

METRO DETROIT BUSINESS

Web Elite keeps clients on top of the latest trends

Software program analyzes survey results in minutes.

By Joel J. Smith
The Detroit News

ANN ARBOR — When consumers respond to survey questionnaires, it usually takes weeks or months for the results to filter back to company executives.

But Web Elite, a small software and Web page design company in Ann Arbor, has developed a program that analyzes survey results in minutes, letting companies quickly adjust to changing trends on a daily basis.

Marketing experts say the software, currently used by the giant computer maker Hewlett Packard and others, has the potential of saving companies millions of dollars by allowing them to correct problems before they linger too long.

"Our software allows someone to go in and slice and dice the data any way they want in real time," said Jacques Habra, founder of Web Elite. "If you see a trend developing in the morning, you can change things by the afternoon.

"The key is real time. The data is always current. This puts valuable information in the hands of people that can use it."

In the case of Hewlett Packard, the company is constantly surveying its customers to determine their satisfaction and loyalty. Some of the data are collected from warranty cards, Internet surveys and telephone polling. The information is immediately added to a database on an Internet site.

Using the Web Elite soft-



David Coates / The Detroit News

Web Elite account executive Christopher Dooley, left, business development director Raj Trigunayat and founder Jacques Habra go all-out to drum up new business for the Ann Arbor firm.

Web Elite

Headquarters: Ann Arbor

Founded: 1995

Founder: Jacques Habra

Employees: Nine

Projected 1999 sales:

\$1.4 million

Projected 2000 sales:

\$3.5 million

Focus: Design and develop interactive Web sites and provide online software to analyze data from surveys

Initial public offering: 2001

Web site: www.webelite.com

ware, Hewlett Packard officials can analyze the data and determine if there is a problem. The process can be done in a few short minutes by someone with access to the Internet and a password.

Marketing experts say the Web Elite software has gained the attention of many company executives.

"The sad fact is that companies are not accustomed to getting real-time results," said Len Wanetik, a business marketing consultant in West Bloomfield Township. "But now in a rapidly changing market, they can make some critical decisions that are based on current data.

"If I can cut just two weeks off a cycle by using this software, it's a tremendous difference. You don't want to have to wait four to six weeks to discover you have a problem."

Habra founded Web Elite in 1995 while still an undergraduate student at the University of Michigan. He started by designing Web pages, but branched out into other communication-related areas of the Internet.

Today, Web Elite has a dozen employees with sales expected to reach \$1.4 million this year and more than double that in 2000. Habra hopes to take the company public in late 2001.