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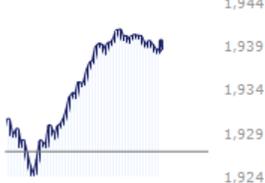
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Morningstar

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VOL. 38 | NO. 23 | Friday, June 06, 2014

## Moms find value in pooling resources, talent

By **Hollie Deese** Updated 10:55AM  
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When moms partner up, they can accomplish great things. Forest Home Media, a partnership between hard-working entrepreneurial moms Nancy Hickman McNulty, 51, and Dana Tucker, 45, landed the public relations account for Carbine & Associates of Franklin, the builder of a HGTV Smart Home someone is going to win this June.

Carbine had approached McNulty for media help, but at the time, she turned them down, feeling overburdened by her client list – even though she had taken on Tucker as a partner.

“When Nancy told me I was like ‘OK, I support you in that,’” Tucker says.

“But I went home that night, and I was looking on Facebook and I saw an article pop up saying that the HGTV Smart Home was going to be in Nashville. So I did a little digging and found out that it was going to be built by Carbine – the client we had just turned down.”

Only a few days remain to register to win a 2,400-square-foot, completely furnished HGTV Smart Home in the Duncanwood Reserve neighborhood in Green Hills.

Contestants can register through June 9. The rules allow for signing up twice a day. In addition to winning the home, the winner will receive a new Lincoln MKZ Hybrid car and \$100,000 in cash.

To enter the HGTV Smart Home contest, go to: [www.hgtv.com/smart](http://www.hgtv.com/smart).

The HGTV Smart Home 2014 is not open to the public but can be viewed online at [www.hgtv.com/smart-home/index.html?vtv=SHpromotion](http://www.hgtv.com/smart-home/index.html?vtv=SHpromotion).

Designed by architectural firm P. Shea | Design and constructed by Carbine & Associates, both of Franklin, the project sourced primarily local labor, materials, furnishings and décor. The home, with three bedrooms and four-and-a-half baths and filled with local art, is an infill project.

“Most of the homes in Duncanwood are in the 4,000 square-foot-range,” says Preston Shea of P. Shea | Design. “HGTV liked the location and the character, but wanted to do something a little smaller, a little more efficient. And so we were able to do a really tight design and pretty quickly. They were great to work with.”



Forest Home Media partners Nancy McNulty and Dana Tucker have a Nashville-area integrated marketing and PR firm specializing in the home industry. The team recently partnered with HGTV on a media and blogger day for the HGTV Smart Home in Nashville, built by their client, Carbine & Associates.  
-- Submitted

So Tucker called McNulty, McNulty called Carbine, and soon the client and the dream PR project of promoting the Smart Home were theirs.

McNulty Communication, McNulty’s company, had been a home-based firm, taking on only a few clients at time while her two children are growing up. Tucker had worked with McNulty’s husband at South Central Media, and the two had gotten to know and like each other over the years and on company trips.

Soon, McNulty was doing PR work for Tucker’s husband’s business, Bella Tucker Decorative Finishes. “She was getting us some coverage so I realized how talented she was at PR,” Tucker adds.

The mother of twin boys with special needs who were 11 at the time, Tucker had been looking to get out of her full-time radio job and into

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something of her own to have more control of her hours.

“I just wanted to be around more and be more hands on because they [her twins] require a lot of care,” she says.

With McNulty, whose children were older and leaving home, she saw an opportunity for both of them. She just had to convince McNulty that, together, they could provide more clients with the very same personal service that was the hallmark of McNulty’s business.

“I had to talk Nancy into going into business with me, I really did,” Tucker says. “I knew how talented she was, and I knew the relationships that she had in the homebuilder sector, so I told her I thought we had something here.”

They celebrated their two-year anniversary in March, and Tucker says her instincts were correct about working with McNulty as they continue to grow and evolve, much like a marriage.

“It’s been amazing because we’ve really hit on a formula that’s been good for attracting clients,” Tucker says. “She brings a set of skills that I don’t have, and I have a set of skills that she doesn’t have. And they are so complementary that there have never been any problems. She knows her business, I know my business. And together, we have a formula that just really works.”

McNulty agrees, even if she doesn’t get to play as much tennis anymore thanks to an increase in clients and high-profile gigs like the HGTV Smart Home.

“We were lucky that we had backgrounds of traveling together and of knowing each other’s work ethic,” McNulty says. “We’re also faith-based. That is a part of who we are. It matters what your values are, being in partnership with someone who shares the value system of your family. The same things you look for in a spouse you should look for in a partner. And at the end of the day, our focus is that we want a better balance with our family.”

Of course, working around a family and taking on more clients requires a constant evolution of time restructuring to achieve work-home balance.

“It is such a mobile world that it is possible to have time to grow more,” McNulty says. “It’s just two of us, so we don’t have any overhead and that makes our pricing competitive. And we are people with experience, not just out of college working on your accounts.

“So with that depth of experience plus lower overhead, we definitely have a great competitive advantage. We can take a lot of clients, but we have to keep it manageable.”

“We’re actually feeling the growing pains right now and are restructuring our business to figure out how we will go forward,” McNulty adds. “Because there’s a need for that small business person to have a full-time PR person who can’t afford the large-scale agency.”



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