



3.2B RESOURCES

3.2.1 Resources

DESA, Inc. currently has a trained and experienced staff that is accustomed to providing quality management and technical assistance to high-level firms. The training tools being provided by the MBDA will enhance the skill set of the existing staff.

The MBEC has its existing client lists and databases for former year clients with over four hundred (400) clients that are in alignment with MBDA's goals. From that list, over fifty (50) are positioned as SGI or "potential rapid growth". In addition to our current SQL database, we also have access to the following databases:

- Governor's office of Small and Minority Business Assistance
- SBA (8a)
- Carolina Minority Supplier Development Council
- Central Contractors Registration
- SC Chamber of Commerce

3.2.1.1 Commitment Letters from Resources

DESA, Inc. - See Attachment A

3.2.1.2 Letters of Support

Thomas McCants Media – See Attachment A

W. Frazier Construction – See Attachment A

3.2.2 Location

The MBEC's geographic location is currently at 1515 Richland Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The center has been at this location for the past three (3) years. The center is conveniently located in downtown Columbia; and in close proximity to major interstates such as; Interstate 26, Interstate 77 and Interstate 20. This centralized area is easily attainable and accessible to all MBEC clients and potential clients. It is accessible to disabled persons and strategically located in the geographic service area to ensure that it is: (1) close to the available public and private sector resources, and (2) within a reasonable commuting distance to the minority business community and is in the heart of the State..

3.2.3 Strategic Partners

To facilitate the MBEC in optimizing its outreach and service delivery to all sections of its geographical service area, DESA, Inc. will recruit, establish and maintain a network of Strategic Partners. These alliances will consist of local public and private

sector organizations that are positioned to support the Center in achieving its goals for assisting minority businesses. Our Strategic Partners will serve as a local resource for minority-owned businesses seeking to obtain services from the MBEC. The MBEC will establish the network of, no less than, five (5) Strategic Partners.

DESA, Inc. realizes the importance of having teaming relationships in the communities in which we serve. Much of our past success in operating a MBEC has come from our informal teaming relationships. We look forward to fortifying our present relationships with Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)'s to allow us to better serve minority businesses through our Strategic Partners.

Methodology

DESA, Inc. has always maintained a group of business and community organizations that have an inherent interest in assisting small businesses. Many of these businesses have worked with DESA for several years. DESA, Inc. will now formalize relationships with five (5) constituents from this body to establish a network of Strategic Partnerships. DESA, Inc. has already received a letter of commitment from a potential partner. This commitment letter is located in the *Appendix A* this proposal.

The Strategic Partners will play a major role in the marketing of the Center. They will not only publicize and promote the Center, but also recommend clients to the Center for technical assistance. In exchange for these services, partners will be afforded access to the tools available through the MBDA. These tools include access to the MBDA's Minority Business Information Portals. Partners may enter sites on the portals, such as Phoenix, Opportunity, Resource Locator and Virtual Centers through the Internet. Partners will also be permitted to identify themselves as a Strategic Partner of the Center and make public its relationship with the MBEC in brochures, advertisements, press releases and other media.

Memorandum of Understanding documents will be developed detailing the roles each member will play and the resources they will provide. These resources may include:

- Initiate, assist and develop mechanisms to increase contracts and funding for minority businesses.
- Providing initial counseling to minority business enterprises, if the Strategic Partner is one that offers direct counseling;
- Provide capital through the partnership with the MBEC
- Provide opportunities through the partnership with the MBEC
- Support of the MBEC projects in coordinating MED Week activities within the geographic service area.

DESA, Inc. has selected a diverse group of partners that match the make-up of the small business community of South Carolina. The list of committed Strategic Partners include:

- 1) 
- 2) 

J (6)(4)

- 3) [REDACTED]
 - 4) [REDACTED]
 - 5) [REDACTED]
- } (b)(4)

The following partners will be negotiated upon award of contract:

- 1) [REDACTED]
 - 2) [REDACTED]
 - 3) [REDACTED]
- } (b)(4)

DESA will collaborate with MBE programs operated by state, county and city government offices. Alliances have already been formed with [REDACTED] MBE Programs. DESA has also been very involved with the Governor's Office of Women & Minority Owned Businesses. This office certifies minority and woman-owned businesses. The MBEC works closely with this office in certifying. We have also worked through this office in our advocacy efforts. Contacts in state government will be very beneficial to our Center and to minority businesses in the state.

} (b)(4)

Chamber of Commerce – SC Chamber of Commerce

The South Carolina Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce have committed to aid DESA in its efforts to strengthen minority businesses. Trade associations like the South Carolina Economic Development Association (SCEDA), who has focused on the needs of the minority business community, will also be invited to align themselves with the program. The State Chamber has developed a database of viable minority owned businesses.

Bank or Financial Institution

DESA has always maintained a good working relationship with statewide banks and financial institutions. Institutions have already committed to partnering with the MBEC. [REDACTED] have already pledged their support for the program.

} (b)(4)

3.2.4 Computer Requirements

DESA, Inc. understands, in the current application for operation of the MBEC, that all award recipients must meet requirements related to the acquisition, installation, configuration, maintenance and security of information technology (IT) assets in order to ensure a productive interface between all Centers, minority-owned businesses, the MBDA, and the public. It is further understood that the basic requirements are the desktop workstations, the server, local area network (LAN) components and a connection to the Internet. DESA, Inc. current hardware and software **fully meets the requirements of the US Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency.** Therefore, the current budget will have limited dollars the first year in this area.

3.2.4.1 Network Design

The MBEC currently has a Local Area Network, computer workstations and a connection to the internet for all staff members. All desktop computers are interconnected with the server computer using an Ethernet protocol enabling communication with all workstations on the network. A constant high-speed Internet connection is maintained at all times during business hours. Each staff persona has an individual email address that is available to its clients and the public. The local area network as described below:

- Dell Poweredge 600SC 2003 SBS Server
- Two mirrored 40 gigabyte 7.2K RPM IDE hard drives
- Single Intel Pentium 4 Processor; 2.4 GHz, 533 FSB includes floppy; upgradeable for dual processor
- Firewall Software
- Trend Micro Anti-Virus
- Bellsouth DSL

DESA, Inc. is confident this server meets the needs of this requirement. It is engineered for high performance, maximum uptime, serviceability, and ease of management. All services are provided by a third party such as an Internet Service Provider (ISP) shall meet the minimum server specifications.

3.2.4.2 Desktop Workstation

The following systems were purchased which meet and/or exceed the application-required specifications:

- Intel Pentium 4 Processor, 2.53 GHz
- Hard drive with storage capacity of forty (40) GB
- 512 MB PC 800 RD Ram (2RIMMS)
- Microsoft Office XP Small Business and ADOBE ACROBAT 7.0
- Internet Access using Internet Explorer 6.x
- Ethernet TCP/IP protocol
- Electronic Mail
- Trend Micro Anti-Virus

One of the workstations has a Xerox Documate 510 scanner installed and a feed along with software fully compatible with Adobe Acrobat for the production of electronic document submissions.

3.2.4.3 Maintenance and Security

A network map is maintained for review by the MBDA. We currently have a designated administrative person who is fully competent in the operation of the Windows 2000 network and local area network (LAN) technology system. They have been on staff since early 2006 and have maintained the system in full operating order.

DESA, Inc. understands that the MBDA may require certain software to be loaded on servers and/or desktops. The cost of this additional software may be borne by MBDA.

Every employee has been assigned a unique username and password to access the system and signed a written computer security agreement, both of which are on file at the MBDC and available to the MBDA. All staff will sign all required forms upon award of the new contract. A photocopy of the agreement shall be sent by fax to the MBDA no later than thirty (30) days after receipt of the award. All subsequent new hires require access to the MBDA or MBDA systems shall read understand and sign the security agreement prior to issuance of a password.

3.2.4.4 Website

The SCMBDC currently hosts a public website at www.scmbdc.com. The website address will change to www.scmbe.com upon award of the new contract. We have designed our website to meet the needs of our clients and in doing so have also met the requirements for websites in this application. The index page of the website identifies the owner as the Minority Business Development Center and that it is funded by the United States Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency. The index page is fully compatible with Internet Explorer 6.x browser software and has minimal graphics to enable downloads on a normal home computer with 56 Kb/s analog phone line connection in less than ten (10) seconds. The web site contains the names of all managers and employees, the business and mailing address of the MBEC, business phone and fax numbers and email addresses of all MBEC personnel. It also includes a description of all services offered at the MBEC and the hours of operations. The site has a short biographical statement for each employee of the MBEC including management, contractors, part-time, full-time and volunteer personnel providing service to the eligible public under the award from MBDA. The cost associated is also posted on the website. The website contains many useful links including those to the MBDA homepage: www.mbda.gov.

The site also has information regarding the new Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software and services. The Geographic Information System (GIS) has the ability to tie demographic information with street addresses, zip codes and census tracks into "business maps" that help minority businesses owners and financial

lenders visualize patterns and understand relationships not apparent from traditional demographic tables and financial charts. GIS analysis links locations with the information behind them and presents the results in the form of a map.

There is no third party advertising on our website. The website also includes the Annual Report of the Center. The website is professionally maintained and is updated as required, usually on a monthly basis.

Every page of the website is in compliance with Federal standards of the American With Disabilities Act, Section 508. DESA will revise and re-engineer the website to serve more as a marketing/sales tool and to be in compliance. The website will be updated monthly by the administration of the SCMBEC and the Project Director.

3.2.4.5 Time for Compliance

DESA is currently in compliance with all technical requirements for computer hardware and software and will report, within 30 days of receipt of award, this via email to the Chief Information Officer, MBDA Office of Information Technology Services and MBDA Office of Business Development.

DESA will provide the name, contact telephone number and email address for the following people:

- Project Director
- Network or Systems Administrator
- IP Number of the Domain Name Server

DESA will also supply pertinent information about our ISP including and any other information as specified in the Technology Requirements.

3.2.4.6 Performance System

The SCMBDC is currently using the Performance database system provided by MBDA for performance reporting, accessed via the Internet. We understand this is a requirement under this application. Within 30 days after award, each MBEC Consultant and/or anyone providing business assistance to the public under this award shall have satisfactorily completed the Performance System Training Source (PTSC) on-line from the Performance website. Only the trained staff, giving service to the client, will enter data into the Performance database. Staff will be instructed that they are required to enter data on a daily basis.

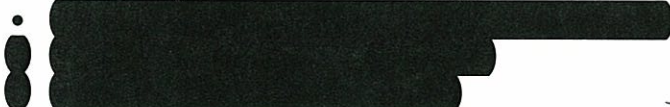
3.2.4.7 Data Integrity

DESA, Inc. will continue to ensure that the necessary steps are taken for all data entered into the MBDA system, and systems operated by DESA, Inc. are accurate and timely.

3.2.5 Current Computer Hardware/Software Applications

- Dell PowerEdge 600SC 2003 SBS; Intel Pentium 4 Processor, 2.4 GHZ, 533 FSB – Two mirrored 40 GB, IDE hard drive
- Dell Dimension 2400, P4 CPU 2.66 GHZ, 512 MB Ram
- Dell Dimension 2400, P4 CPU 2.66 GHZ, 512 MB Ram
- Dell Dimension 2400, P4 CPU 2.66 GHZ, 512 MB Ram
- Dell Dimension 2400, P4 CPU 2.66 GHZ, 512 MB Ram

Current Computer Hardware – Server

-  (b)(4)
- Lanier 5227 Multipurpose
- HP Color LaserJet 3700n

Current Computer Software

- Microsoft Office 2003 Professional
- Microsoft Office XP Professional
- Microsoft Fax Service
- Adobe Photoshop
- Adobe PageMaker 6.5
- Adobe Acrobat Professional 7.0
- Adobe Reader 7.0
- Finance Pro
- PPCs Business Solutions
- Pro CP Phonebook 4.0
- Real Data Real Estate Calculator
- RMA Annual Statement Studies
- ArcView GIS 3.2
- ArcView Network Analyst
- ArcView StreetMap
- ArcView Business Analyst 9.0
- Crystal Reports for ESRI
- American Yellow Pages
- Precision Collection – Extended
- Precision Collection – Standard
- Expedition 6.0



- Internet Explorer 6.0
- Seagate Crystal Reports
- Trend Micro Anti-Virus
- Winfax Pro
- Kudo Catalog Reader
- Street Atlas USA

3.3C TECHNIQUES & METHODOLOGIES (WORK REQUIREMENTS)

3.3.1 Performance Measures

The Project Director will report our program performance measures in a Performance report 30 days after the end of the second quarter and provide an end of the year assessment, using these measures, within 30 days after the end of the fourth quarter. We understand that the program performance measures include:

- Dollar value of transactions
- Number of jobs created
- Number of new clients
- Administrative Management & Operational Quality
- Client satisfaction
- Management assessment
- Market promotion
- Resource entities
- Establish strategic partners
- Facilitated matches

The MBEC will take the necessary steps to assure the integrity and timeliness of all data provided.

3.3.1.1 Dollar Value of Transactions

DESA intends to meet or exceed the annual Dollar Value of Transactions amount of \$12,134,000 which was established by MBDA. The staff of the MBEC will assist clients in securing loans, equity financing, bonds, and other binding financial agreements.

3.3.1.2 Dollar Value of Gross Receipts

DESA intends to meet or exceed the total dollar value of \$8,089,500 in successfully awarded contracts and/or total principal value of executed rights and/or increase in sales and/or completed Mergers and Acquisitions or other binding financial considerations secured by clients resulting from the MBEC staff's business assistance.

3.3.1.3 Jobs Created

DESA intends to meet or exceed the forty-seven (47) job creations required by MBDA, resulting from the minority businesses receiving assistance from MBEC staff.

3.3.1.4 Number of New Clients

DESA intends to meet or exceed the goal of ninety-one (91) new clients required by MBDA, resulting from the minority businesses receiving assistance from MBEC staff.

The following is a chart depicting quarterly breakdown of the goals for the SCMBEC.



3.2.1.5 Quarterly Breakdown of Goals

Indicators	Points	First Performance		Second Performance		Third Performance		Fourth Performance	
		Period (Months =3)	Y-T-D Goal	Period (Months =3)	Y-T-D Goal	Period (Months =3)	Y-T-D Goal	Period (Months =3)	Y-T-D Goal
1. Dollar Value of contracts & procurements	27	3,033,500		6,067,000		9,100,500		12,134,000	
2. Dollar Value of awarded financial transactions	27	2,022,375		4,044,750		6,067,125		8,089,500	
3. Increase in sales	6	266,125		532,250		798,375		1,064,500	
4. Number of Jobs created	10	12		24		36		47	
5. Number of new clients	5	22		44		68		91	
Administrative Management & Operational Quality	25								
a. Maintenance of SGI Client Portfolio	3								
b. Customer Relationships Management	3								
c. Management Assessment	3								
d. Partnerships	5								
e. Consulting hours	3								
f. Maintenance of Non-Federal Cost Share	3								
g. Market promotion	1								
h. Resource entries	2	43		86		129		172	
i. Facilitated Matches	2	2		2		1		5	
Total Points	100								

3.3.2 Market Development Plan

DESA, Inc. is poised to facilitate the identification and solicitation of potential MBE clients. Once these businesses have become clients of the SCMBEC, market building activities will be employed which includes conducting a business assessment and locating opportunities and resources that will help them nurture and grow to the next level. The SCMBEC (operated by DESA) will also leverage its 20 years of relationships with the public and private sector to advance their clients.

3.3.2.1 Market Research & Development

Market research will provide information concerning business and capital opportunities in the service areas, across the state of South Carolina. Research will focus on locating current and future opportunities for MBE development. The SCMBEC will systematically search out sources of capital, sales opportunities and business buy-outs. After locating opportunities, efforts will be made to match them with current clients or use them to attack new clients.

If the research provides regional or national potential, the Center will ensure that information is made available to the MBDA network, so it can be used by other MBECs and MBE firms nationwide. DESA, Inc. understands that the MBEC is dedicated to communicating with minority businesses in order to strengthen them through growth in procurement and financing. Currently at the SCMBEC, information is entered into the Opportunity database on a regular basis. By sharing information with others, all become more knowledgeable and better equipped to succeed in today's competitive market. A nationwide criteria needs to be established for entries into the system.

With the new state-of-the-art environment created by the MBDA's enhanced MBEC Program strategy, the SCMBEC intends to use its newest resources to its fullest extent. The MBDA's Minority Business Internet Portal (MBIP) offers business consultants with an abundance of information at their fingertips and a good starting point for doing market research and development.

With the aide of the MBIP, a great deal of market research can be accomplished on-line. The following information is available to research new markets and their business potential:

- **Minority Population Growth: 1995 to 2050** - Summarizes the major demographic shifts.
- **Dynamic Diversity: Projected Changes in US Race and Ethnic Composition 1995 to 2050** - A more detailed version of Minority Population Growth: 1995 to 2050.

- ***Federal Datalink: A Guide to Federal County-Level Data*** - Federal data sources for market researchers and analysts. Includes hyperlinks to on-line databases.
- ***Mapping Minority Markets: County-Level Maps of US Population and Business Data*** - Over eighty maps of the spatial distribution of population groups and businesses.
- ***US Census Bureau Data Variable Matrix*** - Availability of market research variables at the national, state and county levels.
- ***Minority Purchasing Power: 2000 to 2045*** - Estimating future purchasing power in minority communities.
- ***Resource Locator*** – Helps to find organizations that specialize in starting, operating and expanding a business.
- ***Procurement Opportunities*** - Many contracting opportunities and valuable resources located on the page concerning electronic commerce (E-commerce).
- ***Business Resource Centers*** - A vast number of sites with business information.
- ***GIS (Business Analyst) Software*** - This software allows the Business Consultant to provide specific demographics on locations, competitive data, and color maps for client projects. We are able to utilize the demographic data to determine trends and patterns in the data that are not readily apparent through normal analysis. We are able to illustrate these analyses via interactive maps that allow us to display, explore and query the demographic data of a client's market area. The maps are linked to data tables that we can print out in standard or customized reports. This data greatly enhances our business plans, market studies, loan packages, etc. South Carolina is hopeful to continue using the GIS Business Analyst software.

The information cited above is only a portion of the information available on the MBIP and at other websites over the Internet. Internet research will be used to develop a broad area of knowledge, which will be fine tuned through further research and investigation.

Using strategic partners, established for the new MBEC program, is another excellent way to carry out market research. Networking through Strategic Partners will provide a large amount of information about the market and opportunities in the service delivery area. Information sharing regarding sources of capital, sales opportunities and business buy-outs will be practiced. As information becomes available, the Center will match-up opportunities with clients and share the information with the MBDA to disperse throughout the US.

DESA, Inc. has been in business for over two decades and known throughout the minority and majority business community, as well as the political community. It has alliances, contacts, and resources with many national, statewide and local groups. These contacts and relationships often lead to the discovery of pertinent information. Contact to contract networking is very a important aspect of the Center's efforts to effectively perform market research and development.

Networking with key businesses is critical to locate and develop opportunities for MBEC clients of this project. Responsibility for developing and maintaining the relationships with many business resources falls to the SCMBEC's staff. Over the years, the Center has worked with numerous businesses across the state. The consultants have developed an extensive list of companies that are past and present clients. The Center has also worked with many financial and lending institutions and has maintained working relationships with people who have had "decision-making authority." The SCMBEC will make full use these resources in its market research and development.

This initial contact between the SCMBEC and the resources will be fostered through telephone calls, emails and personal visits. A regular schedule of contacts will be followed in order to make certain that all public and private sector resources are contacted on a routine basis. These resources will be placed in the Center's database to receive SCMBEC electronic notices and other pertinent materials. This will keep them informed of MBEC activities. Additionally, contacts will be made as often as deemed necessary to ensure that available opportunities are discovered, analyzed and pursued.

To identify possible business opportunities for minority businesses in the early planning stages, close coordination will be maintained with the following planning and economic development agencies:

- South Carolina Department of Commerce
- South Carolina Chambers of Commerce
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- City, County and State Procurement Offices
- Private corporations
- Minority Networking Committee
- Carolina Minority Supply Development Councils

South Carolina has a limited number of large minority-owned firms that will be encouraged to secure procurement through win-win prime and subcontracting opportunities. These firms will be critical in providing business opportunities for many of the state's MBEs. Joint Ventures between minority and majority firms will be encouraged. The SCMBEC has found this to be a very useful tool in developing small construction firms. A Joint Venture provides a contractual

situation in which two (2) firms work cooperatively to complete a common project.

Both the public and private sectors will be sources of market opportunities for area minority businesses. In broadening the public sector market, the SCMBEC staff will remain in close contact with federal, state, county and city government agencies, including military installations, procurement offices and technical end-users at school districts and centers of higher education. A liaison will also be maintained with the Department of Transportation regarding minority participation in Federal Highway projects.

Increased emphasis will be placed on the private sector such as [REDACTED] and other large entities. To broaden the market opportunities available, the MBEC staff will utilize the Internet to research procurement opportunities. Internet websites posting procurement opportunities include numerous sites, such Fed Biz Ops. There are numerous sites on the Internet with opportunities. Locating these sites and sharing bookmarks (which contain the URL of each site) will be a regular occurring task for the Center's consultants and administrator.

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3.3.2.2 Market Promotion

Market promotion includes three distinct functions. First, the public must be made aware of the new SCMBEC, its purpose, capability, and its role in minority business. Second, the minority business owner must be made aware of the new Center and its capability to assist them in their business and to be an advocate for minority businesses in general. Lastly, the SCMBEC must make the public aware of the goods and services provided by its clients.

DESA and the SCMBEC is known throughout the state as a qualified highly skilled provider and advocate in the development and enhancement of minority business enterprises. The SCMBEC needs to enhance its marketing efforts. By distributing press releases, the Center will be able to reach a large number of people at a minimal cost. The press releases will contain success stories about clients, stories describing the SCMBEC and its function, and articles about the staff and their capabilities. Any business and professional awards won by the Center, the Center Staff, and clients will be publicized. The SCMBEC will also publicize MED Week to gather support for the program. Publicity will be generated from several different sources, to include press releases, advertising, public speaking, email, website announcements, newsletters, faxes and mail.

Press releases will be sent to the following South Carolina daily, weekly and monthly newspapers:

The State in
Columbia
The News in Greenville
Post and Courier in Charleston

The Standard in Aiken
The Independent-Mail in Anderson
Gazette in Beaufort

Morning News in
Florence
Island Packet in
Hilton Head

Sun News in Myrtle Beach
The Democrat in Orangeburg
The Herald in Rock Hill
The Herald-Journal in Spartanburg
The Item in Sumter
Daily Times in Union
Press and Banner in Abbeville
Citizen Leader in Allendale
People Sentinel in Barnwell

Twin-City News in Batesburg-
Leesville
News Chronicle in Belton
Tribune in Blacksburg
Charleston Regional Business in
Charleston
Index-Journal in Greenwood
The Chronicle in Cheraw
Tribune in Chesnee

Messenger in Clemson
Herald in Clover
Free Times in Columbia
Columbia Star in
Columbia
*South Carolina Black
Media* in Columbia
Woodruff News in
Woodruff

The MBEC will target minorities in the state by submitting press releases to publications identified to have a minority audience. Press releases will be sent to radio and television stations located within the state. Press briefings may be held to announce large contract awards and other success stories that will be of importance in promoting the Center. DESA will also promote the SCMBEC through television talk shows. These talk shows allow time to market the Center and its clients.

Print advertisements provide information to a large number of people. In the past, several ads have been placed in the local media and in the annual publication of the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, the State NAACP publication and other printed periodicals. In addition, ads have been placed in publications with a predominately black readership, such as the South Carolina Black Pages and others.

The Operator, Director and Center staff will deliver speeches before key minority audiences in the service area of South Carolina. Speeches at Chamber meetings, minority business meetings, and other pertinent gatherings will allow the public to see and interact with members of our Centers. Personal interaction will be used to develop future business relationships.

Potential clients must be made aware of the services that the SCMBEC can provide for them. A brochure giving an overview of the Center, describing the services provided, and detailing its target audience and fee structure will be updated, printed and distributed as a marketing tool. This brochure will be available at the Centers and also circulated at events to potential clients through the marketing efforts of the SCMBEC staff and its partners. The SCMBEC will have the brochure included on their website as well.

Email is a key tool in the Center's marketing and publicity efforts. Creating eye-catching, smartly-worded broadcasts will help the Center maximize this free tool. All contacts in the database will have an email listed. If clients do not have email address, they will be strongly encouraged them to immediately create an account. They will be warned that email is practically a prerequisite for doing business in today's marketplace.

The SCMBEC will update its website and continue to add newsworthy information relating to business. Businesses will be urged to visit the site on a regular basis for information on upcoming events and seminars. Those calling in

or emailing to find out about the Center will be directed to the website. Persons visiting the websites of the Center's strategic partners will find a link to the SCMBEC website.

In order for the minority market place to grow, the public must be made aware of the goods and services that MBEs can provide. The MBEC has a responsibility to its clients to publicize their goods and services to increase their market share. Emphasis will be placed on analyzing the clients' needs in terms of what products/services are being offered, who the customers/buyers are, identifying the most effective marketing vehicles and the best market strategy to reach the desired customer base. Special attention will be devoted to possible opportunities in State and Federal procurement programs, private sector opportunities, international markets and new market segments.

By enrolling clients in the Phoenix/Opportunity, they will be allowed to use its electronic bid matching system to be alerted of contract and teaming opportunities via email. Procurement leads are transmitted by email to the minority firm targeted by the company's industry classification and geographic market using Phoenix. A firm can search for teaming partners and sub-contractors using the Opportunities database.

Marketing promotion will also be accomplished through the development of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and other alliances. This added resource has effectively worked over the years. With a minimum of five (5) strategic alliances promoting the SCMBEC to potential clients, the Center should continuously reach clients and resources. The Center will also be able to market clients to alliance partners. This business-to-business marketing strategy will play a large role in increasing its marketing scope.

3.3.2.2.1 Annual MED Week Events

MED Week is the largest Federal advocacy and educational event sponsored on behalf of minority business enterprises (MBEs). The conferences are co-sponsored by the US Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA), and the US Small Business Administration's Office of Government Contracting and Minority Enterprise Development (GC/MED).

3.3.2.2.2 Local MED Week

The MBEC will play a key role in the Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week and will utilize all available resources in assuring the success of this event. A MED Week steering committee will be organized to prepare an orderly, cooperative effort for MED Week. Strategic Alliance partners will be invited to serve on the steering committee. The Alliance partners have knowledge of minority businesses in the community and will represent them in selecting activities for MED Week, which will be beneficial for all who



participate. In addition to the planned activities, several outstanding clients will be chosen as local award winners in various business categories designated by the MBDA.

MED Week, which honors minority business entrepreneurs for their contributions to the United States, is an important week, not only for the minority business community, but for the total community as well. The staff of the MBEC will work with the MBDA and the MED Week steering committee toward this goal. The SCMBEC will take the lead role in putting the week's activities together. The staff will begin, after the first quarter of operations, to plan for MED Week.

3.3.2.2.3 NEC MED Week

DESA, Inc. will cooperate with the Atlanta NEC in its regional MED Week activities. This would include participating in the MBDA's process of nominating and packaging information about the local MED Week award winners. The SCMBEC project director and at least one (1) staff member will attend the NEC MED Week celebration.

3.3.2.2.4 National MED Week

DESA, Inc. has actively participated in National MED Week events since 1992. The SCMBEC project director and at least one (1) staff person and /or the program operator will attend National MED Week in Washington, DC and participate in the celebration as well as the training classes.

Under DESA's reign, the SCMBEC has worked with clients who were named regional and national award winners at MED Week celebrations. These winners include:

Atlanta Regional Minority Advocate of the Year

- Senator John Matthews
- Mr. John Gadson

Atlanta Regional Minority Service Firm of the Year

- Hilton Head Housecare

Atlanta Regional Minority Construction Firm of the Year

- W. Frazier Construction Company
- A-1 Masonry and General Contractors
- Construction Dynamics, Inc.

National Minority Female Entrepreneur of the Year

- Ms. Rachelle Jamison d/b/a Rachelle's Island

National Media Cornerstone of the Year

- Mr. Nathaniel Abraham – Carolina Panorama

By promoting the capabilities and benefits of the Center, and the Clients goods and services, all will have the opportunity to become successful. The Center will receive recognition from the success of their clients. This will assist in attracting more clients for the Center. The nominated client receives exposure for their business, which will result in an increase in revenue for the business. MED Week is beneficial to all that participate.

Business-to Business Linkage

The MBEC shall participate and support designated Business-to-Business Linkage programs throughout the program year. This program is a regional event conducted by MBDA that brings together certified MBEs (i.e. 8(a)) with SGI firms for potential business to business teaming arrangements). The MBEC will collaborate with MBDA in identifying key participants, conducting outreach and maintaining ongoing communication with these participants prior to the event, during the event (where possible) and after the event. The objective of the Business-to-Business Linkage program is to build MBE capacity for competition of larger awards and ultimately the recording of contracting and financial dollars for programmatic success. SCMBEC will also sponsor local business-to-business linkage programs.

3.3.2.3 Resource Development

To meet the financial packaging and/or performance goals, the SCMBEC must match opportunities discovered through research with eligible firms that meet the requirements of the opportunity. This function relates to putting knowledge and research to work to capture the financial or procurement opportunity. The MBEC will not only identify these opportunities but also electronically record on the MBDA Portal. Listed below are several likely sources.

3.3.2.3.1 Market Opportunities

The MBEC makes use of on-line resources to assist in identifying public (Federal, state and local government) and private (domestic and foreign) opportunities. FedBizOpps.gov is the single government point-of-entry for federal government procurement opportunities over \$25,000. Government buyers are able to publicize their business opportunities by posting information directly to FedBizOpps via the Internet. Through this one portal, commercial vendors seeking federal markets for their products and services can search, monitor and retrieve opportunities solicited by the entire federal contracting community. Other online resources regularly assessed include Demand Star by Oniva, EPS.gov, and SC Business Opportunities (SCBO).

3.3.2.3.2 Capital Resources

The MBEC has relationships with many banks and other funding sources and relentlessly seek ways to assist minority business financing and capital issues. As these sources and programs are identified, they will be shared.

3.3.2.3.3 Business Ownership

Many of the higher-level businesses are interested in taking advantage of additional business ownership opportunities. The SCMBEC will communicate any franchises, licensing arrangements, mergers and buy-outs to the MBDA.

3.3.2.3.4 Education & Training

The SCMBEC will keep informed of educational opportunities available in the national, regional, and especially the geographical service area. Because of the relationships the SCMBEC has with institutions of higher education, chambers, business developments groups and programs, etc., notices of learning venues and programs are routinely sent for further distribution. The MBEC will ensure that the details of worthwhile sessions are posted on its website.

3.3.2.3.5 Registration of MBEs

Registration of eligible MBEs into the Phoenix system will be of paramount importance. This system will allow local minority firms the capability of selling their goods and services on a national electronic network. Registrants will be encouraged to update their information on a routine basis or when there is an addition to services being offered or an improvement in largest contract awarded.

3.3.2.4 Development of Strategic Partners & Strategic Intra-Relationships

To facilitate the MBEC in optimizing its outreach and service delivery to all sections of its geographical service area, DESA, Inc. will recruit, establish and maintain a network of Strategic Partners. These alliances will consist of local public and private sector organizations that are positioned to support the Center in achieving its goals for assisting minority businesses. Our Strategic Partners will serve as a local resource for minority-owned businesses seeking to obtain services from the MBEC. The MDBC will establish the network of at least five (5) Strategic Partners.

DESA, Inc. realizes the importance of having teaming relationships in the communities in which the Center serves. Past successes in operating a MBEC has

come from informal teaming relationships. DESA proposes to fortify several of the Center's successful relationships while replacing those that are ineffective. The relationships will be consummated by means of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

DESA, Inc. has selected a diverse group of partners that match the make-up of the small business community of South Carolina. The list of Strategic Partners include:

1. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- } (b)(4)

MBE Program operated by state, county or city government – Governor's Office of Small & Minority Business Assistance

Chamber of Commerce – SC Chamber of Commerce

The South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce, and the Greater Lexington Chamber of Commerce have aided DESA in its efforts to strengthen minority businesses in the past. These relationships will be rekindled. Trade associations like the South Carolina Economic Development Association (SCEDA), who has focused on the needs of the minority business community, will also be invited to align themselves with the program.

Community Development Center – Columbia Housing CDC

The SCMBEC has partnered with the Columbia Housing Community Development Corporation to supply them with businesses seeking opportunities to assist with the construction of new and renovated quality homes throughout many area neighborhoods.

Bank or Financial Institution

DESA has always maintained a good working relationship with statewide banks and financial institutions. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] have already pledged their support for the program. } (b)(4)

Throughout DESA's experience with assisting minority business owners, it has sought out relationships with many different companies involved in banking, lending, and investment.

The SCMBEC relationships cover most banks/lenders in the state of South Carolina. Many national firms have also been searched out to meet the individual needs of each business. Relationships have served the Center well. During the year 2002, a total of \$5,310,016 in loans was approved.

DESA, Inc. has an excellent relationship with the banking and investment community. We look forward to strengthening these relationships in the future by supplying assistance in financial packaging to the minority businesses in the state of South Carolina. DESA is now poised to search out equity capital and investors to further strengthen minority businesses in the state.

3.3.2.5 Facilitate Matches

To meet the financial packaging and/or performance goals, the SCMBEC must identify and refer eligible MBEs with specific viable businesses, markets and/or capital opportunities. This task adds to the total MBEC financing and/or procurement goals, and is the only market development function outside of the standard client business assistance in which a portion of and MBEC's time can be directly associated to an individual client or resource customer. This client specific time, no matter how small, is considered client assistance and may be subject to client fees. The MBEC shall match qualified MBEs with identified opportunities and resources by the methods listed below.

Accessing Vendor Information Systems

The MBEC will utilize various means, including electronic tools like Phoenix/Opportunity system, South Carolina Business Opportunities (SCBO) and FedBizOpps.

Providing Follow-Up Communication to Firms Receiving Opportunity Matches

The MBEC will contact MBEs who have received matches to ensure they are aware of the match and understand the components of the opportunity match. The consultant will also offer to provide the management and technical assistance the business may need.

Maintaining Awareness with Area MBEs

The MBEC will constantly be mindful of new and upcoming MBEs in the area. Consultants will also aspire to determine their business capabilities. Efforts will be made to meet potential clients at trade shows, business seminars, bid openings, and other events. The Center will also rely on word of mouth when visiting procurement offices, job sites, funding institutions and other locations that may

frequent MBEs to discover new firms that may be a good match for future opportunities.

Maintaining Direct Contact with Opportunity Makers

The Center will continue to build relationships with opportunity makers and encourage them to use and promote the MBEC as a resource for matching businesses with opportunities. DESA will market the services of the Center to purchasing officers, government procurement officials, banking officials and others willing to formally or informally advise the Center of opportunities.

Engaging In Relationship Brokering

The MBEC will engage in relationship brokering between purchasing organizations and individual minority firms capable of fulfilling their requirements.

Assisting In Direct Negotiations

Since some MBE are not versed in negotiation practices, the MBEC will assist with direct negotiations between purchasing organizations and individual minority firms when appropriate. The goal will be to aid them in resolving issues, serve as an advocate for the minority firm, or otherwise supp

3.3.3 Plan of Action

As a successful incumbent operator, DESA, Inc. will be able to comply with MBDA’s requirement of being fully operational thirty (30) days after an award is made. The proposed staff is already in place, as well as all essential items of furniture, fixtures and standard equipment. The necessary forms have already been developed. The quote for computer equipment has been received and is ready for shipment upon request. Once the award is made, DESA, Inc. will be ready to open the doors of the South Carolina Statewide Minority Business Enterprise Center to the public well within the allotted time frame.

The following chart lists requirements needed within the first thirty (days) in order for DESA to be fully operational. As you will see, many of the conditions have already been met.

	In Place	In Place, Awaiting Modifications	Pending
PERSONNEL			
Project Director	X		
Business Consultant	X		

	In Place	In Place, Awaiting Modifications	Pending
Business Consultant	X		
Administrator/Marketing	X		
Intern			X
STRATEGIC PARTNERS	X		
FURNATURE	X		
COMPUTER EQUIPMENT	X		
TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION	X		
FORMS		X	
PRINTED MATERIALS		X	
BROCHURE		X	
SIGNAGE		X	
WEBSITE		X	

3.3.4 Work Requirement Execution Plan

DESA has developed a highly experienced work team to provide the well-rounded business assistance required for operation of the South Carolina Statewide Minority Business Enterprise Center. By presenting a team of professionals that cumulatively offer more than 125 years of business experience, DESA is positioned to catapult targeted South Carolina minority businesses into a position of long-term profitability.

Over the past decade, the proposed staff has developed personal relationships with minority business owners throughout the state of South Carolina while assisting them to succeed in their businesses. Additionally, the staff has developed relationships with banks and lending institutions, as well as business relationships with procurement personnel from both the public and private sector to encourage the use of minority businesses on large-scale contracts in excess of \$500,000.

On a daily basis, the team of professional consultants face business challenges that require them to utilize their business skills to strategize and work to eliminate barriers, which limit the access of minority businesses to markets and capital. And every day, they draw from their depth of knowledge to find solutions to these barriers.



Anchored by this strong group of extremely skilled, experienced business consultants, DESA is poised to continue implementing the expanded MBEC program. DESA is passionate about economic development within the minority business community, and as such continuously promote the understanding and use of electronic commerce in order to be connected to people, opportunities, information and other resources essential to business growth and development. DESA already has a website that is regularly updated with information useful to growing businesses and utilizes email for notification of procurement opportunities, seminars, and other events that impact the minority business community.

The leveraging of technology and the assistance of strategic partnerships to increase productivity will result in better service delivery to minority business clients, which include African Americans, Hispanics, Asian-Pacific Americans, Native Americans, and other nationalities. This tremendous pool of resources, along with DESA's extensive knowledge of minority businesses in the state of South Carolina, will ensure the delivery of exceptional service that exceeds the goals and objectives of the Minority Business Development Agency and the United States Department of Commerce.

The following staffing allocation chart below represents the proposed staff that DESA will utilize to effectively and efficiently achieve the work requirements of the SCMBEC. Each professional listed below provides a minimum of 10 years of management-level experience in varied business disciplines and have all worked directly with minority business owners providing assistance for the past several years.



ANNUAL STAFF TIME ALLOCATION CHART
South Carolina Minority Business Enterprise Center
Operated by DESA, Inc.

PROPOSED MBEC STAFF	Status	Project Allocation	Hours	Hrs	Client Consulting % of Hrs	Hrs	% of Administrative Hours	Hrs	% of Other Hours
Project Director	Full-time	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Business Development Consultant	Part-time	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Business Development Consultant	Part-time	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Administrative Coordinator	Full-time	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Intern	Part-time	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Grand Totals			6,328		2,739		3,117		471

(b)(6)
(b)(7)(C)

Note: One full-time position [REDACTED]

Use or disclosure of proposal data is subject to the restriction on the title page of this proposal.

While the strategy of using only one full-time Administrative Coordinator and two part-time Business Development Consultants might appear uncommon, DESA is confident that the proposed team of part-time professionals will more than adequately achieve the work requirements of the Center. Historically, the Center has observed that highly-skilled part-time consultants consistently have met or exceeded their performance goals for Dollar Value of Transactions. This is largely because they work with Strategic Growth Initiative (SGI) firms whose primary market is federal government contracting. Many of these contracts are high dollar value transactions with multiple renewal options.

The proposed staff will focus on assisting the more than fifty (50) 8(a) firms in South Carolina with government contracting opportunities, as well as those larger, stronger minority businesses with annual sales of \$500,000 that are poised to do large commercial, residential and government contracts.

For minority businesses interested in non-federal work, there are many multi-million dollar construction projects going on throughout South Carolina, to include the University of South Carolina Innovista Project (in the Midlands), the Medical College of South Carolina (in the Low County), numerous school construction programs in several counties across the state, and a number of HOPE VI Revitalization projects funded by various city housing authorities. DESA has already begun working with cities, school districts, and housing authorities to increase minority participation in all areas of work on these projects. DESA encourages the use of minority services firms to provide safety and drug testing services as a part of the Owner-Controlled Insurance Programs (OCIP), as well as the traditional use of minority subcontractors to perform various aspects of the construction.

For those 8(a) contractors interested in federal work, much of the 8(a) work is set-aside for firms that have self-marketed to the contracting officers and have requested of the U.S. Small Business Administration that the work be sole-sourced. DESA, Inc. has a long-term relationship with many of the contracting officers and SBA personnel. Thus, the highly skilled, experienced team of business consultants will be able to effectively provide business assistance, which will result in satisfactory achievement of the work requirements for operation of the South Carolina Statewide Minority Business Enterprise Center.

3.3.5 Training

DESA, Inc. currently has a trained and experienced staff that is accustomed to providing quality management and technical assistance to high-level firms. The training tools being provided by the MBDA will enhance the skill set of the existing staff. The MBEC staff will accumulate the credit hours for training as mandated by MBDA (subject to the availability of the training as determined by MBDA) The following training is being mandated by the Department of Commerce to ensue that all Centers are providing the same high quality service to businesses across the United States and in Puerto Rico:

Training Event	Operator	Project Director	Consultant	Administrative
1. Post-Award Conference	Mandatory 10 credit-hours	Mandatory 10 credit-hours	N/A	N/A
2. Program Review & Orientation	Mandatory 8 credit-hours	Mandatory 8 credit-hours	Mandatory 8 credit-hours	Mandatory 8 credit-hours
3. Implementing a System for High Quality Service (Yr 1)	N/A	Mandatory 40 credit-hours	Mandatory 40 credit-hours	N/A
4. MBDA National Conference	**Mandatory 8 credit-hours	Mandatory 24 credit-hours	Mandatory 24 credit-hours	N/A
5. MBDA NEC MED-Week	N/A	Mandatory 8-10 credit-hours	Mandatory 8-10 credit-hours	N/A
6. MBDA National MED-Week	**Mandatory 8 credit-hours	Mandatory 16-20 credit-hours	Mandatory 16-20 credit-hours	N/A
7. Coaching Program	N/A	Mandatory 40 credit-hours	Mandatory 40 credit-hours	N/A
8. Specialized Training		**Mandatory 8-20 credit-hours++	**Mandatory 8-20 credit-hours++	
Mandatory Training/Program Year	26 Credit-Hours	114 – 172 Credit Hours	104-162 Credit Hours	8 Credit-Hours

** Denote attendance required for either, not both.

++ Denotes this course can be waived if there is a certificate of completion (i.e. certificate) for the same course from the Tuck School of Business only. Substitutions from other educational institutions will not be accepted.

3.3.5.1 MBEC Post Award Conference

The SCMBEC Operator and Project Director will attend the Post Award Conference hosted by the Atlanta National Enterprise Center. The purpose of this conference is to review the grant award and key issues pertaining to the successful management of the award.

3.3.5.2 MBEC Program Review and Orientation

The SCMBEC will participate in this session that will focus on understanding key aspects of the MBEC operations and procedures. This will also provide a forum to clarify the rules and expectations of the Center and the operator, as well as a means to answer any questions about the program. Starting the program with a clear understanding will help make the program operate more effectively, thus allowing the Center to keep its focus on assisting businesses. The Center recognizes that this training will not require travel and may be conducted over a series of days by teleconference or by MBDA staff attending the Center in person.

3.3.5.3 Implementing a System for High-Quality Service

Several steps have been taken by the MBDA to increase the skill set of the MBDA field staff and standardize the level of proficiency across the country. One measure is the training being offered during the first year of the program in Hanover, NH. At least one of the MBEC consultants and the project director will attend a five (5) day training session on “Implementing a System for High-Quality Service.” This training would be sponsored by the MBDA and include sessions on:

- Orientation to the MBDA strategy
- Instilling the entrepreneurial mindset
- Standardization of client intake services
- Skills and information needed to provide high-quality service to emerging firms

DESA, Inc. has a seasoned staff that embraces high-level business thinking. This way of thinking will allow them to pass competency examinations like the one required upon completion of the training. In addition to years of experience in business development, each staff member holds a Bachelors and/or Master’s Degree(s) in fields that broaden their view of business principles that would assist with the development of emerging firms.

Several DESA, Inc. staff members have attended an advanced training program designed to transform high-potential minority businesses and them on a high-growth trajectory. Two staff members have already participated in the Dartmouth Minority Business Executive Program (MBEP) and the Advance Minority Business Executive Program (AMBEP). These advanced level training programs are designed to introduce and increase the usage of business principles that help the overall business development strategy of minority businesses. Two members of the staff have also completed the National Development Council (NDC) training course and competency examinations. This curriculum focuses on the financial aspects of securing and managing large business deals. In addition, several members of the team have taken the project management series of the Contract Services Association of America. These courses are designed to help nurture the growth of businesses to become larger businesses through effectively winning, managing and protecting government contracts. One staff member has participated in the Business Analyst GIS classroom training and staff member has taken the on-line course. The software associated with this training provides strategic business

data through a geographic-based information system. All of this training helps DESA, Inc. to better serve the higher-level minority clients.

3.3.5.4 MBDA National Conference

The SCMBEC Operator and Staff will attend this training that is designed to review key Agency initiatives. The team is looking forward to participating in the various specialized programmatic training that is offered at these annual events, in order to better provide services to the clients of the Center.

3.3.5.5 MED Week – National Enterprise Center (NEC)

The SCMBEC will attend this annual celebration hosted by the Atlanta National Enterprise Center and benefit from the market orientations and training programs that are offered in conjunction with this event.

3.3.5.6 MED Week – National

The MBDA continues to add value by maximizing the time spent at National MED Week. DESA, Inc. is excited about the MBDA's plan to continue using MED Week to broaden the skills of the consultants through business and finance training, information dissemination, industry expert presentations and panel discussions, and networking opportunities. This will not only add to the knowledge base of the MBDA system but also benefit the clients who rely on consultants to be at the forefront of the latest business practices, philosophies and trends.

3.3.5.7 Coaching Program

This new program promises to enhance skills in business training, counseling, financing, and procurement opportunities. The SCMBEC understands that this 40-hour, mandatory program must be successfully completed by all staff providing consulting services to clients

3.3.5.8 Specialized Training Program

In addition to the training noted above, the SCMBEC will send at least one staff member to attend this program, which is scheduled to be held in April of the first program year. Examples of specialized training programs include teaching MBEC staff:

- How to transform high-potential minority businesses and put them on a high-growth trajectory;
- How to assist minority firms in supply chains; and
- How to support industry-focused top management teams.

The SCMBEC understands that the successful completion of this program involves a competency examination and results in a certification from the MBDA. The purpose of the training is to ensure the skills necessary to nurture the growth of MBEs to become large companies, thereby helping to fulfill the MBDA's mission.

3.3.5.9 Electronic Tools Program

Over the years, the MBDA and other economic development groups have designed various electronic tools to help better assist businesses. DESA, Inc. has used many of them in the past and plans to continue using these technological tools to assist minority businesses. All staff will be trained in the use of the MBDA's electronic tools and refer them to suitable businesses as a support source. This would reduce the amount of consultant time needed by firms.

- **Business Needs Analyzer** – The staff will be using this standardized, electronic system to record the Client Assessment process. The staff of the SCMBDC has used this tool over the past three years and is aware of its value in capturing a client's status, needs and potential growths.
- **Phoenix/Opportunity** – DEAS, Inc. is currently using this electronic bid-matching system that alerts MBEs of contract and teaming opportunities directly via email. DESA, Inc. will make a minimum of 172 accurate and timely resource entries.
- **Resource Locator** – This electronic tool is presently being used by the staff to help MBEs identify trade associations representing their industries, government licensing and permit offices, other management and technical assistance providers.
- **Capital Locator** Once completed, the SCMBEC plans to use this Internet-based tool to allow the MBDC consultants inquire about, identify and locate potential financiers.
- **Business & Market Planning** – Several staff members have practiced using this tool in order to help streamline and enhance the development of business, marketing plans, and other strategic documents. The current system is ideal for start-up and undeveloped businesses, since it asks the questions that many new business owners would not think about asking. The questions are designed to make them think about their business in a more comprehensive way.
- **Business Analyst GIS** – Staff members are currently using this software which provides strategic business data through a geographically-based information system. Staff members have used this software to identify potential high-growth business markets for developers, retailers, restaurateurs, and those whose business growth depends on population growth projections. DESA, Inc. will aggressively compete to be awarded the software.

- Staff members will identify potential high-growth businesses like developers and automobile dealers who would benefit from the data generated by the Business Analyst GIS. Consultants will work with these firms in order to strategically chart out long-term growth.

3.3.5.8 Business Finance Programs

The MBDA continues to add value by maximizing the time spent at National MED Week. DESA, Inc. is excited about the MBDA's plan to use MED Week to broaden the skills of the consultants through business and finance training, certifications, and information dissemination. This will not only add to the knowledge base of the MBDA system but also benefit the clients who rely on consultants to be at the forefront of the latest business practices and philosophies.

3.3.6 Client Services

The MBEC shall offer a *systems-integrated approach* (as described below) to assist in business growth and development, improving and/or successfully maintaining their businesses, primarily through one-on-one assistance. In order to meet the goals of the MBDA, DESA will focus its efforts on those firms with \$500,000 in annual sales or more, and/or "rapid growth-potential" minority businesses capable of generating significant employment and long-term economic growth. Business consulting to these types of businesses requires a much more sophisticated management and technical assistance approach based on the client size.

In all initial meetings with the MBEC Consultant, basic background and contact information (including email addresses and cell phone numbers) will be gathered. This data will be added to the resource database. Even if later during the assessment stage the business is referred, the MBEC will be able to contact the firm via email to advise them of pertinent business information, announcements of special events, etc.

3.3.6.1 Systems-Integrated Approach

The MBEC will operate a systems-intergraded approach to assist in minority business growth and development. This approach will govern business consulting services for each of the following MBE annual sales range categories:

- Less than \$500,000
- \$500,000 - \$999,999
- \$1,000,000 - \$5,000,000
- Other "rapid growth-potential" minority firms

Understanding the South Carolina market, DESA recognizes that the approach must fit the business, and yet have the flexibility to assist the client with maximizing his/her