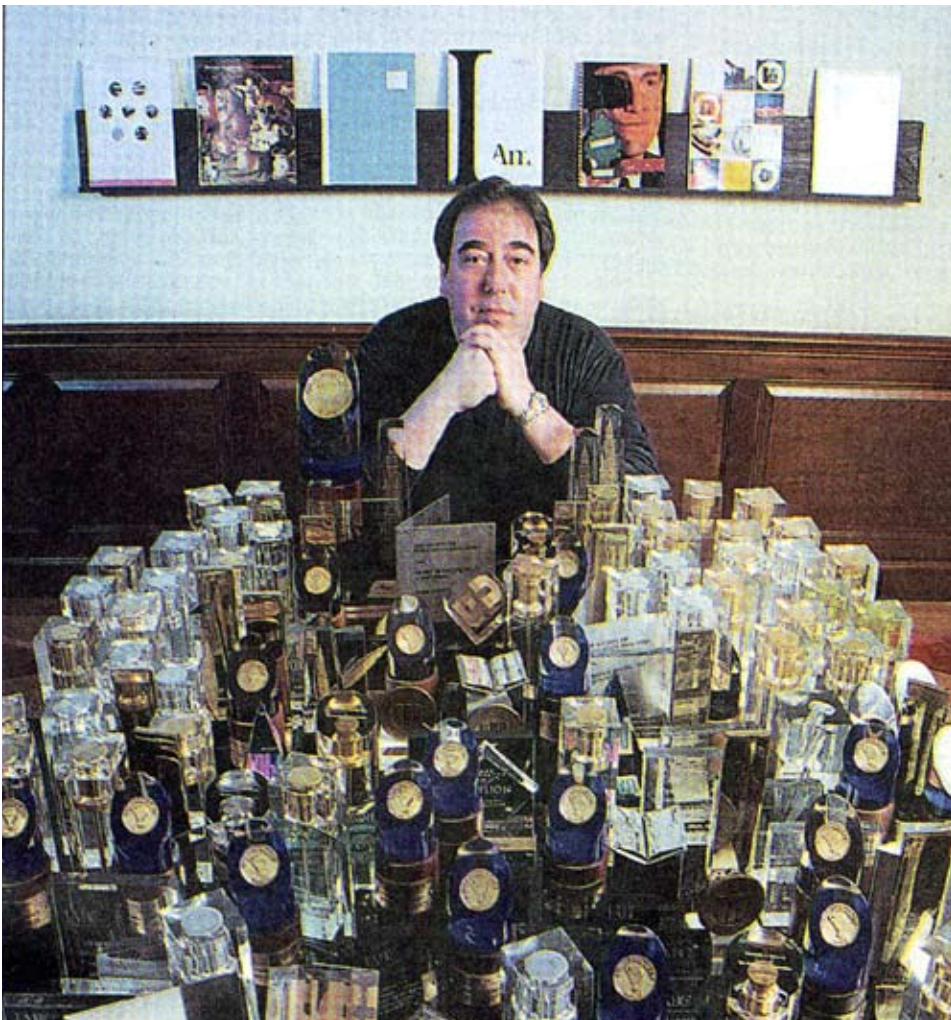


# THE PLAIN DEALER

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Mark Schwartz, president of Nesnadny + Schwartz, said winning awards is not like winning a beauty contest for the Cleveland graphic design firm: "It can have a tangible and measurable impact on your business."

"The Addys are the most important communications competition in Cleveland, but there are hundreds of competitions all over the world," said Schwartz, who heads an 11-member staff. "The impact of winning can be very dramatic to a company like ours. About half of our work is outside the Cleveland area, and the majority of that work stems from the reputation we've developed from being published in various competition publications."

In the last decade, Nesnadny + Schwartz has won 693 local, regional, national and international awards.

More than 200 of those awards came from annual reports designed for Progressive Insurance Co. in Mayfield.

Gail Bozeman, director of events for the American Advertising Federation in Washington D.C., said every so often she gets calls from small- and mid-size firms that tell her winning a national Addy helped them win new business.

In working to sell themselves, larger national and international firms generally rely on the reputations they developed through memorable work. Still, they take the time to enter the competition because awards motivate the staff to create more and even better advertising.

"It keeps their creative juices flowing," said Bozeman, who runs the national Addy competition. "Everybody likes strokes."

Bill Brokaw, president of Bill Brokaw Advertising, said winning advertising awards helps his agency attract clients that want the level of creativity his staff produces.

The mid-size agency was the only Cleveland agency to win a national Addy last year, snagging the award for a direct-mail campaign it did for Info-Data Inc., a Beachwood company that performs computerized background checks.

"A lot of our clients may not have the dollars to run commercials like McDonald's or other major companies, so the advertising that's created needs to be creative and have high impact," Brokaw said. "And subdued, boring advertising can't do that."

Jared Chaney, vice president of corporate communications at Medical Mutual of Ohio, worked at three international advertising agencies in San Francisco before moving to Cleveland two years ago. Now that he's on the client side, he understands the value in winning awards from both sides.

"You get to be a hot shop from winning business and winning awards, and that can have a real snowball-effect," said Chaney. "But the danger lies in forgetting that it's the client who should bask in the glory of the agency winning that award. It can become an ego thing that you have to fight. Let the client take the bows. That's what builds a relationship."

## More than flattery

Small advertising agencies find Addy awards can bring in clients from around the world

By MARCIA PLEDGER

Mark Schwartz first realized winning Addy awards meant more than an ego boost when he landed a million-dollar project from a Paris office furniture company.

Three years ago, a representative from Clestra Hauserman's Cleveland office heard about Nesnadny + Schwartz walking away with 10 of the 38 awards presented that year by the Cleveland Advertising Association. Before the annual local competition, the furniture company was only considering advertising and design firms in Paris, Los Angeles and New York.

"They asked us to come in and show our work, and

we left with the account," said Schwartz, president of the 19-year-old Cleveland graphic design firm.

Snagging new clients as a result of winning awards for creative work is the ultimate compliment for advertising and graphic design firms. But in an industry that plays on emotions to drive people to buy a client's products, local advertising executives say the main reason they enter creative competitions is to sell themselves and build morale.

Last night, about 700 people attended this year's Addy awards dinner at the State Theatre.

For the advertising community, the Addys are the equivalent of the movie industry's Academy Awards show. It's a time to view competitors' work, cheer them or remain quiet with envy.