

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

COMPANY PROFILE

WOW!Works

WOWing the World All Over Again

Does it take guts to produce live-event spectacles that involve everything from pyrotechnics and cryogenics to smoke and flames? What about producing five super bowl halftime shows – arguably the most extravagant few minutes of the entertainment year – does that take courage? If none of those things get your butterflies turning, how about this: leaving a high-pay, high-level senior executive position at our region's largest employer, after a stellar 20-year career, to start a brand new company with no staff, a tiny office and nothing but your industry reputations to stand on – does that take guts?

That is exactly what Bettina Buckley and Tylor Wymer did when they left Walt Disney World just a few short months ago. Their departure signals a new entrepreneurial trend that is emerging in the Central Florida entertainment industry. Industry experts can now sell their entertainment expertise to an entirely new audience.

Between the two of them,

"We're now offering to the rest of the industry what we've had the great honor and pleasure of doing for the last 20-plus years."

- Bettina Buckley, WOW!Works

Buckley and Wymer had put in more than four decades worth of time at Disney. Both have overseen some of Disney's biggest productions. From President Bush's "Points of Light" ceremony to the Walt Disney World Twenty-fifth Anniversary spectacular, from the grand opening of Epcot and the Disney MGM studios to the Super Bowl shows and star-studded opening nights, Buckley and Wymer boast resumes that read like those of A-list Hollywood superstars. In January of this year, they left it all to start WOW!WORKS, an

It's big business in Central Florida. Learn Who's who and what's what around town..

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international, all-encompassing special effect company.

Wagons West

What force could possibly convince two industry legend to leave Mickey and his billion's of dollars in production resources behind. It's actually quite simple, and for Buckley and Wymer, very personal.

"This is something we've been talking about, off and on, for a while," says Buckley. "We wouldn't be who we are without our experiences at Disney, but at the same time, we wanted to expand, to grow, to test our entrepreneurial skills, to grow artistically and creatively, and we felt we needed to make this change."

You don't have to look very hard to find the Disney influence at WOW!Works. The founders' official titles are dripping with that special brand of Disney charm – Chief Effects Orchestrator for Buckley and Chief Effects Artist for Wymer. But these entrepreneurs hope that "Disney Style" is exactly what their client will want to buy.

"We have quite a bit of experience in diversification," says Wymer. "We've done so much with sporting events – the Super Bowls, the Orange Bowl, the Citrus Bowl, the NBA All-Star Game, the first Orlando Magic game – so we understand the parameters around those types of events. We've done Broadway events and a number of grand openings."

The New Model

The WOW!Works business model proves that "entertainment" in Central Florida has moved beyond the traditional theme park and TV-studio settings. From cruise lines to architects, many unconventional

industries are looking for the unique moments that Buckley and Wymer can create.

"What we're offering is really a niche within a niche," says Buckley. "When you talk about the entertainment industry today, there are so many facets. We're offering special effects design and all the things that go around that. "Where we have come from, at Disney, they have the luxury of a special effects design team as part of their creative team. Lots of people don't have that opportunity or have never thought about that before. So, we're now offering to the rest of the industry what we've had the great honor and pleasure of doing for the last 20-plus years."

The bottom line for Central Florida businesses is this: If you want a Disney flare at your next corporate or public event, you can now get it without going through the Mouse himself.