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Man Cave Authority

By Sophie Braccini



From left: Brad Cogswell and Logan Franey
Photo provided

John Gray would approve of Man Cave Authority; some 25 years ago the author of "Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus" theorized that when men's tolerance to stressful situations is exceeded, they go spend time in their "caves." Two young Lamorinda men agree and feel that men deserve a service that caters to their primordial need to build such a cave. Brad Cogswell and Logan Franey, who met at Campolindo High School and are now in their mid-20s, launched Man Cave Authority, an online community site where cool caves are featured and where they sell most everything a man might need to design the cave of his dreams.

Cogswell is a University of Southern California alumnus with diverse professional experience. He worked in commercial real estate after graduation, built a gym in Thailand, and started an online business selling saddles. Man Cave Authority is a partnership with his friend Franey, based on a concept they both love. "We do not have man caves yet," says Cogswell, "but Logan and I remember the ones our fathers, and friends' fathers, had."

"Logan is the creative writer of our team," explains Cogswell. "He writes interviews with

people and posts on our blog." Creating this online hub is key to their business model. "This is a topic people are very passionate about and want to showcase," he says. "There are also people looking for information and tips; not everyone has thousands of dollars to spend on their caves." At www.mancaveauthority.com, people can find examples and tips for budget-conscious cave building.

Some of the caves featured on the website are striking. The Oct. 3 blog entry features a hunting and fishing man-mansion that includes a billiard room, arcade, and full bar. There's also a Toronto Maple Leaf man cave, and a movie and battle station man cave. The most fascinating aspect is the attention paid to detail and the collection of memorabilia that some of these men have lovingly gathered, whether their caves consume an entire floor or just their garages.

The list of products that can be ordered is vast. It includes some very nice beer dispensers (Kegerators), bar stools, and wine racks; all types of seating - home theater seats, recliners, racecar seats; game supplies and equipment such as pool tables and darts; and smaller ticket items including manly lighting, wall art and clocks.

"Some of the more popular categories are the sports man caves," explains Cogswell. There is a whole section on the website that focuses just on furniture and accessories emblazoned with sports team logos and colors. "You can order recliners with the colors and emblem of your favorite team," says the young businessman. The 49ers recliner, for example, comes in either black leather or red microfiber with the team's logo emblazoned on the seatback and footrest.

"It was not easy to convince some of the manufacturers to let us be resellers of their products," explains Cogswell. With a proliferation of pay-per-click sites, manufacturers are wary of young sites that don't have a long history of service. But the team put together a solid presentation. "I believe that focusing on the stories and the blog, and being very active online, convinced them that we had the right business strategy. Our sales are doing very well, even for a

very young site," he says.

Cogswell is still a local guy, but not for long - he landed at his parents' house in Moraga upon returning from Thailand and is planning a move to San Francisco. Take the website for a spin at www.mancaveauthority.com.

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