

NEWSMAKERS

Christmas Lighting Service Helps With Holiday Decorating, Hanging

BY LEE ZION

Staff Writer

A local company has gotten its name in lights by making a name in lighting.

National Décor & Lighting, Inc., of San Marcos, is best known for its seasonal business, (WeHangChristmasLights.com). The firm, which relies mainly on seasonal business but also has a few year-round branches, hangs Christmas lights at both homes and commercial properties.

Joshua Trees, sales director of the company, along with director of operations Michael Quinn, started the firm in 1996. This year, the company has grown to 22 employees and projects about \$350,000 to \$400,000 in gross revenues.

As the name implies, the firm hangs Christmas lights at the start of the holiday season.

The company also takes down the decorations at the end of the season, Trees said.

Residential customers find the service convenient because they dislike having to climb ladders, or the hassle of taking lights down. Electrical problems are another concern — an improperly wired display could blow fuses or trip circuit breakers, he said.

Also, the firm gives customers the option of leasing company-owned decorations, saving people from shopping for holiday lights, Trees said.

"They like the fact that we're a complete service," he said. "We bring all the lights out, we put the lights up, we take the lights down, and we also service the lights through the season."

National Décor's residential service can range from simple displays for \$250, to elabo-

rate setups costing as much as \$20,000, Trees said.

For Trees, the Christmas light season starts in late October, with all the lights coming down by mid-January. In a given week, the service may visit about 50 residential customers, he said.

The company also creates larger displays for commercial customers, including Hazard

Center, Saks 5th Avenue, and the city of Escondido, Trees said.

National Décor isn't just in the holiday business. The firm also creates pole-mounted banners, the sort seen hanging from light poles in city centers for advertising or decoration, he said.

But it's the seasonal business that's growing the most. Trees has already set up a license in Dallas and plans to establish new licenses or franchises throughout the Southwest, he said.

WWW.WEHANGCHRISTMASLIGHTS.COM

Following the (Latin) American Dream: Gallery Combines Heritage and Home Décor

BY PATTI STRICKLAND

Staff Writer

The American dream is changing for San Diegans Toby and Paula Danylechuk. Toby, a former biotech consultant and Paula, currently a marketing analyst for San Diego-based Kyocera Wireless, took a trip to Mexico to escape the hustle and bustle of corporate life and came home to San Diego with a new dream.



ITZA Galerias
Home Décor

furnishing companies ended up with ridiculous cost structures to their businesses, expenses had gotten out of hand, and when the economy went south, they weren't prepared for it."

Toby also said that since ITZA is such a niche

ever, in hindsight, it was probably a great time to launch, because a lot of the home

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It's Just Lunch CEO Daniel Dolan believes in first dates.

Dating Service Plays Mix and Match Over Lunch

BY SALLY ARDIZZONE

Staff Writer

One San Diego-based dating service wants you to have your cake and meet someone too.

It's **Just Lunch** pairs professionals too busy with work to manage their personal lives. For between \$1,000 and \$1,500, It's Just Lunch will pre-screen and match businessmen and businesswomen for a minimum 14 first dates at lunchtime.

With five new locations added last month in Honolulu, Birmingham, Ala., Orlando, West Palm Beach and Kansas City, It's Just Lunch is quickly expanding. The dating service sees revenues of \$20 million compared with \$500,000 in 1993.

"If you're a businessperson, your time is the most valuable thing for you," said Daniel Dolan, chairman and CEO. "We're sort of like a personal trainer who gets you in shape, only we're helping someone with their personal life."

The two offices in San Diego, with 21