher, a graduate of the Berklee College of Music in Boston. "For us, it's all good news."

Like Nimbit, ADA was founded nine years ago by a Berklee grad, Phil Antoniadis. He remains with the new company as its chief operating officer.

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