



Photo Courtesy of Jo Lynne Stark

Learning While Helping Others Succeed

The Hot Ruby Company was one that is family business and in the beginning the Warren's didn't even know where to start as a business. Today you have to market the business online and on print for everything to fall into place, especially when you are an entrepreneur.

At the start of it all, Gwen Warren, now the managing partner of Hot Ruby, made the delicious drink, just as her mother-in-law once did, one pot at a time, using fresh cranberries, citrus fruits and other flavors that remind you of the feeling that you are home; to share with her family during the holidays, birthdays, or any occasion for that matter.

"Ruby always served it hot, and never with added spirits. However, we can say that the drink is delicious hot or cold, with or without spirits," Warren states as she reminisces about the past time.

When the Warrens decided to share the drink with their friends, the sensation was born. Friends that had tried it begged the Warrens to bottle the product. They also provided insight to "mixers" that intensified the taste of the drink, and created the possibility for it to be sold as an "adult" beverage.

The Warrens knew they had a business. But as a new business they knew that they had a problem, they didn't know where to start to market themselves to the public.

"While speaking with Matt Williams of the Texas Department of Agriculture about the product, he informed

me of this new business that Texas Tech University's agricultural communications program had launched." Warren said. "My entire family and I are all Texas Tech graduates, so I knew that this service was a new one and with the things that I have heard about the agricultural communications program I knew they could help us."

Picador Creative, a component Center for Agriculture

Technology Transfer, or CATT, was established in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communications in January 2014. This is a service that takes on interns and gives them real world experience, with dealing with actual clients.

"The Warren's had a dream of taking something that they really love, and had a passion to share it with the public, they are a great testament of hard work and they never gave up on their dream," stated Matt Williams.

Interns that are involved with Picador Creative describe the services of graphic design, copywriting, video production, and web development. The interns do most of the work but there are professors of the college that make sure that everything is staying on topic and task them to create beautiful work, using the skills that they have been taught.

Picador Creative gives agricultural communications students the opportunity to intern for the college, in order to put what they have learned in the classroom to use, and gain real world experience in the industry. This helps

"It was a great feeling of success that everything that I have learned paid off."

those students that are getting ready to graduate build their portfolio for success.

Jaclyn Roberts, Brittani Pfau, and Morgan Lockaby were all part of Picador Creative when Warren approached them about Hot Ruby. Jaclyn was the liaison with the Warrens and Brittani and Morgan were interchangeably writing copy and designing for the website build. While each intern had their own specific job it was important for them to see the value in each other and work well as a team to handle such a massive project.

"In the beginning, we were trying to find our groove as a company," Roberts said.

From behind a computer the three interns, armed with an intensive set of skills they acquired from their agricultural communications and related courses, helped the Warrens build their new website to advertise their products to help their sales skyrocket.

"Picador creative helped us mainly with our website, they also did some branding," Warren said.

The Hot Ruby website was launched as an actual public business that was created by two people that have a deep passion for the product that they are creating.

"When the Warrens came to us, they had a pretty basic logo and a few color ideas," Lockaby said. "We helped them move forward with their branding process."

As the branding process drew towards a close, Hot Ruby was invited to Dallas Market Center to showcase Hot Ruby in a booth included in the gourmet food section. This was the first time that Hot Ruby was shown to the public. With them being a new business, the Warrens knew that the website and branding that Picador Creative offered would help them after leaving this showcase.

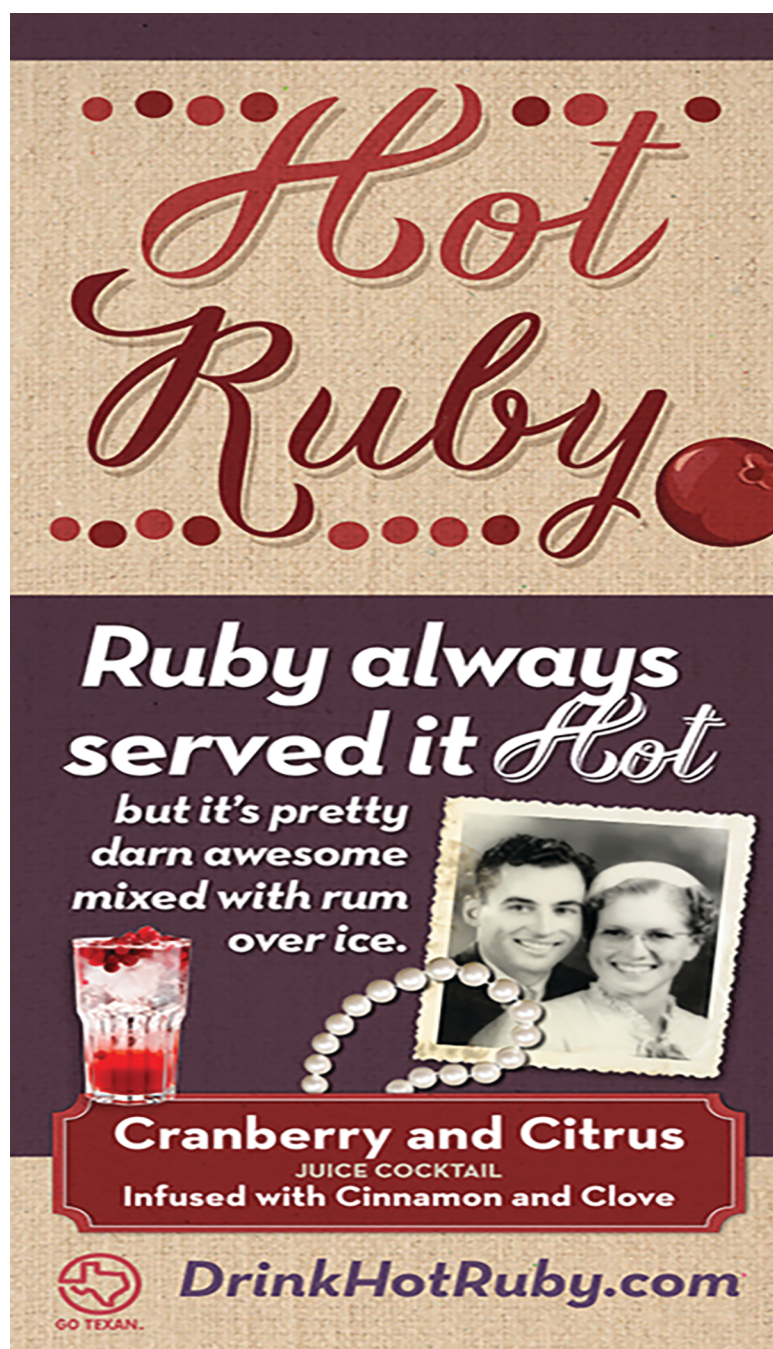
Before getting to the showcase Gwen said, "I received the call that the website was live and it was the biggest feeling of relief." It was at Dallas Market Center one year later that they won the "Gourmet Gold Award for the Best Beverage."

The recognition confirmed to the Warrens that the public was excited about the product and all the different recipes and ways that you can drink Hot Ruby it could be something that every person can enjoy, young and old. The Warrens' success also validated what Picador Creative could accomplish.

"It was a great feeling of success to know that everything I'd been learning during that internship was being put to good use. We all worked together as a team to create products that would be useful to our client and attract more consumers to their product," Pfau stated.

The feeling was unanimous among all those involved was a sense of relief and success that the website was live and that Picador Creative had helped the sales of this business skyrocket.

"I give credit to Picador Creative for all their hard work, and that they are the perfect place to start for anyone thinking about starting an entrepreneurship," Warren said. 🍷



The advertisement features a textured, light brown background. At the top, the words "Hot Ruby" are written in a large, elegant, red cursive font, with a small red cherry to the right. Below this, the text "Ruby always served it Hot" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, with "Hot" in a cursive script. Underneath, it says "but it's pretty darn awesome mixed with rum over ice." in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. To the left of this text is a glass of red cocktail with ice and a cherry. To the right is a black and white photo of a man and a woman smiling, framed with a scalloped border. Below the photo is a string of pearls. At the bottom, a red banner contains the text "Cranberry and Citrus JUICE COCKTAIL Infused with Cinnamon and Clove" in white. Below the banner is a red outline of the state of Texas with the text "GO TEXAN." and the website "DrinkHotRuby.com" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.



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