

Local company hopes software hits big

By Nick Sargent

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The software that will make buying Grand Theater tickets over the Internet a reality may mean big business for the local company that developed it.

Martech Systems Inc. has worked with the theater since 1998, when it supplied the Grand with its Folio Box Office Software that allowed the theater to do simultaneous real-time sales at its ticket window and over the phone.

As Internet ticket technology has become widely available, smaller venues like the Grand Theater and many of the other customers Martech serves with its software have clamored for the ability to sell on the Web.

Partnering with a company called RepeatSeat, Martech now can offer Internet sales software that includes best available seat selection and flexible ticket delivery, which includes E-Tickets.

"The technology is trickling down and is beginning to become more affordable," said Michael Martens, marketing director for Martech. "Online ticket sales have been around 10 years, now the technology is becoming more widespread, more affordable.

"It opens up a whole new avenue (for smaller venues). Customers no longer have to call during box office hours or go down to the ticket office. They can do it 24 hours a day - they can purchase tickets early morning and late in the evening."

The company got its start nearly 20 years ago when it developed software to be used by state and county fairs to track and tally competitions. Its Folio Box Office sales have been on the rise, and the new Internet technology should only increase business, Martens said.

"A lot of our customers have been waiting for us to release this product," he said. "It's opening a whole new avenue for us.

"Smaller theaters don't do online ticketing because of the cost involved with the major players. What we're able to do is provide online ticketing to smaller-size venues at an affordable cost."

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About Martech Systems Inc.

Founded: 1986

Headquarters: 614 N. Third Ave., Suite B in Wausau

Chief executive: Judy Martens, president and CEO

Employees: 11

Type of business: Software development

Phone: 845-2794

Something you should know: The company has about 750 customers for its fair management software and about 140 customers for its box office software.