

July 5, 2004 – The Union Leader

Lists Meet the Net in Rural NH

By Denis Paiste, Union Leader Staff

CAMPTON — Five years ago, Michael and Marilyn Pomerantz moved their 12-year-old list management business from Newton, Mass., to New Hampshire because they felt they'd have a better opportunity to expand in the Granite State.

“Indeed, it's worked out that way,” Mike Pomerantz, 59, co-owner of F1RSTMARK Inc., said in a recent telephone interview. Sales have topped \$1 million, and the business has grown to include five more employees, including daughter Karin Pomerantz.

“Here we are able to get good office space and terrific people at a reasonable cost,” Pomerantz said. They've added two sales representatives and two technical people.

“The New Hampshire thing really worked for us; it's been great, because we've attracted and held onto some top-notch people in this area, including computer professionals, as well as sales people,” he said.

“Our market is national, so we theoretically could be anywhere; all we needed were a good fax, phone, and Internet capabilities,” Pomerantz said. “We chose to be up here because it's very beautiful.”

The firm is just a few minutes from Waterville Valley.

The company expects revenues to grow about 20 percent this year.

F1RSTMARK (which spells its name on its Web site and on company literature with the numeral 1 substituted for the letter i, but uses the letter to identify the Web site) buys data and other list information from a variety of database managers, list brokers and publishers who gather and compile the lists from surveys, questionnaires, telemarketing inquiries, sales data and other sources.

F1RSTMARK then manages and sells customized portions of those lists to job recruiters, marketers, educational and financial institutions, and other business-to-business users.

“Our customers are national marketers, for the most part, heavy into publishers and seminar providers, as well as manufacturers and service providers,” Pomerantz said. “Most of the companies that we do business with have a national focus.”

Nurses are always in demand; the company said it sells a lot of lists of nurses.



Karin Pomerantz buys and sells lists for corporate clients from the rural setting of Campton. (PAULA TRACY)

Karin Pomerantz had been working for a Virginia environmental consulting firm when she was asked to come to New Hampshire and help grow her parents' company. She joined them in January as director of business development.

“When we first moved up here, we hired one person,” she said. “We moved twice as the company grew from two to seven employees.” FIRSTMARK has its offices at 25 Vintinner Road, second floor, in Campton, near exit 28, Interstate 93.

FIRSTMARK manages about 250 databases, or lists, for such industries as high-technology, medical practices, education, libraries, banks and finance. There are also lists featuring travel-related businesses, government-related information, and religious information, such as synagogues and churches.

Mike Pomerantz said cost is typically \$100 per 1,000 names, or 10 cents a record, with a minimum order of \$495. Most customers purchase at least 5,000 names, he said.

Doing business in rural New Hampshire, Pomerantz said, he and employee Colleen Ford are involved with the Campton-Thornton Fire Department as EMTs.

Founded in 1987, FIRSTMARK is a Chapter S corporation. It has had a presence on the World Wide Web since 1995.

On the Net: www.firstmark.com