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## Yvonne Campos: Campos Market Research, Inc.

### Carving an Entrepreneurial Spirit that Keeps on Learning

By Amy Yard, Contributing Writer

As owner and president of [Campos Market Research, Inc.](#), Campos has over 20 years of experience in market research and is a nationally known focus group moderator. However, it was the political initiative of President Lyndon B. Johnson that launched this Austin, TX native into the market research realm.

"President Johnson established educational laboratories nationwide, and I was hired by the southwest educational lab located in Austin, TX," states Campos. "There, we researched and developed educational materials. Yet, it wasn't until we hired a research firm named Marc to complete a needs assessment that my life headed in a new direction."

As one of the key people identified by the lab to work with Marc in completing the assessment, Campos never knew that she'd end up in Pittsburgh, PA.

"The [needs assessment] project lasted several months, and when it was over, I was offered a job by Marc to work in a newly-established satellite office located near mega-client Heinz in Pittsburgh," Campos states. "I accepted and oversaw Heinz's in-house testing program—tracking some 150 woman-focused taste-tests per day—and worked focus groups too."

Yet even then, Campos's life took another turn, when the relationship between Heinz and Marc changed.

"They [Marc] were planning on re-establishing and re-allocating various positions, including my own, and at that point, my life had changed," Campos admits. "I was married with two daughters, and my former husband's job was not mobile so I decided to go out on my own as an independent consultant."

As Campos tested the independent waters of consulting for over 6 years, she began to realize that this could be a viable business of her own. Thus, Campos Market Research, Inc. was born.

Campos' firm currently provides consumer and business-to-business research—both on the qualitative and quantitative levels—which helps other companies to gather information that affects bottom-lines. With 35 full-time employees and 50 part-time employees, Campos established a new service over a year ago. In addition to traditional methods of gathering data, her firm also offers online surveys, virtual focus groups, and specially designed bulletin boards.

Although Campos is seen by many as an inspiration herself, she finds other more successful businesswomen uplifting.

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By Suzanne Thinnies, Communications Coordinator  
My email account has been taken over. I know what you're thinking – it was probably a computer virus that infiltrated the system. Guess Again. Not a social butterfly, by any means, lately I have been inundated with invitations to attend web-based seminars (a.k.a. webinars) that cover a multitude of marketing topics. As technology advances at the speed of light, marketers are constantly challenged to find creative, not to mention meaningful, ways to attract consumers around the globe. This new virtual medium has the capability to provide changing content in a variety of forms. A webinar can consist of an online audio

"When I'm around other women business owners, who are more successful than I am, I just get so motivated and excited," Campos states, citing the Women Presidents' Organization (WPO) as a source of great inspiration. And as a result, Campos is working to establish a Pittsburgh chapter of the national group.

Yet, Campos is quick to credit her Mom as her very first female role model.

"At the time, I never realized how entrepreneurial my Mom was. In fact, my whole family was entrepreneurial, but nobody called it that back then," says Campos. "My mom always had some side business going on to generate extra money—whether it was organizing fund-raising dances or working at my Dad's nightclub. She didn't go to college until we [her children] were graduates."

Campos also credits a Head Start executive director out of New York with being her first "outside" role model.

"She was the first business woman who really affected me," Campos admits. "She came in from New York and she was such an effective leader, visionary, and organizer, that I found her inspiring," states Campos.

Today, other people find Campos inspiring. As a single parent of two college-age daughters, Eva, 21 and Anna, 19, Campos is very active in the Pittsburgh business community and has been recognized repeatedly for her entrepreneurial spirit and community involvement. She is consistently on the top 25 Women in Business list of the *Pittsburgh Business Times* and was a 1998 awardee for Pittsburgh's prestigious ATHENA Award, as well as the winner of the City's 1998 SBA Minority Small Business Person of the Year. Campos was also selected as the Vectors Pittsburgh Small Business Person of the Year for 1999.

However, Campos is modest about her successes.

"My proudest business accomplishment is that we're still here today!" Campos exclaims, laughing a bit. "It's hard maintaining a business all these years."

But despite her business' success, there have been obstacles.

"Overcoming any obstacle is always the hardest part of the battle," Campos states. "My business impacted my family-life dramatically, referring to her divorce. If you don't have an absolutely devoted support system, it'll never work," Campos admits.

And although Campos has seen her share of tough times, she maintains a sense of humor that sustains her through moments of frustration.

"I keep going because I don't know any better!" Campos laughs again. "I just never had any doubt that I'd be successful with this business. I never even considered failure."

That mindset, as well as Campos' self-motivation, high energy, and ability to commit, have catapulted her into success.

"The best advice I ever received was to start treating the company like a real company," says Campos. "Real companies have structure, organization, resources, advisory boards, and the quicker you figure this out, the better." Campos also lives by the Nike motto, "Just Do It!," applauding herself for her quick, but informed decision-making capabilities.

"Today, people want everything (all the pieces) to be in place before making a decision, and that's just not realistic," she says. "You'll miss opportunities if you wait too long or for all the pieces of the puzzle to come together."

Of course, Campos believes that you should have the basic pieces in place in order

stream; a combination of a teleconference and an online presentation; or an elaborate video production. All of these can be viewed in real-time by anyone with a computer and Internet connection.

### **Tips on Writing an Effective Feature Article**

*How-to Series on Public Relations for Your Small Biz (Brought to you by PR Newswire): Part 4 of 6*

As a small business owner, you may very well be the marketing and PR staff, as well. Writing feature articles can be a great PR move, but what if you have no idea how to write one? In the fifth article of a six-part series brought to you by PR Newswire and e-magnify, we look at how to write an effective feature article, from the headline to the editor's note.

to make an informed decision, but you don't have to have everything all figured out. After all, as she points out, if you make a bad decision, you just go back, reevaluate and move forward from there.

"The one thing that I thought would happen in business is that it would get easier," Campos states, "but it doesn't. It just gets different. And that's o-kay, I guess."

In Campos' words, her life is: busy, full, tough, what you make it. And she's certainly done that.

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