

Michigan Business Networking Group

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF
MICHIGAN BUSINESS IN THESE
TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES

Spotlight on Business

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the Michigan Business Networking Group's Spotlight on Business. Each week we will spotlight 10 or so Michigan Businesses to help them grow. As Michigan fights to get out of this recession is important that we help each other during these tough times. Please take a moment to read each of these businesses' stories and work to support them. Perhaps you may not need their services, but a friend or neighbor may. Please add them to your contact lists.

The 10 Best Social Networking Tips For Business.

1. Quitting Traditional networking mode

For some businesses it's not easy to change the whole set up, especially those habituated with attending chamber mixers and industry events. The crux of the matter is if you keep on doing what you have been doing you would get what you have always gotten. So, why not take a step further when your rivals have already taken to social networking techniques.

Try to include a new technique or online marketing outreach into your marketing plan every month. For social networking you can set up a LinkedIn profile or a blog on your company

website. Establish a group forum and try some simple questions.

2. Using Facebook for business

Facebook allows you to build a business page for news about your company. Not just that it also offers you an Events page for business activities and even a Fan page. Update you account and make networking efforts frequently, at least after every 2-3 days. Remember when it comes to business, it effective communication that counts. Be professional until you get to know each other.
(continued page 3)





Spotlighted Michigan Businesses

Berkfield & Co Ltd/Waterford Insurance Agency

Hello my name is Ron Dwyer and I am a licensed independent insurance agent for the Berkfield & Co Ltd/Waterford Insurance Agencies. As an independent agent I represent multiple companies which enables me to have the flexibility to develop an insurance program for my clients that best fits their needs and budget. Some of the companies I represent include Citizens, Frankenmuth, Grange, Chubb, Encompass, Safeco, Indiana, The Hartford and more. I explain coverage options in an easy to understand presentation and want my clients to know that there is no such thing as a foolish question. I have extensive relationships with the companies I represent as I have been in the business since 1991 and I service all of Michigan. Visit my website at <http://www.roninsureme.com> for more information on how to get a fast and easy quote.

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Fantasy On Film

Fantasy On Film is a full service stills photography and movie production studio located in the Historic Eastern Market near downtown Detroit, MI since 1984. Our range of work includes; commercial, advertisement, editorial, freelance, weddings, portfolios, actors headshots, models, food, children, events, concerts, movie/video stills, pets & product.

In addition to stills photography, the studio produces movies; shorts and feature films.

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Esker Properties

Esker Properties has been around for almost FIVE years! While that might not be comforting, the owners of Esker Properties (Doug and Deb Benson) have been in or around the real estate business for over four decades. Esker Properties specializes in the purchase and management of multi-family and single family residential properties. (continue page 4)

3. Making the most of Twitter

Twitter is fast growing into a powerful business tool. Using Twitter you can keep your followers up-to-date on latest deals; establish direct contact with your potential customer; provide people with quick updates. Some Twitter should be hand-fed. With a flood of impersonal links your Twitter account would seem to be an advertising channel. Link to the very best stuff on your blog, as well as relevant stuff you see elsewhere on the web, and also post items that don't contain links at all.

4. Using LinkedIn to your advantage

LinkedIn is the hub for professionals, especially those looking to network for business. Use LinkedIn to build a network of your past colleagues, friends, and industry experts. Create and administer a group on LinkedIn and use it to promote your business. Don't stick to promoting your business; discuss anything from politics to local economy. Let people know you and then your business. Optimize your LinkedIn profile with proper keywords so that clients can find you easily. For the starters you can use your LinkedIn profile to keep up-to-date with the latest information on your small business offerings. Try to connect with others and ask questions on LinkedIn Answers every week or at least once in a month.

5. Take advantage of the apps and widgets

Most of the top social networking sites offer cool apps and plugins to ameliorate business activities. There are some top-notch Facebook apps for business that we had explored. Coming to Twitter if you have a blog connected to your business use services like Twitterfeed to directly channel your new blog posts into Twitter posts. Often in Twitter you need to add links. In Twitter you can use URL shortening service for links like tinyurl.com, cli.gs, and zi.ma.

6. Try multiple social networks, but focus only on few of them

Time is an invaluable asset in any business. Although MySpace is one of the largest social networking sites, but it doesn't leverage your business much when you try to reach a large audience. There are several other networking sites that you may try, however they might not be fit for your target customers. Although you can test a number of sites to see which works best, but stick to one or two of them that serves your purpose.

7. What to post and what not

There's a general opinion among certain sections of entrepreneurs who question the effectiveness of social networking for business. Well, online marketing and social networking as effective as you can make them. Setting up a Twitter or Facebook account and posting personal dealings is a sheer waste of time. Your focus should be on building your brand recognition and getting maximum exposure. One of the best ways you can do this is through a blog. Use it to provide valuable information to your potential customer or client. If your focus lies on your local market write your blog posts targeting that demography. Responding to the e-mails and comments is important to pull target audience to your blog or site.

8. Highlight your expertise on forums

Forums and groups are the best platforms to highlight your USP. Make sure you voice something interesting and use it to establish your credibility. Apps like Twitterfeed are quite handy. However, one of the best things you can do is comment on the blog posts. Reasonable comments are highly appreciated and help you to be recognized as an expert. To provide more details add links to your comments.

9. Look for recognized authorities

Social networking allows easy person-to-person networking. Look for the seasoned pros in your field. In LinkedIn you can send networking invitations and in Facebook you can send friend requests to the concerned person. Don't forget to add a message introducing yourself and provide a viable reason why you want to join the person online. If the person adds you, make sure you talk on business-related motives.

10. Privacy Online

The top professional sites offer many privacy settings that allow you to decide whom to allow into your network, set up filters and e-mail notifications and even block people with whom you don't want to connect. However, you must filter invitations carefully, as you don't want to lose any potential new clients or customers.

Phone: 517-290-6739 or 517-281-5404

Address:

Esker Properties

PO Box 103

Holt, MI 48842

Website - www.eskerproperties.com

Facebook page - <http://www.facebook.com/AdventuresInMichiganRealEstate>

Thank you and we hope you have a prosperous 2010!

Doug and Deb Benson

Esker Properties

Label Network

Label Network is a Michigan based full service, wholesale self-adhesive label and decal supplier. We offer all types of custom printed and in-stock label products for home, office, business and industry. We specialize in unique promotional and commercial labels, stickers and decals. Remember, if you're lookin' for something that sticks, dial 1-800-6-LABEL-6! (1-800-652-2356).

Label Network

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Slick and Bubba's Elite & Expeditious Websites

"Founded in 2003, Slick and Bubba's Elite & Expeditious Websites is an established website developer and hosting company that provides businesses, municipalities and non-profits with innovative website design, e-mail and website hosting, search engine optimization (SEO), e-commerce and project financing solutions which access untapped revenue streams. Averaging double and triple digit growth since the beginning, Slick and Bubba's now boasts a team of over 30 designers, artists, photographers, programmers and project and account managers dedicated to serving clients reaching into the 4 corners of the US and Hawaii! Because we put everything in writing, create custom websites from the ground up, own the servers we host our sites on, are 100% operated and headquartered in the US and do not outsource jobs 83% of our clients rate every aspect of their Slick and Bubba's experience as "EXCELLENT" and have recommended us to their friends and business colleagues! And for a limited time Michigan Business Networking Group (MBNG) members can now get exclusive BOGO Hosting plans for their websites or webmail (buy one year of hosting, get one year of hosting free)! For more details contact us at BOGO-MBNG@slickandbubbas.com or call us toll-free at 866-got-webb?"

Luc Robert "Slick" Poirier

Slick and Bubba's

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Xango

Hi and thanks for the opportunity to tell our story about being able to work for ourselves and great business associates in a company we are very proud of called Xango. Xango is a home based business that is far and above the rest of the competition, at only 7 years young this company is approaching 2 billion in sales. That is faster than companies like Dell, Microsoft and even the likes of Google. Xango is the company that brought the Mangosteen fruit to market and has all other companies in this short period comparing themselves to Xango. Xango has category creating patented products, an unmatched compensation plan that pays 50% back to distributors, strong corporate team and founders with ethics unparalleled as well as a pay it forward attitude that benefits many philanthropic endeavors Thru our own 501c3 non profit organization. Our web address is [www. www.maryjoslin.mymangosteen.com](http://www.maryjoslin.mymangosteen.com) With our November sales up 40% this is right place at the right time. Go Xango

Mary and Gary Joslin
231-590-7764

Opalized Designs Studio Salon

Opalized Designs Studio Salon was a wish in 2006 for owner, Kelley Killop-Marble. On July 1, 2009 though, doors opened to a private charming, blink-of-an-eye sized nail studio both men and women tell their friends about! Voted #2 in 2008 for Best Manicure/Pedicure by Channel 4's Vote for the Best Guide (<http://wdiv.cityvoter.com/opalized-designs-studio-salon/biz/92064>), Opalized insures Shelby Township and surrounding areas, hospital grade sterilization of implements, a "green" outlook through products and procedures along with personal service that is hard to match!

Located at 7859 Twenty Four Mile Road in the Village at Shelby Complex, Opalized sits at the crossroads of Shelby's up and coming downtown district. Hours are by appointment, so call for your own award-winning Opalized Pedicure at 313.36.1755.

Kelley Killop-Marble
Opalized Designs Studio Salon
7859 Twenty Four Mile Road
Shelby Township, MI 48316
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Check us out: <http://wdiv.cityvoter.com/winners/4-the-best/1830/beauty/manicure-and-pedicure?place=2>

The Town Engraver, Inc.

Hello! We are a full-service sign company that has proudly served the Michigan area for over 23 years. We have based our business practices on offering our clients budget-friendly prices, quality products, completion date as promised, & creative sign solutions. Please visit our website for a full range of services and mention this ad to receive a 10% discount!

Sincerely,
Susan
Owner

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Heart & Harp Power Tool

Diane Dunn, professional harpist, plays "Background Music for Special Occasions." Diane plays a wide variety of music across the ages which adds a gracious and elegant touch to any special occasion. Diane performs all over southeast Michigan for events large and small. Her specialty is background music for wedding receptions, teas and showers, corporate dinner parties, client appreciation receptions, grand openings, memorial luncheons, and many other special occasions. Please visit her website at

<http://www.heartandharp.net>

Heart & Harp, L.L.C.

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ReNu Power Tool & Supply Company

ReNu Power Tool & Supply Company has been serving the state of Michigan, with Cordless, Electric & Pneumatic power tools, tool repair services, hand tools, service parts, as well as with electric motors & sump pumps, for over 65 years. The company prides itself on its' abilities to provide technical expertise and support, in solving customer power tool and supply needs. Our foremost aspiration is to continuously enhance our status as a respected company through providing quality products, services, and expertise. ReNu is dedicated in employing our integrity and commitment to our customers.

Our simple, yet fundamental, philosophy whereby we listen to our customers' needs and respond to their requirements, has afforded us the privilege of maintaining a standard by which others are judged. ReNu Power Tool & Supply is a name that can be trusted, and represents an enterprise that guarantees quality. We seek to develop long-term relationships with our customers so that both sides may achieve growth and profitability together.

Please visit our showroom to see the huge selection of power tools & accessories we stock, or call us for product availability at 800.651.TOOL. www.renupowertoolandsupply.com

We look forward to seeing you soon,
The ReNu Power Tool & Supply Team

Patrick Bilicki

ReNu Power Tool & Supply Co.

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"With the right tool, there is a way"

PublicCity PR

PublicCity PR is focused on building the buzz around town for its clients.

The company was founded in 2008 by Jason Brown, a public relations executive with 10+ years of media and community relations experience. He launched PublicCity PR so companies could have an efficient, affordable, reliable and seasoned professional solution to drive their public relations and publicity needs. PublicCity PR's primary mission is to quickly and effectively garner publicity and raise the visibility of its clients through the development and execution of strategic media and community relations programs and initia-

through the development and execution of strategic media and community relations programs and initiatives.

For more information about PublicCity PR, please visit www.PublicCityPR.net or call 248-252-1687.

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PublicCity PR is also very social:
<http://www.facebook.com/PublicCityPR>
www.twitter.com/PublicCityPR
www.linkedin.com/in/PublicCityPR

If your business would like to be featured, please send an e-mail describing your business and provide your contact information to spotlight@roninsureme.com. We will spotlight 10 or so businesses on a weekly basis.

Also if you would like to share with other members networking techniques that have worked for you, we will be happy to share the article and provide you with credit. This would be a little extra free marketing for your business.

Here's to a prosperous 2010 for all of us!

Sincerely,

Ronald Dwyer

Ronald Dwyer
President
Michigan Business Networking Group