

MEDIA & MARKETING

Business

Arts led David Landis to PR

BY NATALI T. DEL CONTE
Staff Writer

David Landis started his career as a pianist. It was his enthusiasm for the arts that led him to public relations. While working for the Chicago Symphony, he was in charge of dealing with irate ticket holders when the performances changed. One day the public relations manager walked past his desk while he was taking particularly good care of an attendee.

"She said, 'I think I want you in the PR department' so I started answering phones in the PR department," recalled Landis. "It's been such a whirlwind for me. I think the creativity and diversity of clients makes it incredibly exciting."

Landis now owns his own public relations agency in San Francisco, Landis Communications Inc. It handles some of San Francisco's most prestigious clients, such as Whole Foods Market Inc. (WFMI), Cold Stone Creamery, the SPCA and the San Francisco Symphony. This year, the firm celebrates its 15th year of business.

"Last year was our second best year in revenues," said Landis. "The first best was dot-com, so I sort of don't even count that year. We had about \$1.7 million in revenues [last year] and we're one of the only independent consumer agencies that's born and bred from the community."

Landis was born in Chicago but makes it very clear that San Fran-

David Landis

Age: 49

Family: Domestic partner of 17 years, Sean Dowdall, senior VP, marketing, Wells Fargo & Co. (WFC).

Hometown: Chicago, Ill.

Education: Bachelor of music in art administration with a minor in piano performance, Northwestern University

Books reading: "Saving Fish from Drowning" by Amy Tan; "The Tender Bar" by J.R.

Moehring; "City of Falling Angels" by John Berendt

Favorite quote: "People rarely succeed unless they have fun in what they are doing."

— Dale Carnegie

Inspirational figure: Martin Luther King, Jr.

cisco runs through his veins. He moved here 25 years ago to handle press for the opening of Davies Symphony Hall. When he opened his firm, one of his first projects was the remodeling of Davies Symphony Hall. He feels that project brought him full circle in his career and established his agency as a community-oriented shop.

"I really believe that that's good business," he said. "When you're involved in the community, you find out what's going on and people get to know you. They know who you are, what your values are, what your work is like and whether or not you're smart."



JASON STEINBERG/SPECIAL TO THE EXAMINER

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