



Celebrating 30 Years of Small Business Success

May 12, 2014

Happy National Small Business Week

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Happy National Small Business Week

[National Small Business Week](#) kicks off in San Francisco on May 12 at Twitter HQs, followed by events in Kansas City, Boston and New York. We'll end the week in Washington, DC where we will honor small businesses from across the United States and culminate in the announcement of the National Small Business Person of the Year. The week will feature educational panels and workshops on topics like how to start a business, how to grow a business, social media tips for your business – just to name a few. These events will be streamed live at www.sba.gov/smallbusinessweek. Also, see the Moves and News section below for many events being held throughout Illinois during National Small Business Week.

5 Ways to Increase the Productivity of Your Small Retail Business

By Nicole Reyhle on [retailminded.com](#), 4/29/14 - As a small retail business owner, we know you're always looking for ways to save time. Fortunately, today's technology offers retail businesses plenty of tools for maximum time optimization. Keep your business running smoothly and avoid revenue loss by increasing productivity in all aspects of your company with these five time saving techniques.

Fast Marketing

Getting the word out about your small retail business doesn't have to be time consuming. Let your customers know about special promotions or in-store events with email marketing campaigns. Save time by using [online email marketing solutions](#) like SnapRetail that make it easy to design emails and send them to subscribers. Another way to market your business without spending too much time and effort is through Facebook. Stay on your customers' minds by creating a business account and updating it daily with interesting tidbits, promotions and product information.

Staff Scheduling

Useful apps like Deputy make [scheduling staff hours a cinch](#). Deputy allows you to coordinate shifts online and even sends notifications via text message and email so your workers never show up for a cancelled shift again. This time and attendance software also makes it simple to keep track of everyone's hours, so you'll always pay your workers the right amount. Forgo those paper time sheets and opt to go digital with staff scheduling. You'll save time and money.

Data Protection

Using the cloud makes it easier to save and access important business files. Consider this situation, you're at home and a customer calls you, upset about being overcharged for an item he or she bought earlier in the day. You don't have to wait until you get back to your business's physical location to solve this mistake. With the cloud you can easily search for a specific transaction and verify the amount charged. However, if you do decide to go from physical to virtual files, make sure you have an [online cloud backup service](#) like MozyEnterprise that can protect important business information from getting lost and improve productivity with file sync and mobile access.

Store Organization

There's no bigger time waster than a disorganized retail store. Keep your displays clutter-free and your client's shopping experience will be smooth. If you find your overall layout is what's slowing things down, then it's time for a more drastic change. [CashierLive suggests](#) investing in light, easy to move shelves and opting for modular furniture that can be arranged in a variety of ways. The site also mentions grouping items in ways that make sense to your shoppers. For example, if a client goes into your store with the intention of purchasing a bathing suit for the summer, place other related items nearby, such as sunglasses, sunscreen and flip flops. This organizational method will not only make finding items easier for your customer but it will make the whole shopping process quicker. And remember, quick and easy transactions improve clientele and drive sales.

Easy Payments

Use technology to your advantage to make transactions quicker and easier. [Credit card processing systems](#) like Swipely can be easily integrated into your payment process and can be used alongside the cash register you probably already own. With Swipely you won't have to spend hours trying to figure out how much you made from credit and debit card transactions, as one of its features allows you to view monthly sale data. Furthermore, you can even save time by adjusting your opening and closing hours to best accommodate the best times for sales, information Swipely can help you figure out.

More at: <http://retailminded.com/increase-productivity/>

Program Success of the Week – Gusco Silicon & Rubber Services

After a few years of working as a foreman in a silicon company Gus Morales became restless and aspired for more responsibility in the business. Using his industry knowledge and entrepreneurial skills, Mr. Morales opened Gusco in 2010. He first sought assistance from the Procurement and Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) at the Illinois Small Business Development Center at the Women's Business Development Center (WBDC) in 2011.

Gusco had earned the ISO 9001 Certified, crucial in this industry, but struggled to acquire clients. This led Mr. Morales to turn to the WBDC for assistance.

He began meeting with PTAC counselors at the WBDC to win government contracts. The WBDC PTAC assisted with every aspect of the business, from developing his elevator pitch to attending pre-award surveys for the Defense Contract Management Agency.

Having clocked over 90 hours with WBDC counselors and hundreds of hours responding to proposals, Gusco found success filling three separate contracts through the System of Award Management (SAM). In the past three years Gusco has substantially grown their client base and produce silicon products both for the government and for private clients in various industries such as healthcare, food and aerospace. In the past two years his revenues have doubled with a staff of only four employees.

Resource of the Week – Cloud Based Accounting Apps

The links below open various cloud based accounting apps your clients may find worthwhile. [QuickBooks Online](#), [Sage One](#), [Xero](#), [FreshBooks](#), [Intacct](#), [NetSuite](#).

Neoserra/WebCATS Update – Creating a Pay Pal Account

Tom Becker will need to assist with creating a Pay Pal account, but the basic instructions can be found below.

<http://www.outreachsystems.com/resources/help/neoserra/faq.jsp?id=n89>

Moves and News - Happy National Small Business Week

Listed below you will find several events being conducted by members of the Illinois SBDC Network this week, National Small Business Week and the following week.

DATE	TIME	NAME OF EVENT	NETWORK CENTER NAME	LOCATION OF EVENT	REGISTRATION/COST/CONTACT INFO/URL LINK (if available)	Email	Link
5/12/2014	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Facebook Success Secrets Webinar	College of Dupage	Webinar	\$15.00, 630/942-2600	entrepreneur@cod.edu	http://ilsbdc.ecenterdirect.com/Conferenc
5/13/2014	10:00 am - 12:00 pm	Starting Your Small Business in Illinois	Duman Center	JVS Chicago, 216 W. Jackson Boulevard, 2nd Floor Training Room, Chicago, IL 60606	FREE, Please RSVP @ http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=qu9foxbab&oeidk=a07e91met3kac89b9eb , Contact Steve Bob @ stevebob@jvschicago.org or 312-673-3429;	stevebob@jvschicago.org	http://events.constantcontact.com/register
5/13/2014	6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Starting Your Business in Illinois	Danville Area	2917 N Vermilion St., Danville IL	\$10 To register call 217-442-7232, email sbdc@dacc.edu or register online at www.dacc.edu/sbdc	sbdc@dacc.edu	www.dacc.edu/sbdc
5/13/2014		Seven Key Steps for Starting a Business	Harper College	Palatine Library, 700 N. North Court, Palatine			www.palatinelibrary.org
5/13/2014		Quad Cities Chamber Small Business Excellence Awards	Blackhawk SBDC	St. Ambrose University, Rogalski Center, 518 W. Locust St. Davenport, IA 52803			http://events.quadcitieschamber.com/sba101&details=True&date=4/24/2014&cale
5/13/2014	9:00 am - 11:00 am	Decision-Making Strategies in Leadership Positions Seminar	Champaign County	Illinois SBDC at Champaign Co. EDC, 1817 S. Neil Street, Suite 100, Champaign, IL 61820	Free, RSVP Required, space is limited, Contact Carly McCrory at 217/359-6261; Presented by Dr. David Rosch, U of I	carly@champaigncountyedc.org	https://www.facebook.com/events/59868
5/14/2014	11:30 am - 1:00 pm	To Your Credit	Danville Area	2917 N Vermilion St., Danville IL	\$10 To register call 217-442-7232, email sbdc@dacc.edu or register online at www.dacc.edu/sbdc	sbdc@dacc.edu	www.dacc.edu/sbdc
5/14/2014	6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Starting a Business in Illinois	Bethal New Life (with West Humboldt park	Nia Family Center - 744 N. Monicello Chicago, IL 60624	Free, to register email croeschley@bethelnewlife.org or call 773/473-7870 X 113	croeschley@bethelnewlife.org	

			Development Council)				
5/14/2014		Starting Your Business in Illinois	Joliet Junior College	Joliet, IL	Free		http://ilsbdc.ecenterdirect.com/Conferenc
5/14/2014	9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Business Plan Bootcamp	College of Dupage	College of DuPage Center for Entrepreneurship, 2525 Cabot Dr., Suite 201 Lisle, IL 60532	\$150.00, 630/942-2600	entrepreneur@cod.edu	http://ilsbdc.ecenterdirect.com/Conferenc
5/14/2014	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Brand New Rules of Marketing Seminar	Champaign County	Illinois SBDC at Champaign Co. EDC, 1817 S. Neil Street, Suite 100, Champaign, IL 61820	Free, RSVP Required, space is limited, Contact Carly McCrory at 217/359-6261; Presented by BIGG Success	carly@champaigncountyedc.org	https://www.facebook.com/events/14274
5/14/2014		Intermediate QuickBooks	College of Lake County	CLC - 19351 W. Washington St., Grayslake, IL	\$100.00, 847/543-2033		wpdi.clcillinois.edu/sbdc
5/14/2014		Asset Protection & Estate Planning	College of Lake County	CLC - 1120 S. Milwaukee Ave., Vernon Hills, IL	\$15.00, 847/543-2033		http://tinyurl.com/l2cmth5
5/14/2014		Advisory Council Lunch	Kaskaskia ITC	Olney, IL	By invitation	sgroner@kaskaskia.edu	
5/14/2014		Exporting For Your Business	Illinois Eastern	IECC, 218 East Main St., Olney, IL	618/545-3260		
5/15/2014	6:30 pm - 8:30 pm	How to Write a Winning Business Plan	Duman Center	Chicago Urban League, 4510 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60653	FREE, Please RSVP @ http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=9pi9hndab&oeidk=a07e91osbts6db86549 , Contact Steve Bob @ stevebob@jvschicago.org or 312-673-3429;	stevebob@jvschicago.org	http://events.constantcontact.com/regist
5/15/2014		Financial Boot Camp	Harper College	650 E Higgins Rd, #18N Schaumburg, IL 60173			http://goforward.harpercollege.edu/busin
5/15/2014	7:30 am - 10:00 am	Leveraging Tax Credits Breakfast Panel	College of Dupage	First Midwest Bank, 491 Illinois 59, Aurora, IL 60504	Free, 630/942-2600	entrepreneur@cod.edu	https://ilsbdc.ecenterdirect.com/Conferen
5/15/2014	10:00 am - 12:00 pm	Starting Government Contracting	College of DuPage PTAC	College of DuPage Center for Entrepreneurship, 2525 Cabot Dr., Suite 201 Lisle, IL 60532	Free, 630/942-2600	entrepreneur@cod.edu	http://ilsbdc.ecenterdirect.com/Conferenc
5/15/2014		The Heels of Business Breakfast	GSU	Engbreton Hall, 1 University Parkway, University Park, IL 60484	Free, for more information call, 708-534-4929		http://ilsbdc.ecenterdirect.com/Conferenc
5/15/2014	10:00 am - 2:00 pm	Compliance Export Seminar	Champaign County	Illinois SBDC at Champaign Co. EDC, 1817 S. Neil Street, Suite 100, Champaign, IL 61820	\$10, RSVP Required, space is limited, cash checks and credit cards accepted, contact Carly McCrory at 217/359-6261	carly@champaigncountyedc.org	http://www.champaigncountyedc.org/eve
5/16/2014		Networking at Arlington Race Track	NORBIC	Arlington Heights, IL	http://www.shop.illinoismanufacturing.org/AIM-Networking-At-Arlington_c15.htm		

5/16/2014	9:00 am - 10:30 am	Friday Forum	College of DuPage	College of DuPage Center for Entrepreneurship, 2525 Cabot Dr., Suite 201 Lisle, IL 60532	Free, 630/942-2600	entrepreneur@cod.edu	http://ilsbdc.ecenterdirect.com/Conferenc
5/17/2014		QuickBooks Saturday	Kaskaskia SBDC	Trenton, IL	\$80.00	sgroner@kaskaskia.edu	
5/19/2014		IDOT - Prime Contractors/Subcontractors Networking Session	Blackhawk PTAC	Moline, IL	Free, Contact Vicky Miller 309/796-5712 or email millerv@bhc.edu	millerv@bhc.edu	http://events.constantcontact.com/regist
5/19/2014		Entrepreneur FAQs, webinar	College of Lake County ITC	Webinar	Free, 847/543-2033		http://tinyurl.com/mvupwh5
5/19/2014	9:00 am - 11:00 am	Starting Your Business in Illinois	Lincoln Land	Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, 155 W. Morton, Jacksonville, IL	Free, Call 217/245-2174, Donna Watkins to register		
5/20/2014	10:00 am - 12:00 pm	How to Write a Winning Business Plan	Duman Center	JVS Chicago, 216 W. Jackson Boulevard, 2nd Floor Training Room, Chicago, IL 60606	FREE, Please RSVP @ http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=qu9foxbab&oeidk=a07e91mhrkbcbd249bc , Contact Steve Bob @ stevebob@jvschicago.org or 312-673-3429;	stevebob@jvschicago.org	http://events.constantcontact.com/regist
5/20/2014	6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Cracking the Code: Social Media 101	Duman Center	JVS Chicago, 216 W. Jackson Boulevard, 2nd Floor Training Room, Chicago, IL 60606	FREE, Please RSVP @ http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=qu9foxbab&oeidk=a07e94m4n2d5b05fbfc , Contact Steve Bob @ stevebob@jvschicago.org or 312-673-3429;	stevebob@jvschicago.org	http://events.constantcontact.com/regist
5/20/2014		West Central Illinois Small Business Day	Blackhawk SBDC	Lake Story Pavilion, Off Route 150 at U.S. 34, Galesburg, IL 61401			http://entremindset.files.wordpress.com/2
5/20/2014	8:00 am - 10:00 am	Choosing the Right Business Entity	Elgin	ECC Campus, 1700 Spartan Drive, Building E, Elgin, IL 60123	Free, contact Linda Hofstedt at 847/214-7488		Link to register
5/21/2014		Small Business Fraud	Joliet Junior College	Joliet, IL	Free		http://ilsbdc.ecenterdirect.com/Conferenc
5/21/2014		Starting a Business in Illinois	GSU	Tinley Park Village Hall, 16250 Oak Park Ave., Tinley Park, IL 60477	Free, for more information call, 708-534-4929		http://ilsbdc.ecenterdirect.com/Conferenc
5/21/2014	1:30 pm - 3:30 pm	Starting Your Business in Illinois	Lincoln Land	LLCC - Capital City Training Center, 130 W. Mason Street, Springfield, IL	Free, Call 544-7232, Suzanne Shear to register		
5/22/2014	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Using LinkedIn to Drive Small Business Growth	Duman Center	Harold Washington Public Library Center, Pritzker Auditorium, 400 S. State Street, Chicago, IL 60605	FREE, Please RSVP @ http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=qu9foxbab&oeidk=a07e98znyws56ceb5c7 , Contact Steve Bob @ stevebob@jvschicago.org or 312-673-3429;	stevebob@jvschicago.org	http://events.constantcontact.com/regist
5/22/2014	8:30 am -	Expanding Your Market Through Supply Chain	Bethel New Life	1140 N. Lamon Chicago, IL	Free, to register email croeschley@bethelnewlife.org or call 773/473-7870 X 113	croeschley@bethelnewlife.org	

	10:30 am	Opportunities		60651			
5/22/2014		Invoice Factoring for Your Business	Blackhawk PTAC	Moline, IL	Free, Contact Vicky Miller 309/796-5712 or email millerv@bhc.edu	millerv@bhc.edu	http://events.constantcontact.com/registr
5/22/2014		Small Loans...Big Results	Joliet Junior College	Joliet, IL	Free		http://ilsbdc.ecenterdirect.com/Conferenc
5/22/2014		WPDI Expo - Explore. Connect. Advance	CLC - Workforce & Professional Dev. Institute	CLC - 1120 S. Milwaukee Ave., Vernon Hills, IL	Free, 847/543-2615		wpdiexpo.eventbrite.com

As part of National Small Business Week, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and co-sponsors will be hosting numerous training webinars and online events from May 12-15.

Making It Big: Small Biz Success in a Mobile World

When: 9 a.m. (EDT), Wednesday, May 14 - Online: View live online at www.sba.gov/smallbusinessweek

Join us as Conduit Mobile and the SBA bring together an array of experts from major technology companies, the public sector, and the small business community to discuss how small business owners can better take advantage of the technology already at their fingertips to transform their mobile and digital experience and grow their bottom line. Pick up tricks on how to promote your business in the mobile age and find out which mobile app features (push notifications, social media, coupons, loyalty cards, reservations, and others) can take your business to the next level.

A discussion moderated by [Melinda Emerson](#) offering the latest tips and tricks for business owners on how to use digital and mobile tools to thrive in today's market. Panelists include:

- [Javier Saade](#)
- [Rob Pulciani](#) – Head of Worldwide Marketing & Evangelism, Amazon
- [Matt Mahoney](#) – VP Business Development, Booker
- [Li-at Karpel Gurwicz](#) – VP Marketing, Conduit Mobile
- [Andre Lamont](#) – Publisher, Muve Magazine

Registration is open, but limited: <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/conduit-mobile-summit-national-small-business-week-sba-sponsored-panel-tickets-11226537877>

How Can Technology and Collaboration Drive More Sales for Small Businesses?

When: 2 p.m. (EDT), Wednesday, May 14 - Where: Watch online live (www.sba.gov/smallbusinessweek) from the PayPal Commerce Innovation Center in New York City

PayPal and the SBA present a special panel discussion as part of PayPal's inaugural "New York Engage" event. The retail landscape is rapidly evolving, but how is that affecting merchants locally in New York City and nationally? Tune in to an interactive discussion with small business experts, influencers, and members of New York's small business community. Follow @PayPal4Business and Facebook.com/PayPalForBusiness to join the conversation and stay plugged in for updates.

Moderator: Gene Marks, acclaimed small business columnist and owner

Panelists:

Dan Leberman – VP, GM of North America SMB Core/Online Business, PayPal
 Javier Saade – U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Investment and Innovation
 Alex Shvartsman – Merchant Owner, Kings Games
 Jo Benson – COO, Vortex

Takeaways:

Learn how small business merchants can lift conversion, reduce cart abandonment, and improve the customer experience
 Hear about the latest technology trends and best practices that have helped real small businesses increase sales and streamline their operations
 Access a powerful cast of small business influencers, leaders, local businesses, and industry executives who want to help you be successful

SBA Co-sponsored Webinars and Online Events:

Monday, May 12

[Smart Small Business Travel: Strategic Ways to Increase Your Return on Travel](#) | 4-5pm EDT | with Marriott and Visa

Despite the clear upside, many small business owners limit travel because of cost or a reluctance to be away from their business. Travel is an investment in your business. And like any investment, you want to maximize your return. Get advice and tips on how to do just that. [> Register now](#)

Tuesday, May 13

[Small Business: Big Benefits](#) | 4-5pm EDT | with Colonial Life

Choosing between offering a robust benefits package or cutting back on total offerings is a challenge for many small businesses. Learn about “voluntary benefits” that can allow you to strengthen your existing benefits packages at little or no additional cost.

[> Register now](#)

Wednesday, May 14

[Achieving Big Customer Loyalty in a Small Business World: 10 Tips to Create A Killer Customer Loyalty Program](#) | 3-4pm EDT | with Manta

Learn about the best approaches to jump-start your small business’ customer loyalty program, including how to make sure that your program fits your business’ needs and how to get positive ROI from a digital customer loyalty program.

[> Register now](#)

Thursday, May 15

[Practical Marketing – A Five-Step Marketing Program for Small Biz](#) | 3-4pm EDT | with YP

Gain insight about how to get the most from your marketing time with a 5-step practical marketing plan focused on “doing” – not marketing theory.

[This webinar is SOLD OUT. A recording of this webinar will be available May 30 on SBA’s YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/sba]

[America’s SBDC Network Connect](#)

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to see the May 1, 2014 edition of [America’s SBDC Network Connect newsletter](#).

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The **WEEKLY CONNECTION** is distributed by the Illinois SBDC and DCEO Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology each Monday to members of the DCEO Illinois SBDC Network to provide the service delivery partners with regular updates on small business issues, opportunities and resources. You may send any information to share with the Illinois SBDC Network to Tom.Becker@illinois.gov. Please feel free to forward this update to other interested resource providers and key stakeholders.

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