



Producer blends service, success

Entrepreneur offers skills to nonprofits. **Business C8**

REVOLUTIONARY APPROACH

By Martin Romjue

BUSINESS WRITER

When Dan Griggs chose his line of work, money was not his priority.

He says it was more important to find a job he really liked that enabled him to contribute through service.

But his business — Media Revolution of Torrance — has established a profitable niche nevertheless. Griggs provides professional video production to mostly nonprofit groups, such as the Salvation Army and the Private Industry Council.

Since Griggs started Media Revolution in 1991, the company has increased its revenues an average of 12 percent each year. It gets 70 percent of its business from nonprofit clients, and about 30 percent from corporate clients.

Griggs, 37, developed his passion for video as a student at Loyola Marymount University, and through his work at Torrance CitiCable.

"I knocked on their door and said I would work as a volunteer," Griggs said. "I wrote cue cards and when they saw I had some ability, I got hired as a writer and worked my way into a producer position."

He started Media Revolution just after graduating with a communications degree from Loyola Marymount University.

"The competition in the field was so great, that with the amount of contacts I had, I could make more money for myself than working with other people," Griggs said. "Writing and directing video programs is what I love to do, as opposed to having people ask you to get coffee."

One of Griggs' first clients was the Salvation Army, a relationship that started in college. The organization allowed him to use its officer training school as a location to shoot his student film. In return, Griggs took some 35mm Salvation Army slides and melded them into a video program. Since then, he has produced numerous videos for it.

When launching Media Revolution, Griggs had to rent his equipment until he could afford his first video camera. He gradually accumulated cameras, editing machines, a computer and digital devices. Griggs saves on overhead by operating his equipment out of his home, and hiring contractors and crews for video shoots.

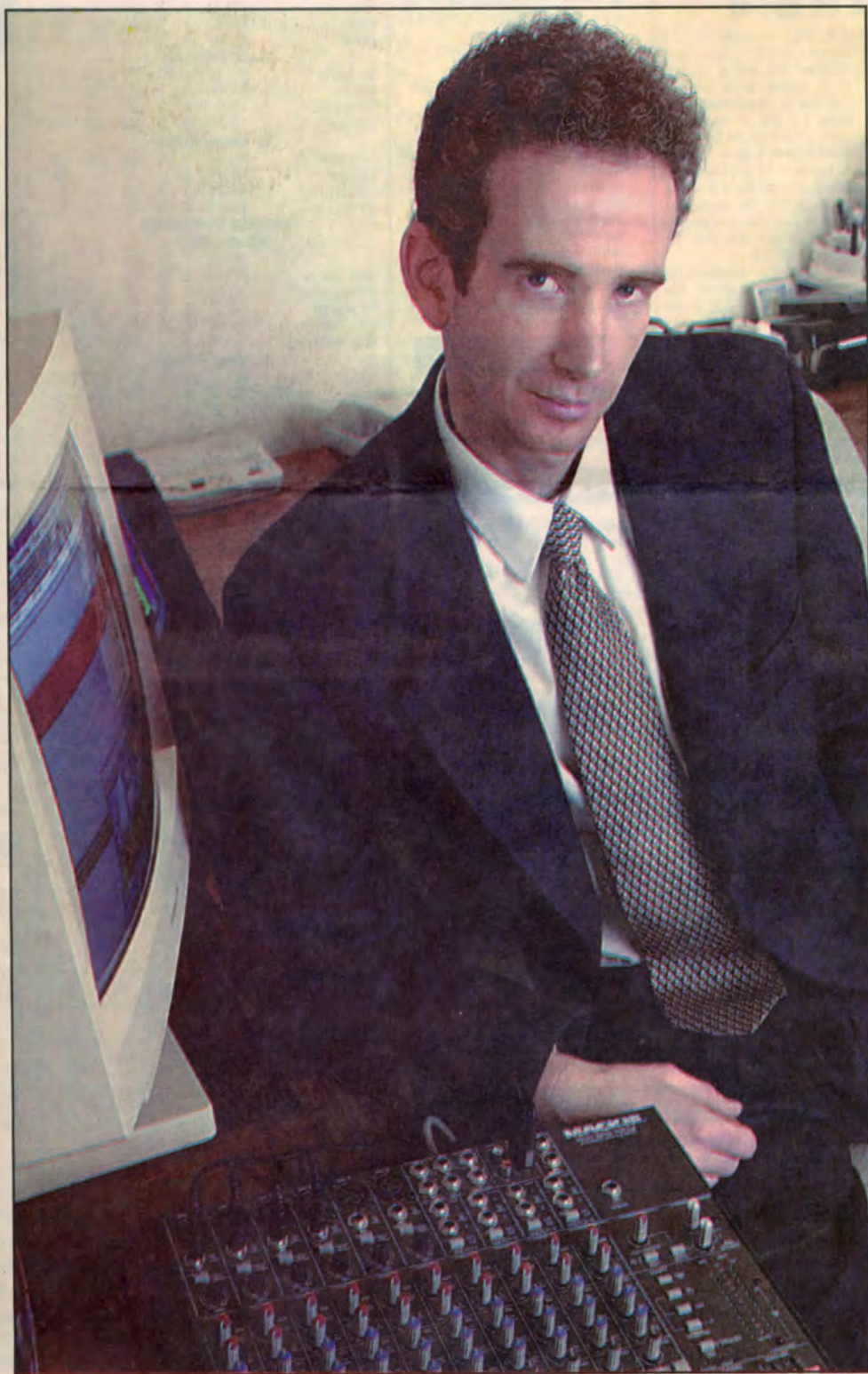
To grow his business, Griggs says he approached many nonprofits, and found the market underserved. The nature of nonprofits means offering below-market prices — a challenge for a business entrepreneur.

"They're getting a better product for less money, so they're grateful for that so the relationship is congenial," Griggs said. "But there is some tension in the fact that I am a businessman and need to make money for the business to survive."

Griggs said he thinks of his work in terms of "making my business succeed" as opposed to "making me rich."

Through cold calls and word of mouth, Griggs gradually picked up corporate clients, such as Casio Phonemate and Trident Data Systems, to complement his nonprofit focus. His work spans promotional, instructional and public service videos.

"I don't even count hours anymore because work is so much a part of my life and lifestyle," Griggs said.



ROBERT CASILLAS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Dan Griggs, 37, runs Media Revolution out of his Torrance home. His passion for video blossomed while he was a student at Loyola Marymount University.



- ▶ **Name:** Media Revolution
- ▶ **Location:** Torrance
- ▶ **Founded:** 1991
- ▶ **Owner:** Dan Griggs
- ▶ **Employees:** One, with contract crews

- ▶ **Top clients:** U.S. Salvation Army, Private Industry Council, City of Los Angeles, Casio Phonemate
- ▶ **Web site:** home.att.net/~mediarevolution