

Empowered

A monthly online publication published by Thompson Management Consulting, LLC for small business change makers – May/June 2014

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Upcoming July Articles (Subject to change)

- ◆ Know When to Outsource
- ◆ Social Media's Impact on Small Business Success
- ◆ Are You Right for Entrepreneurship
- ◆ Avoid the Distractions From Working at Home



Town Hall Business Meeting and Panel at Georgia Piedmont Technical College Conference Center: L-R, Dr. Karen Starks of the University of Alabama, Ashley McCoy of PNC Bank, Lynn E. Hobbs of Fort Valley State University, Rep. Valencia Stovall (HD-74), and Todd Stanton of Stanton Law Firm. Attended, but not pictured, Rep. Dar' Shun Kendrick (HD-93).

Celebrating National Small Business Week 2014

Austin E. Thompson, Jr., MBA, MPM

Thompson Management Consulting, LLC's First Annual Entrepreneurship and Small Business Summit during National Small Business Week 2014 was a successful inaugural endeavor. In the first year of planning such an event, the main objective was to organize and execute an event, at which, small business owners, entrepreneurs, and aspiring entrepreneurs would have the opportunity to engage professional consultants on critical discussion topics important to building long-term business success. During the week of May 12 - 16, attendees participated in workshops and spoke directly with consultants, received valuable information, and had the opportunity to network with other business owners to foster B2B relationships. Workshop topics included how to pursue and acquire government contracts as an 8(a) Certified entity, developing effective business plans, Affordable Care Act and its impact on small businesses, small business financing and the financial plan, small business HR law, building small business credit, pursuing small business loans, building trust as a BBB Accredited business, and entrepreneurship 101. Workshop presenters represented the Small Business Administration, PNC Bank, Small Business Development Center in Lawrenceville, Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, Stanton Law Firm, the Better Business Bureau, and the University of Alabama.

Continued on Page 2



Stephanie Sokenis, Director of Small Business Development at the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce introduces Benny StaRomana (to the left) of the Small Business Development Center in Lawrenceville and Robert Lamp'I (in the back) of Business Plans and More, Inc. for the Business Planning and Entrepreneurship 101 Workshop at DeVry Duluth.

Friday's Town Hall Business Meeting was the culmination of a week dedicated to celebrating the national achievements of small business owners, with an enthusiastic discussion on increasing the impact of small businesses on our Georgia economy, where panelists answered questions from business owners in the audience and facilitated a dynamic exchange of information with attendees. Special thanks to Keynote Speaker Mayor Ted Terry of the City of Clarkston, Representatives Valencia Stovall (HD-74) and Dar'Shun Kendrick (HD-93) of the Georgia House of Representatives, Todd Stanton of Stanton Law Firm, Dr. Karen Starks of the University of Alabama, Ashley McCoy of PNC Bank, Lynn E. Hobbs of Fort Valley State University, and Andrea George of Rapid Gourmet for her wonderful refreshments and moderating the panel discussion. In addition, I sincerely thank DeVry University (Duluth and Decatur campuses), Georgia Piedmont Technical College, Rich Casanova of Buckhead Business Radio X, Sebrana Sumrah-Kelly of Love 860AM, Colin Tinto of 1420AM, Fort Valley State University for their massive presence and the Mobile Unit, Sunsplash Pioneer Design, Inc., Procurement Websites, AOWR Media, LLC, 106Live Radio, Caribbean International Shipping Services, Gwinnett Association of Business Entrepreneurs (GABE), Office of Governor Nathan Deal, Georgia Department of Economic Development, my Public Relations Director, Sandra Nicholls, Joyce Thompson who assisted me in Decatur, Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Business Plans and More, Inc., NOWaccount Network Corporation, Anointed Photography and Video, all of the business associations and organizations to whom I marketed the event, and to all the attendees.

Without your support, this event would not have been possible. Thompson Management Consulting, LLC is looking forward to a bigger and better National Small Business Week Summit in 2015. Pictures from this year's event can be viewed by clicking on this link <http://www.nsbw2014.com/photogallery.html>. Thank you for all of your support.

NSBW2015

Stay Tuned!!

It's Not About Where You Start

Dr. Dan Kaufman

Gwinnett Chamber President & CEO



One of the world's most valuable brands started in Steve Jobs' garage with an order for 50 computers. With an unstoppable imagination, Walt Disney started animating cartoon shorts at his uncle's house. Amazon, the world's largest online retailer, began as a simplistic idea for a web-based bookstore. Google, Harley Davidson, Hewlett-Packard, Mattel... the list goes on and on. What do these successful companies have in common? They were each born in the mind of an entrepreneur.

"Entrepreneur" and "small business" are terms that describe how countless fledgling businesses began. They are also descriptors of the future economic growth and success of our community and our region. Small businesses are the engines that drive the economy: during the last 20 years, small businesses were responsible for creating 64 percent of net new jobs in the U.S. Of the 21,000 businesses in Gwinnett, 75 percent of them have 10 employees or fewer, and 98 percent have 50 employees or fewer. Successful small business leaders have learned how to recognize an opportunity and go after it, as the incredibly varied Gwinnett economy demonstrates every day.

Gwinnett County Chamber of Commerce

GWINNETT SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

June 16 – 20, 2014

Register at www.gwinnettchamber.org/events

The Gwinnett Chamber and local leaders are committed to creating the right business climate to help these companies and their visionary leaders succeed. In addition to our community's pro-business environment, there is a vast array of resources available to assist entrepreneurs and small businesses in Gwinnett:

- **Small Business Essentials** is a program developed by the Gwinnett Chamber to provide small business owners with the necessary information and resources to help navigate the best possible path to start or grow their business. Facilitated by industry experts who have the knowledge and experience to explain how to tackle the issues many small business owners face, these meetings are free and open to anyone, Chamber members and non-members alike.
- Another Chamber program series, **Eat & Educate**, provides small business owners with in-person, topic-specific opportunities to acquire the tools they need to be successful in business. Topics include surviving the first five years, finance and cash flow, legal and compliance issues, business plans, setting goals, minority assistance, networking, sales training, marketing, tradeshow tips, and more.
- In November, we will host our very first **Small Business Summit**, a day full of opportunities to tap into the experiences of successful local business experts who will share relevant and valuable tips, tricks and tools to help small business owners grow their business and make money. The Summit features a dozen informative and content-rich 75-minute workshops on a variety of small business topics, as well as a Small Business Resource Fair.

By offering small business owners access to the education and resources required to manage their businesses more effectively, there will be a positive ripple effect on the local economy and community. Entrepreneurs and small businesses will be able to learn the keys to thriving in today's global economy and in the future.

It is easy to think of companies such as Apple, Disney, and Amazon and say, "I could never do something like that." Successful entrepreneurs and small business leaders will see those same Fortune 500 companies and say, "Why can't I do something like that?" Business – like life – is not about where you start. It's where you end up that counts.

Gwinnett County Chamber of Commerce

SMALL BUSINESS ESSENTIALS

June 25, 2014

Register at gwinnettchamber.org/events

A Healthy Approach to Technology

Arlene Wilson, MPM



I have had the privilege of working with business owners who roughly fit into four GENERAL categories when it comes to technology and their business. In general, these business persons do not have a formal technological background, but, find themselves faced with making various technology-related decisions in their businesses. Which one are you?



The Loathers. Loathers are business people who do whatever it takes to AVOID working with technology. Of course, they also have the hardest time with technology because of their approach.

The Know-It-Alls. These business people, once loathers, have become comfortable with the basics. They are comfortable with one adapted way of doing things and it (apparently) works so they hang on to it for dear life.



The Survivors. These business people have struggled through learning, by trial and error, what technology works for their businesses. They may have taken courses and have been determined to do what it takes. They TOLERATE technology but don't have the time or energy to reasonably explore or evaluate its effectiveness...until something goes wrong.

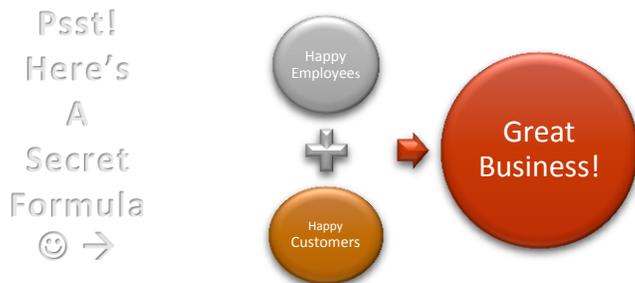
The Aces. These business people are graduated survivors. They have gone through the hoops of learning what is best for their business. They have embraced technology and know that technology in this era is merely a tool, albeit a necessary tool. These businesses and entrepreneurs cleverly use technology to differentiate themselves from their competitors.



Clearly, being an Ace is the best option. Becoming an Ace does not mean becoming a computer genius. It means becoming *knowledgeable on what works for your company*. It means becoming acquainted with changing technology and having the ability to filter the noise and being confident of what will actually work for you. Aces have a healthy approach to technology. They see technology as an investment—a necessary asset and tool for advancement and differentiation.

If you would like to get more out of your technology (whether you are a beginner or an advanced user), there are several ways to have a healthy, ace-like technological approach to your company or organization. It is no secret that technology gives companies an edge in today's environment.

Start by taking our basic online quiz to understand where you stand on technology. From there, depending on your focus, professional individuals and consulting companies like AOWR Media LLC can help guide you on to the best technology path for your business. Get an ace-like attitude towards technology today. Your employees and customers will be glad you did.



About Arlene Wilson

Arlene is an IT professional and Entrepreneur with marked expertise in analyzing, designing and implementing software solutions that streamline and automate business processes. Her core tasks are gathering data and then presenting the data in a meaningful format. Arlene is the founder and co-owner of AOWR Media LLC, a Microsoft Partner, which specializes in Business Intelligence, Digital Advertising and Consulting. Her professional title is Business Development Manager. Arlene received her Master's in Project Management (with distinction) from Keller Graduate School of Management and her Bachelors of Business Administration (BBA) with concentration in Computer Information Systems (CIS) from Georgia State University. She is currently an active member of the Caribbean Association of Georgia and the Guyana Association of Georgia. Arlene's hobbies and interests include writing, exercising, enjoying witty, action movies and spending precious time with family and friends. She is drawn to and passionate about charitable and other organizations and causes that encourage self-empowerment, leadership and poverty alleviation.

Entrepreneur Spotlight



Captured In Time Productions LLC is a visual media production company that fuses the principles and techniques of journalism and film to capture and tell compelling stories. These stories range from Human Interest issues, such as Child Development to very personal tales, such as a couple's journey from first date to engagement. We also do this through our LiliMay framed art collection, which showcases Jamaica's flora fauna and landscapes.

Captured In Time was established in the island nation of Jamaica in 2007, by Chief Creative Officer Halthea Hill-Latty, B.A. MFA. Halthea began her career in broadcast journalism as a Television Writer, Producer and Presenter for the Government's public relations arm: The Jamaica Information Service (JIS). Here, she produced several news stories and features of national interest, most noted of which was the award winning: 'Emergency: Changing the Culture of Road Usage in Jamaica'. Following her stint at the JIS, Halthea embarked on a freelance career, under Captured in Time Productions and worked with several media houses. During this time, her aspirations to produce independent documentaries that would foster public interest, create awareness and inspire support and advocacy, grew; and in 2011 Captured In Time produced its debut, 'made for television' documentary: 'Puzzled, Living With Autism'. 'Puzzled' was the first of its kind in Jamaica to approach autism from the scientific, familial and institutional perspective. It was such a thorough piece that UNICEF funded post-production and island wide distribution. 'Puzzled' set the stage for Captured In Time to subsequently produce content for other Non-Government Organizations (NGO) and Researchers.

Halthea and her family moved to Atlanta, GA in 2013 and she had no intentions of halting Captured In times work. The company continued to facilitate projects in Jamaica and was registered in GA in January 2014.

To date we have covered The International Women’s Think Tank, IWD Conference, conducted several portrait photo shoots and are currently exhibiting the LiliMay collection at the Lona Gallery in Lawrenceville GA. Captured In Time Productions looks forward to an exciting future here and in Jamaica, one where we continue to produce substantial content and partner with our customers to capture their special moments. For more information on Capture In Time Productions, please visit us at www.capturedit.org.

10 Tips for Entrepreneurs Who Owe

William Hampton

Executive Business Consultants, LLC

For taxpayers who owe taxes with their tax returns, the IRS has provided ten tips about how to pay:

1. Taxpayers should never send cash.
2. If taxpayers e-file, they can file and pay in a single step with an electronic funds withdrawal. If they e-file on their own, they can use their tax preparation software to make the withdrawal. If they use a tax preparer to e-file, they can ask the preparer to make their tax payment electronically.
3. Taxpayers can pay taxes electronically 24/7 on IRS.gov. Just click on the ‘Payments’ tab near the top left of the home page for details.
4. They can also pay by check or money order. They should make their check or money order payable to the “United States Treasury.”
5. Whether they e-file their tax return or file on paper, taxpayers can also pay with a credit or debit card. The company that processes their payment will charge a processing fee.
6. Taxpayers may be able to deduct the credit or debit card processing fee on next year’s return. It’s claimed on Schedule A, Itemized Deductions. The fee is a miscellaneous itemized deduction subject to the 2 percent limit.
7. Taxpayers should be sure to write their name, address and daytime phone number on the front of their payment. Also, they should write the tax year, form number they are filing and their Social Security number.

8. Taxpayers should complete Form 1040-V, Payment Voucher, and mail it with their tax return and payment to the IRS. They should make sure they send it to the address listed on the back of Form 1040-V. This will help the IRS process their payment and post it to their account. The form is available on IRS.gov.
9. The IRS reminds taxpayers to enclose payment with their tax return but do not staple it to any tax form.
10. For more information, call 800-829-4477 and select TeleTax Topic158, Ensuring Proper Credit of Payments. You can also get information in the instructions for Form 1040-V.

About Executive Business Consultants, LLC:

Executive Business Consultants, LLC is a business consulting, tax return preparation and wealth coaching firm based in the Atlanta, Georgia area. The mission of our business consulting division is to help entrepreneurs and small business owners start, manage and grow their businesses. The mission of our tax return preparation division is to successfully and legally reduce your tax liabilities. We continually look for ways to minimize your taxes throughout the year, not just at the end of the year. We go beyond tax compliance and proactively recommend tax saving strategies to maximize your after-tax income. The mission of our wealth coaching division is to provide wealth and credit coaching to individuals, couples, families and groups who want to improve their current financial situation. Please visit us at www.executivebusinessconsultantsllc.com, or by calling (404) 482-3170.



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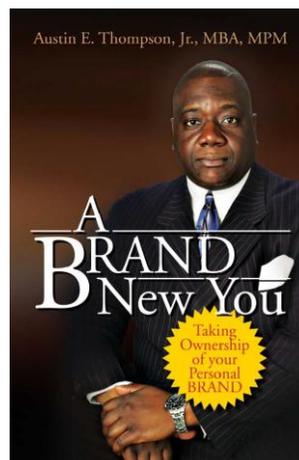
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Fort Valley State University, a unit of the University System of Georgia, has a clear vision to increase its global sphere of influence under the direction of its newly elected 9th President of the university, Dr. Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith. This university is transforming young boys and girls into men and women who are Bold, Amazing, and Prepared to compete in a competitive global environment. For further information, please log on to www.fvsu.edu



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For Information: Carmelita Marcia (404) 509-0690

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