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Parnunu portfolios for the 21st Century

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ZEELAND — After losing his marketing job of 17 years at Herman Miller, Andrew Otteman found the traditional two-page resume an antiquated way to look for a new position.

Spurred by an entrepreneurial spirit and Herman Miller's innovative culture that rubbed off on him, Otteman founded **Parnunu LLC** and launched www.parnunu.com in early March. The website is a place for job seekers and other workers to keep their career house in order and store information and highlights — a 21st century portfolio of sorts.

The site is unlike LinkedIn where users make connections in a very public way, and job search sites such as Monster.com or Careerbuilder.com where users must conform to a specific architecture. Parnunu is more conversational in tone and allows members to tell their story.

"It's a place for individuals to maintain their career portfolio online in a secure place," Otteman told *MiBiz*. "You want to make sure when the time comes, you have a portfolio that's current."

He said the site allows employers to get to know job seekers, bridging the gap before the interview and shortening the hiring process by helping businesses to quickly find the right talent. Otteman said the site offers employers a better alternative to plowing through 2,000 resumes sent in for an advertised opening. He uses the analogy of baseball — the Detroit Tigers wouldn't post an advertisement when looking for a pitcher.

"It's a much more complete visual representation," said Otteman, noting messages will be sent to users to remind them to update their information.

Otteman said in the past, he has enjoyed helping individuals develop to their potential and is now focused on helping people land their dream jobs.

"The premise of Parnunu is to help people be prepared and ready," Otteman said.

All revenues will come from memberships with no advertising or pop-ups on the site. Individuals who want to upload information to the site are charged \$34.95 per year or \$69.00 for an expanded space suitable for photographers and designers and others who need more space to upload their work samples. Companies that want to be part of the site are charged \$1,999 per year, \$699 for 90 days or \$299 for three months. Individuals have their own URL that they can send to prospective employers.

He is pleased with the early response to the site with about 75 already taking part by the end of April. Before launching the site, he conducted some beta testing and made changes based on suggestions. Most of the marketing has been viral through YouTube, Facebook and word-of-mouth. A promotional video was shot in Chicago in December 2009 with interviews of people on the street.

"If you lost your job, how prepared are you to find a new job?" "If a dream job became available, how prepared are you to go for it?" Those were two examples of questions asked of passersby. Most were not prepared and hadn't thought much about job seeking, with one person commenting that maybe he had become too comfortable in his job of seven years.

Before launching the site, Otteman received intense eight-week training through the **Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center's** FastTrac New Venture program. Otteman said the name "Parnunu" came from his father-in-law Jack DeWitt, now 99, an entrepreneur and founder of **Big Dutchman Inc.** in Holland. Parnunu was DeWitt's childhood, made-up word for "banana" — a food that back then was considered unique, cherished and a special treat.

Developers worked hard to make the site user friendly, easy to upload and easy to remove information. Otteman worked with Holland-based **Fairly Painless Advertising**



Andrew Otteman recently launched [parnunu.com](http://www.parnunu.com) as a user-friendly site for workers and job seekers to manage their careers and upload and store information to be ready to seek new jobs and highlight career histories.

to design and develop the site.

Fairly Painless Advertising Strategist Beth Taylor said her company helped Otteman realize the vision of what he wanted to do.

"The foundation of his thinking is that people are so much more than that piece of paper," Taylor said.

She said Otteman envisioned the site as a way for people to show their best side with their photo and examples of work. He wanted the site to be user oriented — easy, welcoming and friendly.

"The whole process of looking for work — there's so many roadblocks in the way," Taylor said.

The potential for the site is largely untapped. Taylor said every time the site was shown to a new audience, they found new ways to use it. For examples, universities told him they view it as a great tool to help prepare students. **MiBiz**