Fifth Annual Colorado Entrepreneurship MarketPlace

October 5, 2012

Pueblo Convention Center, Pueblo, CO

Session Descriptions

10:15 – 11:15 a.m.

Business In Agriculture

Opportunities Through Rural Development

The USDA-Rural Development has many funding opportunities for rural businesses. This session will provide an overview of their programs so you will easily be able to determine what might best fit your needs. ***Presented by April Dahlager, USDA-Rural Development***

Business Development

Programs & Services within the Small Business Administration

In this session participants will learn about the many services the Small Business Administration can provide the entrepreneur. This will be a general overview of the resources that will provide you with the information to get started on working with the SBA. ***Presented by Amy McDowell, US Small Business Administration***

Community Development

Professional Development at Your Fingertips

Sharpen your skills or learn new ones with our instructor facilitated online courses. Local community colleges offer a variety of courses available through distance learning – perfect for small businesses. Discover how easy professional development can be with outstanding interactive courses and the flexibility to meet your schedule (day or night) in your home or office. Demo session provided, as well as a drawing for free course for participants! ***Presented by Nancy Zimmer, Pueblo Community College***

Financing (This session will be repeated in the afternoon)

Financing Resources Round Table

For many potential and existing small business owners, the biggest hurdle, real or imagined is financing. There are many funding opportunities for the small business in rural Colorado. This session will allow participants to visit with organizations that may have the right program for you and your business. Organizations include: ***Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade, Colorado Housing & Finance Authority, Colorado Lending Source, Colorado Enterprise Fund, ACCION, Mile High Community Loan Fund, United States Dept. of Agriculture – Rural Development, and the Small Business Administration***

Marketing

Developing Your Message, Improving Your Product, Price, Place and Promotion: Branding Drives Everything!

Entrepreneurs will explore how their brand's image and equity can help create a motivating message, influence product development, drive distribution options, direct pricing, and improve promotional efforts. A strong brand can save the entrepreneur money and help with critical business decisions. ***Presented by Beth Parish, Regis University***

10:15 – 11:15 a.m. Continued:

Technology

Customer Service in a World of Social Media

The secret service that will have your customers coming back for more. Good customer service in a world of social media is more important than ever. If a customer feels bad about how he or she has been treated, they will not only tell their friends about it but they will likely post their bad experience on potentially dozens of social media sites destroying your reputation and ultimately your business. Therefore today it is essential to implement a customer services strategy that not only eliminates bad experiences but will also have your customers coming back again and again. This workshop will provide the secret to developing a world class customer service. ***Presented by Mark Bittle, CenturyLink***

11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Business In Agriculture

Ag-Tourism

Participants will learn factors of the tourism business that "make it or break it" for ranchers and farmers. Hear how to make money in tourism that will help guide tourism investment decisions. ***Presented by Martha Sullins, Colorado State University Extension & Wendy White, Colorado Department of Agriculture***

Business Development

SBA 7(a) Loan Program for Entrepreneurs

A business goes through many "life cycles." Hear how they can best be utilized by the entrepreneur no matter what "cycle" your business is in**.** ***Presented by William Hardin, US Small Business Administration***

or

How Can the Small Business Development Center Help You?

Learn about the resources for start-up and existing businesses through the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). From free one-on-one business consulting to marketing and growth strategy tools, to access to capital assistance, discover how the SBDC can help your business start, grow and prosper. ***Presented by Caroline Trani, Southern Colorado Small Business Development Center***

Community Development

Management Support for Sustainable, Vibrant Business

Independent business owners often open their businesses to be their own boss and sell a product that they love. But being the owner operator can often take a toll and leave business owners feeling overworked, underpaid, and helpless to find assistance. As the economy continues to bring new challenges, businesses and local governments are finding that partnerships can help alleviate some of the strain, attract customers, and identify affordable co-marketing opportunities. This session will review some management ideas to enhance business district support and bring relief to overworked entrepreneurs. ***Presented by Katherine Correll, Downtown Colorado, Inc.***

Financing

Budgeting for Success

In this session you will learn how to transition from your household checkbook to running the finances in a business. You have more understanding than you might imagine. We will review how to budget both Income and Expenses, and how to track them both and actually “Manage” your money… ***Presented by Greg Goettsch, Team BTS***

11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Continued:

Marketing

Choosing the Right Advertising & Promotion Tools for Your Business

You will explore how target market selection, company objectives, budget, brand image, and message are all used to help you select the right advertising and promotion tools to reach your target market and grow your business! ***Presented by Beth Parish, Regis University***

Technology

Beyond Social Media 101: Advanced Tips, Tricks, Strategies & Warnings

Right now, business owners and entrepreneurs just like you are successfully connecting with their customers through a variety of socially engaging platforms, including company blogs and social utilities like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest and a host of emerging social media-related tools. Those are the places customers and prospective customers are spending more of their discretionary time, and to gain a competitive edge and lift sales, you need a presence there, too. But just being there isn't enough.

Sadly, far too many entrepreneurs and businesses into the deep end of the social media pool without first knowing how to swim or whether they're even healthy enough to be in these water. In this fast-paced session, *Entrepreneur* magazine columnist and contributing writer, and co-author of *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Facebook*, Mikal E. Belicove, takes you through the process of determining whether social media marketing is right for you and your business and reveals the very latest trends and what you need to do to take advantage of them to generate more traffic and lift sales. ***Presented by Mikal Belicove, Entrepreneur Magazine & Co-Author of The Idiot's Guide to Facebook***

1:45 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

Business In Agriculture

The IRS Does Not Have to be the Enemy~

In this session participants will learn about the information needed to complete your Schedule F, set financial goals, and how farm finances can be managed to meet your tax liability goals. This discussion will have participants gain a greater understanding of how the Internal Revenue Service views farm income and expenses. ***Presented by Jeffrey E. Tranel, Colorado State University Extension***

Business Development

The Art of Interviewing Employees

So you are ready to hire an employee, huh? In this session you will learn tips on seeking out the right candidates. Learn different entrepreneurial interviewing skills and how to keep those super employees with your company. ***Presented by Ann Blickhann, Colorado Caring Companions, LLC***

OR

Growing Your Business by Winning Government Contracts

This session provides a broad overview of information starting with a big picture view of the government acquisition process, registration requirements for businesses, effective search methods for discovering opportunities, a practical approach to marketing, guidelines and tips for responding to solicitations, and hints for successful contract performance. This is a great government primer and will provide audience members a good understanding of the global process of growing their business while successfully dealing with the government. ***Presented by Kenneth P. Knapp, Colorado Procurement Technical Assistance Center (CO PTAC)***

1:45 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. Continued:

Community Development

Redeveloping Great Locations in to Great Business Sites - Often, great business locations are occupied by vacant buildings, structures and debris from former uses. This session will discuss the process of recycling these sites and making them ready for a new business through site cleanup, renovation, or redevelopment. Learn how to evaluate physical and environmental site challenges presented by former uses; transactional considerations and due diligence for underwriting the deal; approaches to addressing
lingering environmental issues; and sustainable redevelopment approaches. ***Presented by Jesse Silverstein, Colorado Brownfields Foundation***

Financing- (Repeat of 10:15 a.m. Session)

Financing Resources Round Table

For many potential and existing small business owners, the biggest hurdle, real or imagined is financing. There is an array of funding opportunities for the small business of rural Colorado. This session will allow participants to visit with organizations that may have the right program for you and your business. Organizations include: ***Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade, Colorado Housing & Finance Authority, Colorado Lending Source, Colorado Enterprise Fund, ACCION, Mile High Community Loan Fund, United States Dept. of Agriculture – Rural Development, and the Small Business Administration***

Marketing

Leveraging FREE Resources with Your Due Diligence

Getting the word out there about your product and business on a shoestring budget can be tough! However through tenacity, picking up the phone, never giving up and a try try again attitude, you can do it. Explore how social media can open up many doors for free! Hear how you can get a product to market and how to knock down big retail and wholesale doors. ***Presented by Michelle Staley, Busy Breathers Oxygen Packs***

Technology

Utilizing Your "Smart Phone" in Today's Business Environment

This presentation will assist attendees in becoming more Productive and Profitable through focus with using their "Smart Phone". Attendees must remember that the "smart phone" is not a way to do business as usual, but rather it is a way to stay connected in the event that you need to step away from your office. During this session, attendees will have a discussion about what their priorities are within their business when they have to step away (phone, email, market trends, orders, confirmations, deliveries, etc.).

As businesses try to bridge the gap, while continuing to do business utilizing mobile technology, it becomes increasingly more important to have a plan and a purpose for what information is critical to them when out of the office. Staying connected through mobile technology has its pros and cons. Disadvantages to staying connected could include loss of personal independence when away from the office, increased hours of both time and unproductive work, and perhaps damage to your branding initiatives. While the benefits could be astronomical, thus the importance of finding the balance between the two is imperative.

Staying connected in today's economy is critical, join us to learn how to better utilize mobile technology including "smart phones". ***Presented by Mark Bittle, CenturyLink***

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Business In Agriculture

Be Colorado Proud and Benefit from the Buy Local Trend

Be "Colorado Proud' and Benefit From the 'Buy Local' Trend! By attending this session you will learn about resources available to help promote Colorado food and agricultural products. ***Presented by: Wendy White, Colorado Department of Agriculture***

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Continued:

Business Development

An Action Plan to Boost Your Business Results

Is your business wandering off the track you thought it would be on by now? Are you getting mired in the details of operating your business – and losing out on really running it? This session will give you a hands-on approach to get back in the driver's seat, or to strengthen your organization and market share, whether you're just staring up or a seasoned veteran. ***Presented by Debora Hood, Communications Specialty Inc.***

Community Development

The "Art" of Doing Arts in Your Community

The development of an arts and cultural environment in a small community is fast becoming an exciting way to "revitalize" people and places in our rural areas – and it need not cost a lot of money. This session will present ideas used in small towns and rural areas across the country to expose and promote the heritage and cultural arts of the area. The presentation will outline ways to encourage and engage artists and showcase the artistic talents of the community members. The "creative juices" are sure to be flowing in this session! ***Presented by Pam Pleasant-Foster and Sandy Greenhut, Rural Arts Now! (RAN***)

Financing

Crowdfunding: An Alternative Avenue to Traditional Financing

With the passage of the Crowdfunding Act of 2012, equity based crowdfunding is poised to revolutionize how small businesses raise capital. The combination of social media and equity-based financing via crowdfunding will provide a new avenue for investing in our communities, and for entrepreneurs, a new tool to raise capital during the early stages of development. Crowdfunding has become big business with peer-based lending websites and reward-based websites like Kickstarter and Indiegogo. The session will include a discussion on the Crowdfund Act of 2012 and crowdfunding as a tool for entrepreneurs. ***Presented by Anthony Edwards, Crowdfunding Offerings, Ltd.***

Marketing

Overall Approach to Marketing & Mass Media

Participants will receive an overview of marketing strategies for their business. From the use of radio and print media to trade show marketing, soft skills, digital marketing, "elevator speeches," and more. Hear why marketing is an investment and not an expense. ***Presented by Lorrie Boyer, Colorado Ag News Network and Basket Designs, LLC***

Technology

Can Your Business Withstand a Data Breach or Being Hacked?

A data breach or hacking incident to your business can be crippling, destroy your reputation and in the end potentially mean closing shop. What have you done to protect yourself? Can the security you have implemented protect your reputation and protection you against liability if sensitive information is stolen? Learn how to lower your risk of a cyber incident and reduce or eliminate your liability if data is lost or stolen by employees, vendors or hackers***. Presented by Dave Wilson, Attorney at Law - CISSP, Security Plus***