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Award for parents who love the little readers

A BUSINESS run by a Maraetai couple from their home has won a 1999 New Zealand Export Award for its website.

The Parent Company Ltd, run by Grant and Denise Ford, picked up the Bank of New Zealand e-Commerce Export Award at the Auckland Town Hall on Thursday.

"It's amazing. We've only been

on-line for three months," Denise says.

The Parent Company was up against some big guns for the award including joint winner the TAB, which boasts \$20 million a year in foreign exchange earnings.

Grant and Denise's business isn't in that league, but the judges' were particularly impressed by the cre-

ativity of the company's website (www.readingmaster.com).

"The company's use of e-commerce is innovative in that the clients can order the product, pay for it and have it delivered on-line," the judges said.

"They provide a free sample and the software - over the internet - by which to download their books.

The company also routes e-commerce enquiries back through their agents, so they aren't cutting their traditional business distribution out of the loop."

Grant says the website is their own design although they had help to build it.

Reading Master is The Parent
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Export award win

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Company's principal product - an early childhood reading education system featuring 28 books, three videos and a CD-rom - and was born out the Fords experiences with their own children.

Denise's education background prompted her to learn more about reading programmes when she had children. The couple adapted programmes they had researched and used home made materials with outstanding results.

"Our son was reading books from two years of age and by the time he was five he had the reading age of a nine-year-old," Denise says.

Ten years after they developed their first reading programme Denise and Grant are exporting Reading Master to Australia and selling locally through both the website and TV infomercials.

The next step is to use the website to crack the lucrative United States market where they have a series of TV advertisements screening.