

"Region Business"

THINKING ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN MICHIGAN CITY

Michigan City opens the Doors of the Entrepreneur Center the ECMC

The Entrepreneur Center / Michigan City is a multi-tenant facility for new and growing small businesses that provides a supportive environment where entrepreneurs can acquire lease space at affordable rates and benefit from support services, resources, training, and business advice in one location. The outcome from these businesses is to grow and expand beyond the resource center and become local businesses that are structured for success.



This Center has been established as an affiliate of the Michigan City Area Chamber of Commerce, as well as a partnership of the Michigan City Economic Development Corporation and the City of Michigan City.



The Northwest Indiana Small Business Development Center provides a full-time on-site business advisor, as well as a library of valuable resources and training programs.

Rental fees range from \$70 - \$475 monthly, based on space considerations. For more information about programs and rental space please contact: Heather or Jennifer at (219) 809-4200.

Indiana Training Acceleration Grant— Is It For You?

All companies and organizations located in Indiana may be eligible for this fund. To qualify for the Innovating Indiana Training Acceleration Grant you must meet one of the fund's core objectives:

- Increase personal income for Hoosier workers
- Foster job retention and expansion
- Promote small businesses
- Fill WorkKeys® skill gap via training

We are currently looking at Microsoft Office Training for small businesses

For more information and to see if your company is eligible through the SBDC Consortium Plan please contact: NWI SBDC 219-838-0176



Volume 1, Issue 1

Region Women Initiative

Regional Public Forum

To discuss report findings and policy recommendations through a moderated panel of distinguished women
 Join us June 2, 2006 Valparaíso University Theater

Cultural Connections: "The Soul of Region Women"
 May 22-July 15, 2006 Lake County Visitors & Convention Bureau

For more information go to the website www.regionwomeninitiative.org or contact
 RWI c/o Tina Rongers
 P.O. Box 2463
 Chesterton, IN 46304
 Phone: 219-616-7147
 Fax: 219-531-2791
 E-mail: regionwomeninitiative@hotmail.com



Indiana's Government Procurement

May 23, 2006

On May 23, 2006 Partners in Contracting Corporation, Northwest Indiana Minority Business Committee, Indiana Small Business Development Center, Northwest Indiana Minority Business Opportunity Committee and the Northwest Indiana Chambers of Commerce Executive Directors Association will be hosting the 10th semi-annual Government Procurement Conference. This conference provides Indiana companies the opportunity to meet with as many as thirty government agencies, DOD Prime Contractors, state agencies and the Indiana Gaming Casinos.

Some committed government attendees include: US Army Tank and Automotive Command (TACOM), Defense Supply Center Columbus, Great Lakes Naval Base, Crane Naval Supply, Air Force Research Laboratory, Home Land Security, US EPA, National Park Service, Army Corp of Engineers, Veterans Administration, State of Indiana Procurement Office, Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District and Ivy Tech.

Prime contractors and casinos include: Woodward Company, Mead Johnson, General Dynamics, Parsons (NECDF), AM General, Horseshoe, Blue Chip and Barden Casinos.

In addition, there will be workshops and seminars on a myriad of topics that provides crucial information to government contractors and subcontractors. Some of the workshop topics include: "Packaging and Bar Coding," presented by Ted Hollander of Defense Contract Management Agency, "How to Complete a Bid Package" Judith Perkinson President of The Calumet Group, "Marketing Your Business" Presented by the NISBDC, "Are You Ready for Government Procurement?" "Doing Business with and Obtaining MBE/WBE Certifications with the State of Indiana" "Earned Value Management", "Labor Law Compliance" presented by Rich Wilkinson VP of Delteck "How to Market Your Company to Prime Contractors", "SBA and Other Financial Resources" presented by Gary Hammond East Chicago Empowerment Zone, Regional Development Company & NISBDC.

The program will start Monday evening with a networking reception sponsored by Horseshoe Casino and Northern Indiana Public Service Company at the Horseshoe Casino. The tentative schedule for the 10th semi-annual Procurement Conference is as follows:

Date: Tuesday May 23, 2006

7:30 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:30 - 8:45 am Welcome / Opening Remarks

9:00 a.m. Networking and Workshops begin

12:00 p.m. Lunch & Keynote Speaker

1:30 p.m. Networking and Workshops begin

4:00 p.m. Conference Conclusion- Networking

Location: Radisson Hotel and Conference Center, Merrillville, Indiana.

Cost: \$85 per person. Price includes admission to all exhibits, workshops and meals.

Certified Disabled Companies will receive admission for one person free.

Mark your Calendars now, and more details pertaining to this "must attend" procurement conference will be e-mailed to you as well as being posted on the PICC website, www.piccorp.org in the near future.

e-mail or Call Dennis H. Terry at dterry@piccorp.org 219-838-0176 for reservations.

Thanks to our great sponsors, we would not be able to provide this event with out their support:

Horseshoe Casino
Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO)
Northwest Indiana Minority Business Opportunity Committee
Northwest Indiana Chambers of Commerce Executives Association
Regional Development Corporation
Bank Calumet
Indiana Small Business Dev Ctr.

E-DAY AWARD WINNER ALSO WINS STATE AWARD

On April 20, 2006 the state SBA honored J & N Enterprises, Inc. owners, J. Scott Kleppe and Nancy L. Kleppe as SBA Small Business Exporter of the Year. J & N Enterprises, Inc. is located in Valparaiso and produces gas detectors for national companies and 26 nations worldwide. The NWI SBDC is proud to honor such a client. Congratulations



Indiana SBA Celebrates Small Business Week in Northwest Indiana



Tony Rodriguez Executive Director, discussing the 504 loan program.

This week the Indiana SBA celebrates Small Business Week. One of the events held throughout the state relating to small business was a loan clinic with Mike Hasler presenting Indiana SBA and its loan programs and

How to Start a Business in Northwest Indian, a session for those thinking about starting a business was also held at

the Entrepreneur Center Michigan City.

The monthly meeting of the Quickbooks User Group was facilitated by Anna Sheets owner of Accounting Made Simple, and held at the Highland Small Business Service Center. These user groups meet regularly throughout the region. See www.nwisbdc.org for a list of sites and times.

All programs were sponsored by the Northwest Indiana Small Business Development Center.



PATH TO THINKING GLOBAL



The Northwest Indiana Small Business Development Center presented a session on exporting tips and information. This presentation panel discussion took place on April 28th at the NWI Forum / NIRPC Building in Portage. The presentation was sponsored in partnership by The Small Business Administration, Regional Development Corp., NWI Forum and the NWI Port of Indiana.

Some of the topics discussed by Martin Anderson, Business Development Specialist U.S. Small Business Administration related to loans for export development and expansion. He explained the funding programs for Foreign trade shows, Document translations, Purchase of equipment for expanding production for export, and Acquisition or Modernization of U.S. facilities to accommodate production of goods for international trade.

Mark Cooper, Director, U.S. Department of Commerce, Indiana Export Assistance Center explained the importance of understanding your product, knowing the demand for it locally and then making sure there is a demand internationally. He gave the audience tips for success, and talked about avoiding the mistakes others have made.

Steve Mosher, Director, of the Port of Northwest Indiana discussed the exporting future of Northwest Indiana in relationship to our location and transporting industry. He talked about the future of container and bulk exporting and importing and what that means to the small business owner.

Afterwards there was an informal lunch at which time the speakers interacted with the participants.

There seemed to be an interest in the presentation by the community and the participants and the NWI in partnership will be presenting it again in the fall. If you are interested in attending this future fall presentation, please contact the NWI SBDC at (219) 838-0176 and we will reserve you spot and send out additional information to you closer to the date.

This program co-sponsored by:



IT'S TIME TO START THINKING ABOUT NOMINATIONS FOR THE NWI ENTREPREUR AWARDS. THE EVENT WILL BE HELD ON OCTOBER 26TH . SAVE THE DATE

Marketing for Strategic Advantage and Success

Unless a business is very, very lucky, increased growth and profitability comes from implementing a winning strategy. Marketing is the conduit that delivers that winning strategy to the marketplace through Branding, Unified Communications, Positioning, Advertising, Creative Pricing, and Customer Service.

Often the business owner and management have difficulty creating, implementing, or marketing that strategy because they are embroiled in managing the day-to-day efforts of the enterprise – insuring that the promises the business makes to its customers, vendors, staff, and investors are kept; that relationships are maintained and strengthened. This leaves little time, focus, and energy for the “quiet time” necessary to create unless the talents of a strategist-partner are utilized.

The process is much more than defining “what we want to become and how do we communicate it” - that is just the starting point. Once the “what do we want to become” is defined other questions need to be asked and answers developed: “What actions will need to be done?” “Who will do them?”

“When will they be done?” “Who will check and see that they are done on time” “What will they cost and how will the project(s) stay on budget?” “What decisions will need to be made?” “What resources will need to be committed?”

The outside marketing strategist / coach / consultant has no agenda other than the creation and execution of a successful project, is not a “yes-person,” but is a creative catalyst for positive change who can help businesses attain breakthroughs in growth, profitability, efficiency, workflow, processes, and systems. Often it takes outside talent to question the status quo, cut through decades of “because that’s the way we’ve always done that” thinking and has no axe to grind; someone who is only responsible for positive change.

Growth takes strategy and marketing. A marketing strategist / coach / consultant helps create the strategy and communicate it towards accelerated growth.

Larry Galler
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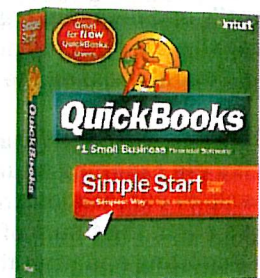
NEW QuickBooks User Group

Got questions? Got Answers? Got QuickBooks?
If the answer is Yes, then this meeting is for you!

All users and prospective users are welcome, no experience required. If you are new to QB, we'll answer your questions. If you are a seasoned user, you can share your experience with this diverse software and learn about the new products and solutions available. Improve your QuickBooks and bookkeeping skills while networking with other small businesses at our monthly meetings. The best part is, it is a free resource of the SBDC!

Web forum is also available for e-mail response to QBUG members.

go to www.nwisbdc.org for schedule and additional Information or call 219-838-0176



Sales Outside the Box

Most businesses we encounter really do not understand their immense value at a deep level. These businesses automatically lower their price at the first hint of competition. This is really a symptom of a much more basic problem in the organization. It is extremely rare that we find a mission and values statement that everyone in the company can recite or even find. Most of the time they are filed away or only hanging in the lobby. In other words no one knows what value you bring to your clients and prospects! The only time they are effective is when they are emblazoned in the hearts and minds of the people in the company.

You can not passionately convey value to a customer if you do not really embrace and assimilate that value for yourself. Once everyone gets on the same page of the value equation and is confident in their unique contribution to that value, magic begins to happen. When everyone, who comes in contact with customers, understands the value the company offers, they will think differently about themselves and the priceless value they bring to the table.

When this transformation happens the company will attract customers that can appreciate the value of the offering and are willing to pay for that added value. There is no begging, no manipulation, and no hype. There are only honest discussions of trading value for value. The customer is always right as long as you are attracting the right customers.

We, as outside your box consultants, can help you see and communicate the value you bring. We can help you identify the ideal customer who will gladly pay for your services since your value proposition is compelling and brings positive outcomes to both parties. Once your company begins to think differently then, surprisingly, your customers begin to think differently about you.

Al Turnbeaugh SCA Success Systems, Inc.
The Sales Thinking Company
alturnbo@comcast.net

Planning, Planning, Planning that's what it's all about

Most business owners think that a properly executed business plan coupled with a well-planned financial strategy is all you need. It's a good start and just might help you attain your ultimate financial goals. But have you ever known someone who is or was financially successful but still wasn't fulfilled?

Did you ever say to yourself, "I will be happy when I have X amount of income or Y net worth?" You may even have achieved that desired income or net worth but still feel empty or disillusioned. You may wonder if you have built your ladder and placed it on the wrong wall?

How do you ensure that you are building your business and financial ladder on your desired wall? One possibility would be to investigate and then implement a *personal life plan* that seamlessly integrates with your business and financial plans.

What is a life plan? In the most general terms it is a plan that focuses on what is of most importance to you in your life. Why is a life plan important? When you focus on what's most important to you in your life you will attain much better results in your business and financial life.

How do you accomplish this? The simplest way is to get a piece of paper and write down all of your business, financial and life goals. Next to your goals, write down why you want to achieve these goals. Finally write down what achieving each one of these goals will do for you emotionally. Hint: how will it make you feel to accomplish these goals?

Another option would be to hire a business/life plan coach who guides you objectively in formulating your unique plan as a business owner. Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods utilize coaches to hone their skills and you as a successful business owner may want to consider a coach as well to enjoy maximum satisfaction.

Tom Heitz specializes in helping business owners who want to balance their business plans, financial plans, and life plans into one synergistic seamless plan. tomheinz@sbcglobal.net

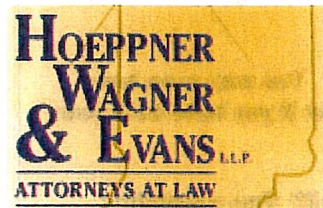
SmallBizU™

go to : www.nwisbdc.org



For information relating to
this issue or any program
please go to www.nwisbdc.org

SBDC GOLD PROGRAM SPONSORS



SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER SEMINARS

MAY

MAY 4th THURSDAY	Highland NxLevel Topic: The Deal Making Process	5:30p – 8:30p	\$20.00 219- 838-0176
MAY 9th TUESDAY	Quickbooks Intro-Highland <i>Learn beginning Quickbooks-Highland</i>	9:00a – 4:00p	\$85.00 219-838-0176
MAY 11th THURSDAY	Highland NxLevel Topic: Your Business Future	5:30p – 8:30p	\$20.00 219- 838-0176
MAY 11TH THURSDAY	Michigan City NxLevel Topic: Managing Your Money –Part 1	5:30p – 8:30p	\$20.00 219-809-4200x 304
MAY 16TH TUESDAY	QuickBooks User's Group-Highland <i>(Various Topics)</i>	8:00a – 9:15a	FREE
MAY 17TH WEDNESDAY	How To Start A Business-Highland <i>Basics for starting a business</i>	5:30p – 7:30p	FREE
MAY 18th THURSDAY	Michigan City NxLevel Topic: Managing Your Money –Part II	5:30p – 8:30p	\$20.00 219-809-4200x 304
MAY 24TH WEDNESDAY	Quickbooks Intro-Michigan City <i>Learn beginning Quickbooks</i>	9:00a – 4:00p	\$85.00 219-809-4200x 304
MAY 25TH THURSDAY	30 Seconds to Networking Success. Presented by Advanced Systems 7:30-9:30 a.m. continental breakfast. Highland-SESSION 3		
			\$20.00

JUNE

JUNE 1ST THURSDAY	Michigan City NxLevel Topic: Understanding & Using Financial Statements-219-809-4200 x 304	5:30p – 8:30p	\$20.00
JUNE 8th THURSDAY	Michigan City NxLevel Topic: Financing Your Business	5:30p – 8:30p	\$20.00 219-809-4200x 304
JUNE 13TH TUESDAY	Quickbooks Intro-Highland <i>Learn beginning Quickbooks-Highland</i>	9:00a – 4:00p	\$85.00 219-838-0176
JUNE 14TH WEDNESDAY	How To Start A Business-Highland <i>Basics for starting a business</i>	5:30p – 7:30p	– FREE
JUNE 15TH THURSDAY	New Age Marketing Today's Trend ~ Tomorrow's Reality-Session 4 Presented by Advanced Systems-7:30-9:30 a.m. continental breakfast		
JUNE 15TH THURSDAY	Michigan City NxLevel Topic: The Deal Making Process	5:30p – 8:30p	\$20.00 219-809-4200x 304
JUNE 20TH TUESDAY	QuickBooks User's Group-Highland <i>(Various Topics)</i>	8:00a – 9:15a	FREE
JUNE 22ND THURSDAY	Michigan City NxLevel Topic: Your Business Future	5:30p – 8:30p	\$20.00 219-809-4200x 304
JUNE 28TH WEDNESDAY	Quickbooks Intro-Michigan City <i>Learn beginning Quickbooks</i>	9:00a – 4:00p	\$85.00 219-809-4200x 304

Events & dates are subject to change, for updated information,
please visit our web site at www.nwisbdc.org