

# Designed for Success



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-Stephanie Thompson

**Stephanie Thompson**  
**Agile Graphics**

210 Long View  
Carlisle, PA 17013  
Cumberland County  
[www.agilegraphics.com](http://www.agilegraphics.com)

**Industry:** Graphic Design  
**Year Founded:** 2004  
**SBDC Assistance:** Market Research, Sales Assistance, Networking  
**Additional Partners:** Chamber of Commerce, Success Learning Systems



**Shippensburg University SBDC**

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In the past three months, graphic artist, Stephanie Thompson, turned her struggling business into a thriving one. Her dedication and passion for her trade combined with help and advice from the SBDC has made her business more successful than she could ever have imagined.

In 2004, Thompson started Agile Graphics. Agile Graphics specializes in a wide variety of graphic design. Most of Thompson’s work is geared toward printed materials such as brochures, advertisements, business cards, stationary, newsletters, logos and corporate identity programs. The company also offers web design options such as website and blog design.

Thompson first considered starting her own business while pregnant with her first child, Elaina. Thompson wanted a way to stay at home with her daughter, while keeping up with her career at the same time. “I wanted to keep my skills fresh,” she said. With a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Kutztown University and four years working in the graphic design industry, Thompson had enough knowledge to make her dream a reality. Thompson first ran Agile Graphics out of her home in Leesburg, Va., just outside Washington D.C. This made it possible for her to raise her two girls Elaina, 7, and Ella, 5, while working 10 hours a week.

Five years ago, Thompson moved from her home in Leesburg to Carlisle, where she continued to work part-time at her home-based business. As her two daughters got older, Thompson wanted to expand her graphic design business into a full-time career. This past June, she began marketing herself in an attempt to draw in more clients. With little luck, Thompson got in touch with a Murata Business Center representative, who recommended that she contact the SBDC.

The SBDC helped Thompson turn her business around by offering marketing advice and creating a list of potential clients in the area. They also helped her get in contact with the Carlisle Chamber of Commerce, which works to help the economic growth of local businesses. “My biggest difficulty was connecting with people, and the SBDC helped with that,” Thompson said. She also plans to attend other networking events such as the Mechanicsburg Business Women’s Luncheon, to keep up to date with current business trends and meet other entrepreneurs.

Since working with the SBDC, Agile Graphics has gained a variety of new clients, such as associations, printers and health care professionals in need of design assistance. Because of Agile Graphic’s increase in clients, Thompson now works between 30 and 40 hours a week compared to her previous 10-hour work weeks. Agile Graphic’s sales have also increased significantly since May, and they continue to grow. Before working with the SBDC, “I was dead in the water,” said Thompson. “I had clients, but nobody was giving me work.” Now, “I feel like I’ve created a bit of a monster, and I’m overwhelmed,” she exclaimed. “I think that my business is more than thriving, and I’m pleased with what I’ve accomplished in the past two months.”

Because of the SBDC’s research and networking services, Agile Graphic’s is booming with business. With help from the SBDC, Thompson is excited about the success of Agile Graphics and hopes to continue to see her business flourish.