Scuba.com Has Defied The Odds, Successfully Changing From A Retail Chain To An Online Store

For Immediate Release

RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, Calif./EWORLDWIRE/June 8, 2004 --- James' and Melinda Herndon's successful SCUBA diving retail website, Scuba.com, has continued to flourish after the dotcom meltdown. The Herndons had owned a successful chain of SCUBA diving shops, but closed their stores and evolved their business to an entirely online operation.

Both of these college-educated professionals knew the risks inherent in an online retail business, and had noticed the failure of many commercial websites. They changed their business plan regardless and the result has been success.

Their motivation for the unorthodox business change began in 1995. The Herndons were a married team that owned and managed virtually every aspect of the Discount Diver's Centers - a chain of 8 retail stores located throughout California and Nevada. While business was good, the hours were long and there was little time for life outside of work - and certainly no time to start a family.

They carefully assessed the challenges and opportunities of moving their business from a retail operation to a strictly online business. After projecting the potential profits from a web-based business, and comparing the significant labor and time demands of an online store versus a chain of stores, they decided to move from the "world of bricks" to the "world of clicks." They were aware that once the stores were closed, it would be impossible to turn back.

Complicating matters was Melinda's dream of having an online, automated help desk to answer virtually any customer question that could arise. Only long hours and extensive programming sessions would accomplish this goal.

The website was officially launched in 1996; it was a smash hit from the very beginning. A virtual scuba instructor named Kotie functions as an online help desk, and has over 250,000 answers to virtually any scuba-related inquiry. Over 6,300 in-stock items provide a depth and selection that is unbeatable. And with live help from diving instructors who possess in-depth knowledge about the sport, www.scuba.com has rapidly become a favorite site for tens of thousands of people looking for the right gear, with the right information, at a competitive price.

Today scuba.com has over 40,000 unique visitors each day, making it one of the highest rated sites in the industry. Revenues now far exceed those of the former retail operation, and they continue to grow each year.

Despite this tremendous growth, the company founders have found a way to enjoy a personal life, and now take pleasure in seeing the colors and splendor of the undersea world through the eyes of their child.

More information on Scuba.com may be found at the company's website, www.scuba.com.

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