



Mountain Mentoring News

Small Business Marketing Tips from Ruby Ware, a marketing mentor:

Include Event Sponsorship & Promotions in Your Marketing Matrix

Many small businesses feel that their advertising dollars are scarce and often choose not to advertise at all. As a small business you may feel that word of mouth is the best form of advertising and there is no need to spend money investing in ads that may or may not work.

As a seasoned Marketing and Communications professional I would agree and disagree. I agree: word of mouth is a great form of advertising, but I disagree because unless you are marketing or advertising, your small business is not getting new customers to spread the word about what your business can offer.

Industry standards usually utilize up to 4% of your revenues into promotions and events. However, if you are a small business owner and are resistant to commit that amount, my recommendation is to take a minimum of three existing community events that reach your target audience, research to see if there is a promotional opportunity which will allow you to set up a

information or sample tent during the event, and lastly create an engaging promotional experience for your audience.

Take for example, an event that Skeena Diversity Society launched last year during Riverboat Days called the Taste of Terrace. The non-profit society asked eight local restaurants whether they would be able to place 150 sample size food items from their menu and participate in a promotion about diversity (in this case showcasing food from different ethnic backgrounds to promote diversity). Maps were sold and the participants had to find all eight restaurants and they were given a chance to sample food items from all eight restaurants. Once participants completed the maps, their maps were stamped and were entered for a draw to win gift certificates from the participating restaurants. The restaurants got free publicity from the organizers and from the event.

The participating restaurants found that because of a \$200 investment, they ac-

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Get into Mentoring!

Diana Alexander, the owner of Studio 3 Spa and Salon, an Aveda concept Spa and Salon, is an adamant enthusiast of mentoring. After starting her first business, Santé Skin and Laser, by reading book after book, Alexander understands the magnitude of talking business with another business owner. She lamented the fact there were so few resources available to women starting a business, and jumped on the chance to form a relationship with the Women's Enterprise Centre. From there, a love of mentoring has grown. She has facilitated workshops, mentored one on one and looks forward to the next peer-mentoring group to start in

Terrace. She not only enjoys the camaraderie with other businesses, but also the chance to learn from those she mentors. "New thinkers tackle issues from an entirely different direction," Alexander states. "Someone to think outside the box for you."

Mentoring has helped Alexander run her business in measurable and immeasurable ways. She said one of the ways mentoring keeps you accountable are little reality checks: you are reminded of your own advice as you recount your stories with what has worked for you in the past. So, if mentoring will make your business better— what are you waiting for? Get into mentoring!

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Volume 1, Issue 2

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Register your Small Business with us!

Part of our project mandate is to gather a list of ALL the businesses in Northwest BC. We'd like to know how many businesses could potentially benefit in our project (even if you don't actually have the time to participate). If you own a small business that employs around 10 people or less, or you are self-employed, please register your business with us!

Marketing Tips from a local mentor, Ruby Ware

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quired a new customer base that perhaps didn't even know the restaurant existed. If you were the participating restaurant you would have spent \$1.33 for each customer to physically come into your restaurant, try your menu out, and get a feel for your staff and viola! You have done your first acquisition campaign. The great thing about this promotion is it actually got people who normally would not come into your place of business, in the door and potentially end up being repeat customers. If only just one out of the 150 participants decides to come into your restaurant twice a month and spend \$100 every month for year – you've basically

spent \$1.33 in food costs (plus your time) for a customer who will spend \$1,200 a year. What an investment! This is a lot cheaper than an expensive media campaign and a great return on your investment. Remember, the key is to research the perfect event, with the right audience and the right promotional opportunity in order to have success. Media buys are still very effective and work great alongside your promotional event. Events with a great promotion can quickly create additional traffic resulting in higher revenues.

Ruby Ware

Owner, Nikita Marketing & Communications
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Feature Business

Curtis Cunningham Photistry

The Small Business Mentoring Project would like to feature the eclectic mix of businesses and services available in Northwest BC. Curtis Cunningham is a participant in the Small Business Mentoring Project, and we are pleased to welcome the talented photographer to the project.

Curtis Cunningham moved to Smithers for a change of pace, and a chance to develop his photography business. He offers a wide range of services, including product photography, group shots, headshots, individual and family portraiture, engagement sessions, weddings, event photography, passport/ visa photos.

Curtis started his business in 2004, but prior to

that he had developed his photography skills during a teaching trip to China in the mid-nineties. Following his own advice, he "just kept shooting" and is almost entirely self-taught in the art of photography. He says, "in essence, you learn by simply doing the work, although if you enjoy what you do, it can hardly be called work." It is evident in his work that the love of detail make for beautiful photos.

As with the funky combination of 'photography' and 'artistry' in the name of his company, it is evident Curtis enjoys getting people "to think about what it is they are looking at." For a sample of his work, check out his website, at www.photistry.com or email him with questions at curtis@photistry.com.



Mentoring Project Update

The Small Business Mentoring Project has gathered a solid base of protégés and mentors, and is ready to take the next step. The project coordinator has started to pair individuals with matching skill sets. With a bit of imagination, we are pairing good matches, sometimes with unexpected cross sector results. This accomplishes an important as-

pect of mentoring: networking. We hope that some of these pairings are opportunities to build community with people that otherwise, might not have had the chance to get to know one another.

We're still looking for more interested, open minded individuals to participate in the project! Please don't hesitate to call with questions.

Mentoring Project Q&A

What is Business Mentoring?

Business mentoring is a confidential relationship between two people, the mentor and the protégé, designed to help both grow and learn from each other about business. Mentors come to the table with experience, knowledge, and insight. Equally as valuable, protégés come to the table with a fresh perspective, lots of questions and a willingness to learn.

How does it work?

Mentors and protégés can get together for breakfast or coffee, meeting in the office, a walk in the park, a phone call or any environment that feels comfortable. Learning happens by honest sharing, lots of questions, trial and error, and being respectful of each other's experiences.

Who can be involved?

Anyone involved in small business! If you have the time, experiences to share or questions to ask, you can register on our website at www.smallbusinessmentor.bc.ca. If you have any questions please feel free to call (250) 635-2311 or email dave@1637cfdc.bc.ca

What kind of skills do you need to be a mentor?

There are similarities across business, no matter what industry you're in. There are a wide variety of skills that people would like help with and experience is a

wonderful teacher. Even if you're highly specialized, we might have someone who would like to bounce ideas off you.

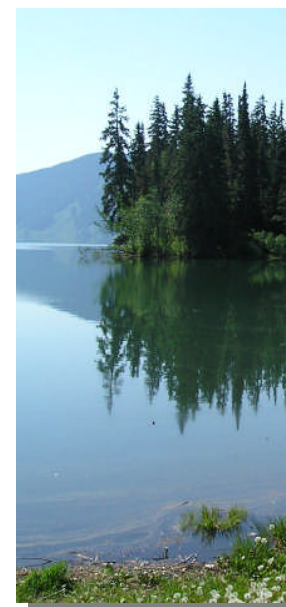
When is the program taking place? How long will it take?

The program comes to an end in March 2010, and we're hoping to get a pilot group ready to go before the end of summer 2008. If we find pairs that match skills sets of need and expertise, we may connect them earlier. Once you're in a mentoring relationship, it can last as long as seems practical. Many relationships will naturally come to an end as needs shift to a different area. People may have several different mentoring or protégé relationships during the course of the program. You may mentor as many times as you wish, and as it is totally voluntary, if there is a time that is not convenient to you just say no!

Why should you participate?

Some of the best reasons are: 1. Learn from someone in your community, 2. It's a free resource far more personal than any seminar would be, 3. You can expand your network and meet new people, 4. Learn new ways of doing things, 5. Give back to your community, 6. Feel proud of your community and your contribution, 7. You may find out about things you didn't know you didn't know! 8. There's nothing to lose and a ton of benefits.

Knowledge
talks,
wisdom
listens



Upcoming Events....

Kitimat

Dragon Boat races June 28. 8:00 am breakfast and practice runs. Contact Ruth Mills at 632-9207

Music & Friends at Kitimaat Village July 18 & 19. Contact Shannon Merit at 632-2531

21st Annual Fish Derby August 30 & 31st. Contact 1-800-664-6554, or www.visitkitimat.com

Prince Rupert

30th Annual Seafest. June 12-15. Please contact 624-9118, or visit www.prspecialevents.com

Dodge Cove Art Guild Art Exhibition July 5. 12-5 pm. Catch the ferry at Atlin Dock, Prince Rupert. Contact Jan at 624-8144 for more details

Terrace

Riverboat Days August 1-10. Check the website at www.riverboatdays.ca

Riverside Festival August 8 - 10. 14 km North on Kalum Lake Drive. Call Rene Lucier at 635-2357

Smithers

June 19 Chamber of Commerce Member Appreciation Lunch. Please register beforehand.

Midsummer Festival, June 20-22. Bulkley Valley Fair Grounds

Check local news for Canada Day Celebrations!

Did you know...

- The species *Homo Sapiens* have been around approximately 250,000—400,000 years.
- The word 'gregarious' comes from Latin, meaning of a flock or herd. The modern word refers to a sociable person.
- Scientists have found living prokaryotes (think bacteria) 1.6 kilometres under the ocean floor. About 2/3 of all biomass could be living inside the Earth!



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SMALL BUSINESS
MENTORING PROJECT
ENHANCING WORKPLACE SKILLS

About Community Futures 16/37:

Community Futures Development Corporation of 16/37 is a locally governed board funded by the federal government. Its role is to help local communities use their resources efficiently and effectively for economic gain, to meet the needs of employers and businesses, as well as make better, healthy communities. That means help create jobs (with services such as Self Employment Benefits), facilitating new business start-ups (with feasibility studies and loans) and other support services for employers, entrepreneurs and small businesses (knowledgeable business analysts and a great library!) Community Futures 16/37 also gets involved with many social and community economic development projects. The Small Business Mentoring Project is just one of the many ways Community Futures provides valuable services to the local population. The office is located above the Service Canada building on the second floor. If you have a business idea, or need help financing a new or expanding business, business counseling is free of charge.

Call Community Futures 16/37 at (250) 635-5449 or Toll Free in BC at 1-800-663-6396, or visit the website: www.1637cfdc.bc.ca.



*"Growing communities
one idea at a time."*

Partnerships:



Kitimat
Chamber of Commerce
& Visitor Info Centre



Terrace & District
Chamber Of
Commerce



Smithers B.C.



Canada

