

The Advocate



Advocate's Message



Governor Kulongoski



Lydia Muñiz, Advocate

Obstacles.

Every business has or has had first-hand knowledge of obstacles. Successful small business owners have learned how to leap over or side-step those obstacles to keep their companies running.

Two current obstacles are a slowing economy and high fuel costs. Most of Oregon's small businesses can and will weather this storm. Oregonians have a "maverick spirit" that keeps them going. However, sometimes a



business has to know when to flow with the river. Businesses must look at new patterns, policies, and technologies and embrace them to keep on top of trends. This might mean setting up a computer system to track

business opportunities, communicate with customers, or streamline accounting practices. It might mean shifting to keep up with current trends such as using environmentally healthier paint, cleaning supplies, etc. It might mean implementing conservation practices, changing marketing strategies, etc. A business must be flexible to survive.

Obstacles will continue. Businesses will continue their aspirations, hopes and dreams. That's what it took to get started and that's what it takes to get over hurdles. It also takes good management and employee relations. It takes the right type of marketing to bring in new customers. It takes good customer service and quality of product/service to keep customers. Run your company with pride and integrity. Keep up with current trends. Combine your aspirations, hopes and dreams with hard work and look at obstacles as opportunities.



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"I've met enough of our fellow citizens – from back wood trails, to commercial downtowns, to white dunes on the coast – to know that our aspirations are greater than our divisions. Our hopes are bigger than our doubts. And, yes, our dreams are more powerful than the obstacles that stand in our way."

Theodore Kulongoski, Governor, March 21, 2008, State of the State Address

State of the State Address

To read the Governor's entire speech, go to the following website:

http://governor.oregon.gov/Gov/speech/speech_032108.shtml

Oregon Beauty



Crater Lake

Dates of Interest

July	4 - Independence Day
September	1 - Labor Day
September 22	- Autumn Begins
October	13 - Columbus Day
November	4 - Election Day

Networking Opportunities Abound

The Governor's Advocate MWESB and staff have had a busy spring, traveling to Klamath Falls to present information at the first Klamath Tribes' Economic Development Summit/Conclave and attending OAME's 20th Anniversary Trade Show and the



Tony Lawrence, Lydia Muñiz, Linda Jones at OAME's 20th Tradeshow

Hispanic Chamber's Latino Employment and Business Fair.

Snow fell on April 8 for the Klamath Tribes' event. Lydia Muñiz shared information with attendees about the services offered by the Advocate's Office. Linda Jones spoke about the Clearinghouse services and ORPIN.

On May 8, an estimated 800 people mingled throughout the Portland Convention Center to meet vendors and public agency staff at OAME's (Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs) annual Trade Show.



May 22 found the Advocate and staff again at the Portland Convention Center for the Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce's Latino Employment and Business Fair. Various booths again filled the PCC allowing visitors and vendors, public agency staff and guests to interact, meet, exchange business cards, and get leads on business opportunities.

Know Current Trends

Running your own business takes a lot of hard work, but most business owners wouldn't have it any other way. They are in charge of their lives. They have passion for their product and/or service. They like being their own boss and not having to answer to anyone. However, every business does have to answer to someone. You must answer to your customers. Without customers, you won't stay in business. Customers drive business trends. To stay in business, companies may have to adjust to customer demands/needs. It's important to keep up with trends, not fads that will disintegrate quickly. Trends are long-term shifts.

For example, if you don't have a computer, you're at a disadvantage. Computers are worth the time and money to set up and use. They are fast and efficient and allow you more access to business opportunities. Government procurement opportunities are being listed more often on web sites. Agencies can place their bid requests on these



sites, saving time and money. Computers also are quick and easy communication tools between a firm and its customers. Computers are here to stay.



Go green. Sustainability and environmental conservation have been with us for decades, however, now is a critical time to reduce our carbon footprint on the earth as global warming nears critical stages. Sustainability is one of the Governor's priorities for this biennium. Not only are conservation methods helpful to the planet, they often save money. Can your business conserve water, fuel, energy? Can you recycle plastic, metal, computers, etc.? Can you purchase or create products using recycled materials?



Can you focus on "green" landscaping: reducing water usage, planting native plants, using natural pesticides and fertilizers? Can your company use and/or



create alternative sources of energy: wind, solar, wave, geothermal? Can your business shift into a sustainable

business such as the landscaping just mentioned, installing solar panels, helping businesses/homes become more energy efficient, etc.? Can you use (and market) healthier products? Many customers are requesting safer, more environmentally conscientious products. It's good for them, good for the planet, and good for business.



Research current trends in order to stay up with your competition. A thriving business not only grows, but is flexible enough to shift as needed.

Business Tips From a Growing Northwest Company

Helen Rockey, founder of WildBLEU, spoke at the Key Bank's Key 4 Women luncheon at the Multnomah Athletic club (MAC).

Helen's company produces sleep-wear using fibers that pull moisture from the body and evaporate it faster than cotton, allowing people with night sweats (due to conditions such as menopause or cancer) to rest comfortably at night. WildBLEU has gone from a small cottage industry to



2-plus million dollars. Helen shared her journey and introduced Madeline Turnock from the public relations firm she hired (Hill & Knowlton.)

The importance of communicating

was stressed. Businesses must have a few **key messages** which should:

- be clear
- be consistent
- differentiate the business

Avenues to present messages:

- The **internet** allows a company to measure interest and track sales
- Ads** can be crucial, depending on where and when they are placed
- Door flyers** may be effective
- Product give-aways** may lead to repeat business as well as "word of mouth" progression
- Trade shows** cost a fortune, are a pain to do; "But," Helen stated, "they work" for her product.

Hiring a PR firm may seem like a luxury, however, Helen knew a time came when she could not do it all. It became more cost effective to outsource production as well as to hire



help with public relations.

Madeline pointed out that good PR helps establish long-lasting relationships. They will do research, create a plan, help execute the plan and evaluate the process.

While this might cost several thousand dollars per month, it was pointed out that a company might benefit from hiring a PR firm at set-up (at a much lower cost) in order to create a plan that the firm executes itself.

Whether you go it alone or hire a public relations firm to help with the creative process, it's crucial to get your business name and message out in order to promote your product or service.

Correction

Apologies go to Noni Causey of City of Roses Drop Boxes and to Natasha Hendricks of American Steel Products, Inc. In our last newsletter, the wrong name was attributed to the woman in the photo below talking to Raleigh Lewis (DCBS). Both women were good sports about the mix up. Here is the correct version:



Raleigh Lewis (DCBS) has a discussion with Noni Causey (City of Roses Drop Boxes) at the Governor's Marketplace Connection Construction Contracting Workshop, March 5, 2008

SBA Honors Oregon Small Businesses

The Small Business Administration (SBA) with the help of many corporate sponsors, celebrated 55 years of service and presented awards to various Oregon businesses and financial institutions at an Awards Gala on May 22. Lydia Muñiz, the Governor's Advocate for Minority, Women and Emerging



Small Businesses, read the Governor's Proclamation declaring Small Business Week and honoring Oregon's businesses.

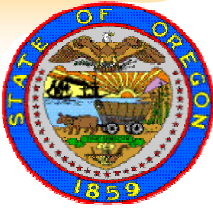
Keynote speaker was Susan Sokol-Blosser, founder of Sokol-Blosser winery in Dundee, Oregon. This winery was one of the first in Oregon and helped lead the way for Oregon's growing wine industry. Susan focused on three main points: vision, mission and values. Vision is a business's destination. It's a long way away, but helps

keep the company focused and on track. Mission is why the firm wants to go in that direction. Values are the ethical road map. Profit is a vehicle to achieve one's vision, not a destination in and of itself. The vision and mission should be what motivates a company.

Other pieces of information from the Gala include the following. Small businesses are what keep the country competitive. Small businesses are innovators. Companies have to be their own "cheerleaders" to keep going during the tough times. Small business owners are inventors, dreamers, risk takers, entrepreneurs, and innovators.



Our heartfelt thanks and congratulations to ALL of Oregon's small businesses.



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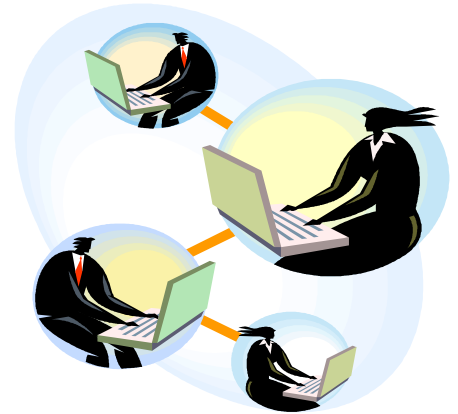
Government Procurement Websites

ORPIN — Oregon Procurement Information Network

<http://orpin.oregon.gov/open.dll/welcome>

OUS — Oregon University System

www.ous.edu/about/bo



Upcoming Events

August 26-31 - American Contract Compliance Association— For more information:

http://www.bdiweb.org/mboc_pages/mboctraining.htm

September 11– Hispanic Metro Chamber's Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration. Oregon Convention Center. 6 p.m.-9p.m. www.hmccoregon.com/

October 1- MEDWeek Trade Show and Awards Luncheon. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oregon Convention Center. Free admission. Charge for parking and luncheon. www.bdiweb.org/mboc_pages/mbocmedweek.htm

**October 11- Oregon Native American Chamber 4th Annual Gathering. 6 p.m.—10 p.m. Red Lion on the Columbia. For more information: kellyanne@onacc.org
Phone: 503-654-2138.**

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