



Pamela Collins, Editor in Chief

Welcome to the new quarterly newsletter of the Palm Beach County Office of Small Business Assistance.

Services Provided By The Office Of Small Business Assistance

- continually monitor, review and evaluate local conditions affecting small businesses
- make recommendations to promote an environment which encourages small businesses to sell their goods and services to Palm Beach County government
- act in an advocacy capacity for small business
- provide Information and Referral Services
- provide Technical Assistance and Training

Information and Referral Services

The purpose of this program is to provide accurate, up-to-date information about services, resources and issues affecting small businesses and also to provide referrals to appropriate departments, outside agencies and entities assisting small businesses. The OSBA will:

1. Provide information about upcoming procurement and contracting opportunities, resources

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A Message from Commissioner Maude Ford Lee

On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to the Office of Small Business Assistance (OSBA) for their pioneering efforts to help small businesses in Palm Beach County. Since their inception in August, 1998, they have successfully increased the services available to Palm Beach County's business community. Hitting the ground running, they have already conducted three international trade seminars in cooperation with the Port of Palm Beach and FAU's College of Business, Small Business Development Center, as well as coordinated a well attended Procurement and Business Advancement workshop at Palm Beach Community College. In addition, they have expanded their Advisory Board by four (4) members, for a total of seventeen (17), to incorporate a greater representation of small businesses.

The OSBA is clearly on its way to serving the needs of Palm Beach County's entrepreneurs and business owners. The Board is proud of its economic development efforts and anticipates that this office will continue to create impact through its innovative pursuits. *Congratulations once Again!*

Commissioner Maude Ford Lee, Chair
Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners



Message from Robert Weisman

The creation of the Small Business Assistance Office is an important step in providing support to business owners in Palm Beach County.

This office complements the services provided by our Economic Development Office and furthers the mandate established by the County's Board of County Commissioners to utilize government resources in building a strong business community.

The potential for this office is great and Palm Beach County Administration stands behind its mission.

Robert Weisman
County Administrator



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

On August 18, 1998 the Board of County Commissioners formally announced the creation of the Office of Small Business Assistance (OSBA). This office incorporates both the existing M/WBE Program and the race and gender neutral

Small Business Program. The Small Business staff consists of Pamela H. Collins -Programs Coordinator, Lavara Rolle - Program Reporting Technician and Vicki Hobbs - Secretary.

The focus of this program is to encourage the growth and development of small businesses in Palm Beach County. This office will provide technical assistance and training opportunities for small businesses and serve as a clearinghouse for business information and referral services. In particular, we have initiated the following exciting new programs we feel will be most advantageous to small business owners: **Small Business Roundtable Forums, Small Business Training Initiatives and International Trade Training Workshops.**

We look forward to the involvement of the small business community and developing a strong economic base in Palm Beach County.

Charles Collins II
Director, Office of Small Business Assistance

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for business support activities, proposed legislation affecting small businesses, technical assistance and training opportunities through the Palm Beach County web site, Channel 20, a quarterly newsletter, and our resource partners.

2. Establish directories of sources of assistance available to small businesses in Palm Beach County.
3. Act as a central clearinghouse for small business assistance for Palm Beach County.

Technical Assistance and Training

1. Coordinate Training and Technical Assistance for small business through referrals to the Small Business Development Center/FAU-College of Business. Services will include ongoing business consulting and management assistance by professional business analysts as well as access to the SBDC business training seminars.

2. Conduct Small Business Roundtable Forums and Training Initiatives. The purpose of these programs is to provide small businesses with the opportunity to discuss current issues of interest with peers, experts and other people having

"hands-on" experience in these areas. For more information call the OSBA (561) 233-1553.

3. Coordinate International Trade assistance with community resource partners to increase the County's competitive edge in the worldwide marketplace. With the County's Free Trade Zones, excellent port facilities, and strategic geographic location, local businesses are well positioned to prosper in global commerce.

Attention Palm Beach County Vendors! County WEB Site Announcement- County Quotes Go On-Line!

After March 31, 1999, Palm Beach County may no longer be contacting you directly for quotes on small purchases (below \$25,000).

The County is automating the quote process!

Effective immediately, the County is maintaining a list of active quotes at our web site: <http://www.co.palm-beach.fl.us/pur/>. The "Requests for Quotation" listing is updated daily with new requirements. Each new requirement will remain on the quote site until the date that quotes are due. Each time you access the quote site, you will be able to:

- See a complete listing of all active requests for quote. This listing will provide a brief description of what is sought and the closing date for quotes.
- To read each quote simply click on the quote number in the listing. The entire quote (identical to what you have previously received in the mail), will be available for you to read and print out.

It will include specifications, response page, and all other information or requirements. (Responses must continue to be submitted by hard copy or fax.)

The quote site is active and may be used now. You have the ability to compete for every quote the County puts out.

The County intends to rely solely on the web page quote site to obtain the needed quotes. For vendors who are not on-line to the Internet, you may go to any Palm Beach County Library, and through use of their "Seflin" system, access the Internet and Purchasing's quote site.

There are only 2 basic ways to establish competitive advantage: do things better than others or do things differently.

--- Karl Albrecht

"The difference between successful people, and unsuccessful people is that successful people do the things that unsuccessful people do not want to do."

13 Tips to Increase Your Business

Here are 13 ideas that may help you generate more business. They do not fall into the category of "one size fits all". Some suggestions work better for one type of business rather than another. Use the ones that are most appropriate for your company and budget.

Maybe 13 will be lucky for you!

1. Stuff a sales message in the invoices you send out each month. It's a low cost way to announce a sale, offer a discount, or present a new service.
2. Make a video and use it.
3. Publish and send a newsletter.
4. Tie in your point-of-purchase signs with current advertising.
5. Use demonstrations. Seeing is more powerful than hearing.
6. Add displays at the cash register. More sales are made of merchandise displayed here than anywhere else.
7. Be persistent. Sometimes repeated attempts to close a sale are necessary; many people give up too soon.
8. Ask for referrals.
9. Call your customers after completion of the transaction. If they are satisfied, you might get referrals. If they are not satisfied, you have the opportunity to correct any problems. A satisfied customer is what you always want.
10. Smile when you are on the telephone. The customer can feel it and will become more relaxed. *Tip: Keep a mirror in front of you.*
11. Be positive. Eliminate negative words from your advertising and from your speech. Examples of replacing negative words with good feeling words: investment, for cost; agreement, for contract; approve the paper work, for sign here; own, for buy.
12. Extend your business hours to include evenings and weekends.
13. Keep a car or two in front of your store or office, even if it's yours. No one wants to be the only person in a place.

IMPORTANT NOTICE REVISIONS TO M/WBE CERTIFICATION STANDARDS - HOUSE BILL 319

Florida legislation enacted House Bill 319 which became law effective October 1, 1998. This law impacts the certification of M/WBE firms, and brought about changes to the Palm Beach County Code in the following areas:

1. Physically disabled persons are no longer eligible for certification.
2. All applicants must be domiciled (registered to do business) in the State of Florida.
3. In order to be eligible for certification, the minority or woman must be the license holder in any trade or profession they would offer to Palm Beach County, and must hold an ownership interest in the business. Currently certified firms that do not meet this requirement have until October 1, 2003 to comply. New applicants are required to meet this requirement at the time they apply.
4. Size standard eligibility will be determined by the number of employees, net worth and net income over the preceding two years of business operation. To qualify as an M/WBE, the firm must employ 100 or fewer permanent full-time employees and together with its affiliates have a net worth of not more than \$3 million and an average net income, after federal income taxes and excluding carryover losses, for the preceding two years of not more than \$2 million. For sole proprietorships, a \$3 million net worth shall apply.
5. The minority or woman must have owned 51% of the firm for a minimum of two (2) years, when any previous majority interest was held by a non-minority relative, former employer or current employer of the applicant.

If you have any questions regarding the M/WBE program and revisions to the certification standards, please call the S/M/WBA Office of Palm Beach County at (561) 233-1550.



This is for informational purposes only, and is not intended to be an interpretation of the law.

Business Resource Guide

Business resources that can assist with the growth and development of your business:

Business Development Board of Palm Beach County - (561) 684-2401

Hispanic Human Resources - (561) 641-7400

Palm Beach County Resource Center - (561) 863-0895

Palm Beach County Business Incubators:

Business & Economic Development & Revitalization Corp. (BEDR) - (561) 686-0064

Delray Beach Center for Technology, Enterprise and Development (TED) - (561) 265-3790

Enterprise Development for Glades Entrepreneurs (EDGE) - (561) 993-3343

Palm Beach County Business Incubator, Inc. - (561) 964-5871

Palm Beach County:

Office of Small Business Assistance (OSBA) - (561) 233-1550

International Airport - (561) 471-7447

Engineering Department - (561) 684-4000

Purchasing Department - (561) 233-1500

Facilities Development & Operations - (561) 233-0200

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) - (561) 833-1672

Small Business Development Center - (561) 362-5620

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) - (305) 536-5521

Business Resource Checklist

- ***Accounting***
- ***Business Plans***
- ***Credit Counseling***
- ***Incubators***
- ***International Trade***
- ***License/Certification***
- ***Marketing Plans***
- ***Relocation Assistance***
- ***Business Counseling***
- ***Business Roundtables***
- ***Employee Training Programs***
- ***Legal***
- ***Loans/Financing***
- ***PBC Marketing Assistance***



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Office Of Small Business Assistance
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