

White Cat or Black Cat?

With social and environmental 'blowbacks' spelling worries for the Olympics and more, perhaps Deng Xiaoping's well-acclaimed quote that "No matter whether it's a white cat or a black cat. It's a good cat so long as it catches mice" needs some amendment -- "...and does not create a mess in the house". While higher costs and slower turnover will inevitably translate into credit crunch on both ends of sourcing, selling might be another way to catch the (Year of) Mouse/Rat.

FROM SHAWN'S DESKTOP

(02/2008)

My fellow China-marketeers:

... Every ascent inevitably sets the stage for its decline -- the very goal of working hard to succeed is so that you wouldn't have to work hard anymore. The wheel of fortune thus turns around and on...

... A Chinese saying goes: "For 30 years the east side of the river thrives. The next 30 years the west side."

... In the last century during a few 30-year periods, prosperity waves have rippled across from the east shore of the Pacific (USA: 1910/20s-40/50s) to the west (Japan and Asia Tigers: 50/60s-80/90s), and further west still (China: 1978- 2008).

... Now westward again the 'trade winds' blow...

... After the Lunar New Year holiday, tens to hundreds of thousands of Pearl River Delta-based factories, local or HK or TW-invested, are expected to go either belly-up, or 'up-valley' to western provinces, or even further west, like the Indochina East-West Corridor (i.e., Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos...) or the far far west, namely, Africa.

... That is, following the tens of thousands that already have.

... "Made-in-China" will surely get pricier in 2008 due to a growing list of woes: reduction/elimination of export VAT refunds...soaring energy/material prices... already rising labor costs further propelled by the newly enacted Labor Laws...a waning US consumer demand dampening producers' economy of scale...

... The quickened appreciation of RMB vs. the Dollar certainly would not spell any relief in sight, either.

... Although the recent power and transportation-crippling snow storms temporarily forced the government to relax its credit squeeze imposed since Oct. '07, however, to counter overheating and inflation -- known in the 2008 national economic policy as "liang fang" (literally meaning "2 Preventions") -- China may need to continue with its interest rate hikes (while the Fed with their cuts)!

... Now consider catching the mice another way. With higher incomes and more 'bang' for the RMB, wouldn't it be a great time to sell into China?

... But what sells in China?

... Simply put, 'utility' and 'futility' (or 'vanity'), like everywhere else...

... A 2006 UPS survey of Chinese urban, middle class consumers found that they crave for US movie/music, skincare products, sneakers and jeans. But a recent McKinsey

survey claims that they favor domestic products. How do we make sense of this seeming inconsistency?

... For those who are shopping for 'utility', the key is "Price-performance Ratio". That explains the local brand preference given comparable quality.

... For those who are shopping for 'vanity', the secret is "Conspicuous Consumption". That explains why US and other Western products (services included) do extremely well in certain categories and why China is the fastest growing market for luxury goods.

... So it depends on what kind of product you are selling and who your target audience is. Are there domestic alternatives? Is there int'l competition? What's your unique selling proposition? Can you maintain that uniqueness?

... If you are trying to sell 'utility', you'd better make sure that utility is not available or cannot be easily made in China (e.g. many metals/minerals, mid- to high-end medical devices, jumbo jets, or a US degree).

... Better yet, can you enrich it with some 'vanity', like Starbucks and NBA (as opposed to just coffee and basket ball)?

... In M&A transactions, while many deep-pocketed Chinese companies are willing to pay for established marketing and distribution capabilities, i.e., a 'utility' they cannot 'manufacture' themselves, known brands can also fetch a better deal than the 'hardware' behind them (think IBM PC, while UK's MG Rover was another example).

... Although the Chinese always seem reluctant (if not outright resistant) to pay for consulting services, in reality exceptions abound: Aside from the window-dressing need of large Chinese firms to routinely hire top int'l auditors, bankers, consultants and lawyers, I can recall from own experience an industrial park near Shanghai that paid McKinsey just under \$1 million for a feasibility study so as to enable them to better market themselves.

... At a recent roundtable of ours, a financier who has helped dozens of Chinese companies get listed on Nasdaq through 'back-door listing' told me: "When those Chinese bosses hear the word Nasdaq, their hearts start pumping!"

... Yes, when their vanity blood boils, they have no problem forking over millions. Upcoming MCB programs ...

... Entering the new year, our calendar is filling up quickly. Following two successful roundtables (in Boston and Philadelphia, respectively) in January, we will be holding more in Hartford, Boston, New York, Chicago and Indianapolis in the coming month. Please monitor our roundtable page for details.

... In late April we expect to host a Chinese business delegation in Chicago and more details will be available soon.

... We are also busy planning our next trip to China in late May to early June.

... If you are interested in any of these programs, please feel free to write us at info (at)meetchinabiz.org.

Graphics omitted:

.Panoramic shot showing the attendees at the Executive Roundtable held in Boston on Jan. 29, 2008.

Special Feature

... Below you will read about some China importing insights based on 16 years of experience. It was contributed by Global Sources (GS), a new addition to MCB's premier member community.

Graphics omitted:

.Global Sources Logo

...For 36 years, GS has been a leading facilitator in 2-way trade with Greater China, covering some 2 million products, over 160,000 suppliers and 647,000 active buyers in 230 countries annually through 14 online marketplaces, 13 monthly magazines, 100+ sourcing research reports, and 9 specialized trade shows which run 22 times a year across 7 cities.

...Suppliers receive more than 23 million sales leads annually from buyers through Global Sources Online alone.

...In mainland China it has over 2,000 team members in 44 locations, and a community of over 1 million registered online users and magazine readers for Chinese-language media.

...Courtesy of GS and MCB, you may now request free sourcing magazine copies via our website.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year of the Mouse/Rat! ...

Shawn He, Chair

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We inform, educate and enable US companies to turn China into an opportunity!

Tel: 617-208-0470

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Graphics omitted: MeetChinaBiz Logo and slogan "We inform, educate and enable SMEs to turn China into an opportunity".

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Special Feature

Importing from China:

...16-year veteran shares insights (Part 1)

In an exclusive three-part interview with Global Sources, Adam Linden of Ultimate Footwear Corp in Canada reveals sourcing strategies and lessons learned during a 16-year span importing China-made footwear.

Among his many helpful tips, he cautions importers to brush up on their currency exchange skills, makes the case for using letters of credit where larger orders are involved, and reviews the improvements he has seen in importing from China.

Global Sources: What is your company's annual import volume of China-made product?

Adam Linden: We imported US\$7-10 million of goods in 2006.

Global Sources: How would you describe your approach to importing from China?

Adam Linden: For most shoes we work through our agent, for others we work with a trading company. I have been to most of the factories producing our footwear. We mainly deal with our agent who lives in China currently but has also lived on and off in the United States. We also deal

with trading companies who represent the factories on our behalf much like an agent but we do not pay them an agent's fee. Their profit is built into their price quote.

Global Sources: When you find a new supplier -- for example, at a trade show -- how do you evaluate their reliability and trustworthiness?

Adam Linden: We request samples and pricing first. If that looks good we may give them a small test order. We like to actually try and build a relationship by doing business in a small way before we expand any larger with this new supplier. We also check out their web site and try to get as much information about them as possible.

Global Sources: Compared to sourcing domestically, what aspects of the buying process require the most additional attention when directly importing from China?

Adam Linden: Making sure the product meets the correct specifications since we do a large safety shoe and boot program and have very rigid requirements for this type of footwear in Canada. Also, making sure the design aspects are correct and that the samples are made properly. On large orders we ask the factory to apply our customer's barcodes or carton content labels to the boxes or master

carton. This saves us a lot of time since it keeps the handling of the goods to a minimum. We also specify what we would like printed on the cartons.

Global Sources: Have you run into any "hidden" issues that importers should look out for?

Adam Linden: Yes, the importance of knowing and understanding the currency market. Suppliers in China will constantly use this reality when negotiating prices, and it can really make the difference in whether you are making money or losing money on an order. I can't stress enough the importance of how currency fluctuations affect the bottom line. This issue seems to be more of an issue now that the U.S. dollar is losing ground against most world currencies.

Global Sources: What are some effective ways you use to build rapport with your China suppliers?

Adam Linden: Visiting suppliers is always a very good idea. Face-to-face contact is the best way to really move a program forward. What you lose through the language barriers you gain through body language. Spending time with suppliers getting to know them,

their factories, and their way of doing business I feel is most important. Much of this is lost with today's online way of communicating. Don't get me wrong -- communicating via computers is essential, but nothing compares to the personal touch.

Want to read more?

More past MCB newsletters can be found in the left bar under their respective years.

2007 Newsletters

2006 Newsletters

2005 Newsletters

2004 Newsletters

2003

2002

Recent Newsletters...

MCBEventFlash 20071230

Alibaba-MCB Webinar, Upcoming Roundtables, Chinese Newsletter to Debut, Latest China News & Comments by MCB...

MCBNews 20071128

The New Face of China Challenge/Opportunity, Alibaba-MCB Webinar, Meet China Biz Owners...

MCBEventFlash 20071016

Roundtables, China Forum, New MCB Report and Chinese Language Newsletter...

MCBNews 20070921

Sirens of Shanghai, New Round of Roundtables and Trips...

MCBEventFlash 20070815

Meet 30+ Buyers, Suppliers and Partners Directly From China

MCBNews 20070721

Beware of Lanes Merging Ahead, Inbound Matchmaking in Philly, and more...

MCBEventFlash 20070522

Roundtables in Boston and Chicago, June China Trip, August Inbound Matchmaking, Joint Events in CT and Phila...

MCBNews 20070430

The End of A Beginning (or the Beginning of An End)? China Town Hall National Program, 11th Biz Dev Trip to China...

MCBEventFlash 20070318

Roundtable 'round the Region, 11th China Trip Finalized, Member Discounts to Supported Events...

MCBNews 20070224

The year of the Growing Pig, Healthcare, HR, Upcoming Activities...

MCBEventFlash 20070120

Roundtable 'round the Region, 11th Trip & '07 Matchmaker Conference Planned, Jobs, New on Website...

PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY

Offered in conjunction with the U.S. Export Assistance Center
Take advantage of this opportunity to learn how to move, think and act
in the global
marketplace. Whether you are just starting to think about exporting or
have years of
experience, this course will give you the tools and confidence necessary
to succeed.

You'll also learn about the free county, state and federal Government
programs
designed to help your company grow through exporting.
This exclusive training program has been carefully designed to give you
the
skills, strategies, insights and network of contacts necessary to expand
your sales
through exporting.

The course material will be taught over six sessions and will include
insights and
expertise from various international trade experts. Course activities
and discussions
will focus on developing a strong foundation for beginning and
intermediate
exporters.

A Six-Week Course for Business Leaders
Dedicated to Maximizing Their Companies' Sales
www.PhilaU.edu/continuinged

Breaking Into the Trade Game

Philadelphia University, Bucks County Campus
4800 E. Street Rd., Trevose, PA 19053

Tuition: \$300.00

**Six Week course: April 15, 2008 to June 24, 2008, 9
a.m.- 3:30 p.m.**

Date: Topic:

April 15 Making the Export Decision
April 28 Making the Connection: Selecting the Best Markets
May 13 Transporting Goods Internationally
May 27 Legal Issues for Exporters
June 10 Financing and Payment Options
June 24 Cross-Cultural Communications

For more information or to register, please contact:
Office of Continuing and Professional Studies • School House Lane &
Henry Avenue • Philadelphia, PA 19144-5497

- 215.951.2900; Fax 215.951.5300 • evening@PhilaU.edu

Office of Continuing and Professional Studies announces:

- Identify International Markets and Methods of Distribution
- Discover Government and Private Sector Financing
- Learn Strategic Alliances and Foreign Investment Opportunities

Under Secretary Christopher Padilla Invites You To The Colombia Free Trade Agreement Webinar

Find out what the Colombia Free Trade Agreement can do for *your* company.

Date: February 21, 2008

Time: 2:30 p.m. EST/ 11:30 a.m. PST

Cost: Free: When registering no credit card is needed

To Register:

<https://emenuapps.ita.doc.gov/ePublic/newWebinarRegistration.jsp?SmartCode=8Q2G>

The U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement is a tremendous opportunity for U.S. exporters. The agreement will give U.S. companies improved access to Colombia - a robust market and a committed U.S. trading partner. Please join us to learn how to leverage this agreement to benefit your business. Under Secretary Christopher Padilla, U.S. Chamber of Commerce representatives, and other experts will present the benefits of the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement.

Discover valuable information about:

- Proposed changes in taxes and duties
- Specific industry sectors: agricultural equipment, aircraft and related products, autos and auto parts, building products, chemicals, construction equipment, consumer goods, electronics and instrumentation, environmental goods, fish and fish products, footwear, leather and leather goods, infrastructure and machinery, information technology agreement products, lumber and wood, medical equipment, metals and ores, paper, scientific equipment, and transportation equipment.

Communicate directly with experts and get answers to your questions:

- Christopher Padilla, Under Secretary, International Trade Administration
- Margaret Hanson-Muse, Commercial Counselor, U.S. Embassy, Bogota, Colombia
- Leslie Schweitzer, Senior Trade Advisor, U.S. Chamber of Commerce
- Miguel Gomez, Executive Director, Colombia American Chamber of Commerce

Who should attend? International export managers, business owners, sales managers, buyers and interested parties. Even if your company is not selling overseas, it's never too soon to learn about the Colombia Free Trade Agreement.

Register: To register click [here](#) or contact Linda Abbruzzese at Linda.Abbuzzese@mail.doc.gov

For more information visit <http://www.export.gov>

The U.S. Commercial Service — Your Global Business Partner. With offices across the United States and in more than 80 countries, the U.S. Commercial Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration uses its global Network and international resources to connect U.S. companies with international buyers worldwide.

Your privacy is important to us. Please note that we do not share our lists with parties outside of the U.S. Department of Commerce. You may review our privacy policy at <http://www.commerce.gov/privacystatement.html>

Dear Colleagues,

Attached is the **updated** IBP show announcement cable for the Institute of Food Technologists 2008 show to be held Louisiana.

Please promote this IBP show to all your clients, partners and other interested parties. If you have questions about the show and would like additional information and promotional materials, please contact either Tracy or myself and we will respond to you immediately.

As always, thank you for supporting the International Buyer Program. We look forward to seeing you at this exciting show.

Best regards,

Amanda Ayvaz

THE INSTITUTE OF FOOD TECHNOLOGISTS (IFT) ANNUAL MEETING & FOOD EXPO – THE MOST IMPORTANT GLOBAL FOOD INDUSTRY EVENT OF THE YEAR

1. **SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED.** THIS IS AN ACTON CABLE FOR COMMERCIAL SPECIALISTS TO RECRUIT DELEGATIONS FOR THE INSTITUTE OF FOOD TECHNOLOGISTS (IFT) FOOD EXPO, THE MOST IMPORTANT FOOD EVENT OF THE YEAR, TO BE HELD JUNE 28 – JULY 1, 2008, AT THE ERNEST N. MORIAL CONVENTION CENTER IN NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA. FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE IFT FOOD EXPO, PLEASE VISIT WWW.IFT.ORG/IFT08.

2. **EVENT DESCRIPTION**

- A. THE IFT FOOD EXPO IS BY FAR THE MOST HIGHLY REGARDED NEW PRODUCT FORUM IN THE INDUSTRY, BRINGING TOGETHER BUYERS AND SELLERS FROM ALL CORNERS OF THE FOOD SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WORLD. THOUSANDS OF FOOD PROFESSIONALS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE MAKE THEIR WAY EACH YEAR TO THE IFT FOOD EXPO TO PURCHASE NEW PRODUCTS, TECHNOLOGIES, AND SERVICES, AND TO MAKE NEW PROFESSIONAL CONNECTIONS.
- B. MORE THAN 1,000 EXHIBITORS FROM AROUND THE WORLD AND TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PRODUCTS WILL BE FEATURED AT THE IFT FOOD EXPO. THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO SEE PRODUCTS IN ACTION, AND TALK DIRECTLY WITH VENDORS AND SUPPLIERS.
- C. DELEGATES CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PAVILION, A PLACE TO VIEW A COMPREHENSIVE COLLECTION OF NEW PRODUCTS, EACH PRESENTED BY VENDORS WITH THE CAPACITY TO DO BUSINESS OVERSEAS. THEY WILL ALSO HAVE ACCESS TO AN INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY LOUNGE, AND AN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS CENTER. MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE AT WWW.IFT.ORG/IFT08.
- D. IF YOU ARE A FOOD INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL IN PURCHASING, INGREDIENTS, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT OR PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION, LABORATORY MANAGEMENT, OPERATIONS, CONSULTING, OR MANAGEMENT, THERE IS NO BETTER PLACE TO LEARN ABOUT THE NEWEST PRODUCTS, DISCOVER THE LATEST MARKET TRENDS, AND DEVELOP NEW BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS THAN THE IFT ANNUAL MEETING & FOOD EXPO.

3. EVENT CONTACTS

- A. SHOW ORGANIZER
INSTITUTE OF FOOD TECHNOLOGISTS (IFT)
TRACY GARCIA
525 W. VAN BUREN STREET
SUITE 1000
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60607 USA
TEL: +1.312.782.8424
FAX: +1.312.782.8348
TGARCIA@IFT.ORG
- B. IBP PROJECT OFFICER
AMANDA AYVAZ
TEL: 202.482.0338
FAX: 202.482.7801
E-MAIL: AMANDA.AYVAZ@MAIL.DOC.GOV

4. EVENT PROMOTION

- A. MULTILINGUAL BROCHURES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT WWW.IFT.ORG/IFT08 AND IN PDF FORMAT. CONTACT JENNIFER LONDON AT JLONDON@IFT.ORG.
- B. THE IFT 2008 EVENT WEBSITE IS THE BEST WAY TO STAY UP TO DATE ON DETAILS OF THE IFT FOOD EXPO. YOU WILL BE ABLE TO FIND CONFERENCE SCHEDULES, IFT FOOD EXPO DETAILS, INFORMATION REGARDING RELATED IFT EVENTS, VISA INFORMATION, HOTEL AND TRAVEL DETAILS, AND OTHER KEY INFORMATION. INTERNATIONAL VISITORS CAN ALSO PRE-REGISTER BY VISITING THE WEBSITE. REGISTRATION OPENS MARCH 3, 2008. QUESTIONS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO HEATHER JOIREMAN AT HCJOIREMAN@IFT.ORG.

- C. TO SUBMIT A DELEGATION, PLEASE CONTACT HEATHER JOIREMAN AT HCJOIREMAN@IFT.ORG OR U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PROJECT OFFICER AMANDA AYVAZ, AND REQUEST AN IFT GROUP REGISTRATION SPREADSHEET (IN MICROSOFT EXCEL).

FILL OUT THE SPREADSHEET AS DIRECTED, AND THEN RETURN IT VIA E-MAIL TO BOTH HCJOIREMAN@IFT.ORG AND AMANDA.AYVAZ@MAIL.DOC.GOV.

THIS INFORMATION WILL BE USED TO ENSURE THAT ALL REGISTRATION BADGES ARE CORRECT AND WILL BE SHARED WITH U.S. EXHIBITORS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN BUSINESS MEETINGS WITH DELEGATES.

- D. BADGE PICKUP WILL TAKE PLACE AT HALL G IN THE REGISTRATION AREA LOCATED IN THE ERNEST N. MORIAL CONVENTION CENTER, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA.
- E. DELEGATION LEADERS REQUIRING HOTEL ACCOMODATIONS SHOULD CONTACT SUSAN ANDRONOWITZ AT SMANDRONOWITZ@IFT.ORG.

5. ONSITE PROGRAMS

- A. INTERNATIONAL PAVILION, LOCATED ON THE FOOD EXPO FLOOR DURING REGULAR EXPO HOURS.
- B. INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY LOUNGE, LOCATED AT THE ERNEST N. MORIAL CONVENTION CENTER.
- C. INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS CENTER, LOCATED AT THE ERNEST N. MORIAL CONVENTION CENTER IN THE REGISTRATION AREA, HALL G.

SOME OF THE SERVICES THAT WILL BE AVAILABLE TO INTERNATIONAL DELEGATIONS INCLUDE:

- COMPUTER TERMINALS WITH INTERNET ACCESS
 - COPY AND FAX MACHINES
 - PRIVATE MEETING SPACE
- D. SUPPLIER SOLUTION SESSIONS, VENDOR PRESENTATIONS ALIGNED AROUND SPECIFIC FOOD INDUSTRY TOPICS, LOCATED ON THE IFT FOOD EXPO FLOOR ON JUNE 30 AND JULY 1.

6. ACTION REQUESTED

- A. PLEASE CONTACT AMANDA AYVAZ WITH GENERAL INFORMATION ON HOW YOU INTEND TO PROMOTE THE IFT ANNUAL MEETING & FOOD EXPO AND HOW YOU WILL QUALIFY BUYERS IN YOUR DELEGATIONS. AMANDA.AYVAZ@MAIL.DOC.GO

Amanda Ayvaz
US Department of Commerce
USA Trade Center/GTP
1300 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Suite 800 Mezzanine Level
Ronald Reagan Building
Washington, D.C. 20230
202/482/0338 Fax: 202/482-7801

amanda.ayvaz@mail.doc.gov

To view this email with graphics, click on the following link or copy and paste the following link to your browser:
<http://nexco.org/event20080116.html>

NEXCO invites you to attend:

Uncovering Trade Data

Using the Availability of Customs Information to Protect Your Company

*****RESCHEDULED AS FOLLOWS*****

Date: Thursday, February 28, 2008

Time: 1:00 - 3:00 pm Eastern Time

Location: Your Choice! All you need is internet access!

Cost: \$45 NEXCO Members - per computer

\$80, Non-members - per computer

JOIN NEXCO AT WWW.NEXCO.ORG

=====
IF YOU EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTY REGISTERING ONLINE, PLEASE CONTACT NEXCO AT
877-291-4901 SO THAT WE MAY COMPLETE YOUR REGISTRATION OVER THE
TELEPHONE.
=====

Members \$45.00

click here to register: <http://nexco.org/20080214M.html>

Non-Members \$80.00

click here to register: <http://nexco.org/20080214N.html>

Uncovering Trade Data

Using the Availability of Customs Information to Protect Your Company

Learn how Customs targets shipments electronically for cargo security

and compliance exams! With the availability of data from ACE,

electronic manifests and the upcoming implementations of 10+2 criteria,

(Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for the 10+2 Security Filing was

published in the Federal Register on Wednesday, January 2), Customs has

more information about your company than ever before. What prompts an

examination of your merchandise? How does the Automated Targeting System

work?

To help prevent terrorist weapons from being transported to the United

States, vessel carriers bringing cargo to the US are currently required

to transmit certain information to Customs and Border Protection about

the cargo they are transporting prior to lading that cargo at foreign

ports of entry. The proposed rulemaking proposes both importers and

carriers to submit additional information pertaining to the cargo before

the cargo is brought into the United States and it must be received by

way of a CBP-approved electronic data interchange system.

Join us on Thursday, February 28, 2008 and learn about these concerns and more at our program on Uncovering Trade Data.

OUR SPEAKER

Ashley Craig, Attorney-at-Law, Venable LLP

Mr. Craig concentrates his practice on legislative and regulatory matters involving transportation and international commerce. He is actively involved in various matters before the Executive Branch, Congress and federal agencies such as the Federal Maritime Commission. Additionally, Mr. Craig has extensive experience with transportation security, third party logistics, and related commercial and regulatory matters.

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PIDA Interest Rates Lowered

The interest rate for PIDA (Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority) applications has been reduced. Projects in the Boroughs of Norristown and Pottstown are now at 4.00%. Advanced Technology projects anywhere in Montgomery County are now at 4.00%. All other industrial projects are at an interest rate of 5.00%. [Click Here](#) for PIDA Guidelines.

All MELF (Machinery and Equipment Loan Fund), MELF First Industries, SBF (Small Business First) and SBF First Industries applications approved February 6th, 2008 and until further notice will receive a 4.00% interest rate. First Industries agriculture projects located in an Agriculture Security Zone will receive a 3% interest rate. [Click Here](#) for MELF or SBF Guidelines.

Contact Carmen Italia for more information on any of the above loan programs.

Re-Opening of the Philadelphia Regional Building & Construction Partnership's Incumbent Worker Grant

The Philadelphia Regional Building and Construction Partnership has received the grant funds to re-open the Incumbent Worker Grant for the 2007-2008 year. We will now be accepting grant applications for eligible courses taken between the dates of July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008.

The primary purpose of the Incumbent Worker Grant is to train personnel in non-entry level positions (ie: advanced certification for specific jobs) as well as supervisory and management level positions in the construction industry. The grant will be used to fund training that creates a career lattice which strengthens and advances the company. Any construction company located in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is eligible for the Construction Industry Partnership Grant. **Trainees must be employed in Pennsylvania.** Basic Training and Lean Manufacturing are not the purpose of this grant and will not be deemed eligible. Programs covered by WEDNet will not be accepted.

For the grant guidelines, application, and other materials needed to obtain reimbursement, please send an inquiry to Carli Pio at cpio@mcidc.com or contact the offices of MCIDC at 610-272-5000.

Public Open House:

Routes 611 & 263 Corridor Study

Elected representatives from Abington, Cheltenham, Hatboro Borough, Jenkintown Borough, and Upper Moreland (*the "Multi-Municipal Redevelopment Task Force"*) invite you to our first Public Open House to help develop solutions to transportation and livability problems in Eastern Montgomery County. The Route 611 / 263 Corridor study is a major effort addressing such concerns as: safety and walkability, streetscape enhancements, traffic mobility, and public transit improvements.

Tasks completed in the first year of this two-year study include data collection and stakeholder interviews. The Public Open House will serve as a forum to present initial findings and preliminary recommendations. The findings draw from three broad areas: transportation, land use, and the environment. They inform the preliminary recommendations, which are designed to support the continued redevelopment of the corridor.

The public is asked to attend, participate and acquaint themselves with the direction of the study. Planning staff will be available to answer questions and take comments. Comments will be documented and considered for the next steps for the study.

Date & Location:

Thursday, February 21st
3:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Grace Presbyterian Church
444 Old York Road
Jenkintown, PA 19046
(*parking available*)

Your participation will provide a gauge for decision making along the corridor and in your community!!

www.dvrpc.org/transportation/longrange/corridor/rt611.htm

Help Shape the Future of the Delaware Valley

Take 5 Minutes to Give the DVRPC Your 2 Cents

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) needs your opinions and concerns to help shape the future of the Delaware Valley. The results of this survey will help to create a vision for the future, which will be communicated in the next update to the region's long-range plan, entitled "Connections - The Regional Plan for a Sustainable Future."

Please go to www.dvrpc.org/connections and take a short, confidential survey about land use, economic development and transportation in the Delaware Valley. By completing the survey you could be eligible to win an 8 GB iPod Touch.

The DVRPC would like to ask you to help insure a successful survey by helping to promote it through your websites, newsletters, community meetings, classrooms, etc. The survey ends March 7th.

SBA: Government Contracting Workshops

How to Do Business with the Federal Government

FREE SEMINAR SERIES- Would you like to sell goods & services to the Federal Government and its Prime Contractors? The Philadelphia District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration sponsors a workshop, "Doing Business With the Federal Government", which provides an overview of the requirements to become a government contractor.

Topics Include:

- How to Register
- Small Business Certifications
- Finding Opportunities
- Marketing Your Firm
- Federal Supply Schedules
- Tips to Prepare Your Offer
- How to Seek Additional Assistance

Space is limited and pre-registration is requested. To register please call or email
Don Jefferson @
215-580-2726 or don.jefferson@sba.gov.

Dates & Locations:

Friday, March 7th @ 9:00 AM

(Montgomery County Community College -
Pottstown Campus - Room 106)
16 High Street, Pottstown, PA 19464

Wednesday, March 19th @ 8:30 AM

(Associated Builders & Contractors, Inc.)
430 W. Germantown Pike, East Norriton, PA 19403

Thursday, March 20th @ 9:00 AM

(Michael's Delicatessen - Boardroom)
Route 202 Valley Forge Center, King of Prussia, PA 19406

Tuesday, April 8th, @ 9:00 AM

(Michael's Delicatessen)
Route 202 Valley Forge Center, King of Prussia, PA 19406

Wednesday, April 16th @ 9:00 AM

(Limerick Township Building)
646 West Ridge Pike, Limerick, PA 19468

Small Business Funding Workshop

FREE SEMINAR SERIES- Do you need capital for starting a business or expanding your current business? The Philadelphia District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration sponsors a workshop, "Small Business Funding".

Topics Include:

- SBA Guaranteed Lending Programs
- What Lenders Look For
- Use of Loan Proceeds
- Interest Rates & Fees
- SBA Resource Partners
- No Cost Professional Counseling For Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs

Space is limited and pre-registration is requested. To register please call or email Don Jefferson @ 215-580-2726 or don.jefferson@sba.gov.

Dates & Locations:

Tuesday, March 11th @ 9:00 AM
(Michael's Delicatessen)
Route 202 Valley Forge Center, King of Prussia, PA 19406

Tuesday, March 18th @ 8:30 AM
(Associated Builders & Contractors, Inc.)
430 West Germantown Pike, East Norriton, PA 19403

Friday, March 28th @ 9:00 AM
(Montgomery County Community College -
Pottstown Campus, Room 106)
16 High Street, Pottstown, PA 19464

Wednesday, April 9th @ 9:00 AM
(Michael's Delicatessen)
Route 202 Valley Forge Center, King of Prussia, PA 19406

Tuesday, April 15th @ 9:00 AM
(Limerick Township Building)
646 West Ridge Pike, Limerick, PA 19468

Upcoming Events & Seminars:

Education & Workforce Seminar

March 4, 2008

Over the years we have spoken with many of you within the manufacturing and construction trades about the lack of an educated workforce and how difficult it is for companies to find qualified/skilled employee candidates. MCIDC and The Montgomery County Education & Workforce Partnership have been discussing this problem and learned that several schools in Montgomery County have been directly addressing this issue. We would like to invite you to join us and these educators to learn more about their curriculum and how they are preparing the future of your workforce.

Where

[Plymouth Country Club](#)

When

Registration/Check-In: 7:30-8:30 AM

Program: 8:30-11:00 AM

Admission

MCIDC Members: \$15.00

Non-Members: \$25.00

(Admission fee includes Continental Breakfast)

For more information or to register
for this seminar, contact:
Carli Pio at 610-272-5000 or by email:
cpio@mcidc.com.

Thank You To Our Sponsors!

American Infrastructure
www.americaninfrastructure.com

Haines & Kibblehouse
www.hkgroup.com

Keep an eye out for more information on these upcoming seminars:

Economy Seminar
(April 9, 2008)

Changing Utility Rates
(To Be Announced)

2007-2009 Business & Industry Directory

Our 2007-2009 Business and Industry Directory is still available. The directory can be purchased for \$40.00 by any non-members of MCIDC. Because the directory is a service provided as a part of annual dues, it is made free of charge to all members.

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the directory, you may feel free to contact our office via telephone or email.

For more information contact:

Carli Pio
610-272-5000
cpio@mcidc.com

About Us:

Montgomery County Industrial Development Corporation (MCIDC) is the key resource in Montgomery County for economic assistance and development for business. MCIDC is dedicated to enhancing the county's economic balance and preserving its quality of life. The Corporation has a rich, successful history in attracting new business to the county.

PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY

Office of Continuing and Professional Studies announces:

Breaking Into the Trade Game

A Six-Week Course for Business Leaders

Dedicated to Maximizing Their Companies' Sales

Offered in conjunction with the U.S. Export Assistance Center

Take advantage of this opportunity to learn how to move, think and act in the global marketplace. Whether you are just starting to think about exporting or have years of experience, this course will give you the tools and confidence necessary to succeed. You'll also learn about the free county, state and federal Government programs designed to help your company grow through exporting.

This exclusive training program has been carefully designed to give you the skills, strategies, insights and network of contacts necessary to expand your sales through exporting.

The course material will be taught over six sessions and will include insights and expertise from various international trade experts. Course activities and discussions will focus on developing a strong foundation for beginning and intermediate exporters.

LOCATION:
Philadelphia University, **Bucks County Campus**
4800 E. Street Road
Trevose, PA 19053

Tuition: \$300.00

Six Week course: April 15, 2008 to June 24, 2008, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Date:	Topic:
April 15	Making the Export Decision
April 28	Making the Connection: Selecting the Best Markets
May 13	Transporting Goods Internationally
May 27	Legal Issues for Exporters
June 10	Financing and Payment Options
June 24	Cross-Cultural Communications

For more information or to register, please contact:

Office of Continuing and Professional Studies
School House Lane & Henry Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19144-5497
215.951.2900
evening@PhilaU.edu
www.PhilaU.edu/continuinged

This notice is provided solely as a courtesy and does not constitute a U.S. Department of Commerce or U.S. Small Business Administration or U.S. Export Assistance Center endorsement of the events or of the organizer(s)/sponsor(s). For a more complete listing of international events in your area visit www.export.gov