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Justin Near 25

President
Near Perfect Media
Farmington Hills

Education: Bachelor's degree in telecommunication, information and media studies from Michigan State University.

Claim to fame: Founding publisher of *Six Degrees* magazine, now owner of his own public-relations firm.

Next step: Grow his PR firm's client base and open offices in other cities.

Justin Near is a Michigan guy. He just isn't from here.

Born in Texas, he went to junior high in Belgium while his father worked for **Dow Chemical Co.** in The Netherlands.



photo: John Sobczak

After moving to Midland and then getting a degree from Michigan State, Near planted himself in Farmington Hills. There, he's run a magazine and now runs his own growing public-relations firm.

Oh, and he's a defender of metro Detroit: "A lot of people dog it, but I like the sense of community in each little pocket. They all have their unique things to offer."

Among the things those communities offer are the people, places and events that fill the pages of what is now *Six Degrees* magazine, a pocket-size monthly with trendy local and national content aimed at "influential cosmopolitan trendsetters." Near was among the investors in the publication and its first publisher.

When the magazine launched in September 2004 as *Ego Detroit*, circulation was 10,000, Near said, and it's since grown to 25,000. The magazine, which became *Six Degrees* when Near and others bought that Miami-based title in 2005, is free and distributed at 600 upscale locations in metro Detroit.

"We built the magazine from scratch here," he said. There are Miami and Atlanta editions, too.

Once the Detroit edition was launched and stable, Near felt it was time to do something different.

"After two years I wanted to move on to something else and do something new," he said. That something new is **Near Perfect Media L.L.C.**, a public-relations and marketing firm he formed in September.

Near plans to stay involved in an advisory role with *Six Degrees*. He remains a minority investor in the publication.

Why he lives in Detroit: Near said he made useful local contacts that have been critical to his new venture. "I keep those relationships alive and that's the reason I'll keep Near Perfect based in Michigan. I don't think people realize how many influential people are here in Detroit."