

NBM Small Business Board of Advisors Issue

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What Every Small Business Should Know



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Special Report

Most new businesses are overwhelmed by the sheer amount of information required to run a successful enterprise. New Business Minnesota assembled its Small Business Board of Advisors, business pros who work with new and small businesses, to share essential information about their respective fields.

Save this issue. You're going to need it.



Workspace Solutions

By Lori Spiess

Lori Spiess CEO of OffiCenters/VirtualOffiCenters has provided workspace solutions to the Twin Cities since 1981. She is an innovator, leader and motivator who helps businesses do their best work. Her company won Most Innovative Workspace 2014 and she made Minnesota Real Power 50 list 2015. Spiess, a recent cancer survivor, has a new motto: Life is short. Work someplace awesome! She can be reached at (612) 349-2712 or lspiess@officenters.com www.virtualofficenters.com

Workspace solutions need to be mobile and flexible. All of us have learned that we must be able to work and provide our customers a variety of services anytime and anywhere. A dedicated space is helpful but often unnecessary to satisfy today's work force. Home is a popular choice because: the commute is great, the dress code rocks, proximity to lunch and coffee rooms are usually just steps away, and also the economics work.

The downside is this, separation of home and work can be challenging. You need to be very disciplined to find good balance. Isolation is a major business challenge and studies have shown that business owners who get out and network or use CoWorking spaces are 85 percent more productive than those who work alone. And, I don't know about you, but there aren't a lot of people hanging around in my kitchen who can provide an inspired work atmosphere. Getting into a community of

like-minded professionals can actually who have great energy and ideas can positively impact your bottom line.

Over the last 35 years, I have worked with thousands of microbusinesses looking to maximize efficiency and minimize capital expenditures. I am delighted to share some of my observations:

1) Image matters. What the client sees will determine their trust level and how they will work with you long term. A solid company has a solid identity. Build your foundation with care.

2) Be safe. Remember, there are security issues when using your home address and your personal cell number. Put a layer between you by setting up a separate address and a dedicated work phone number.

3) Stay flexible. If you don't know what your new company will look like at any time down the road, do not make multi-year commitments on office space or equipment.

4) Be realistic. Some people can work virtually anywhere under the sun. For others, it's a struggle. If you need structure to be productive or if distractions pull your focus, find options that work for you. If a home office works, don't apologize for choosing that lifestyle. Enhance the home experience with CoWorking space and productive work environments. The coffee shop just does not cut it!

5) Sharing is good. Why make commitments to office equipment and long-term leases? You can buy as you go and use space, furnishings and equipment as needed. It really works.

6) Never apologize. Remove the phrases "I'm just" or "We're only..." Be proud of what you do. Small businesses are the backbone of America.

7) WORK AWESOME! Get out of the house and surround yourself with successful and productive people. I know that success is contagious. Be open to opportunities for creative collaboration! Community and networking will help you reach your goals. This can be the difference between success and failure.

At VirtualOffiCenters we have plans as basic as a mailbox to help you get started. We offer networking, educational opportunities and collaboration to enhance your businesses. Choose a workspace solution that will work today and has the flexibility to help you grow into the future.

Call To Action

Be Inspired to Work Awesome! Stop in for a Day Pass to any of our five CoWorking Spaces. Walk-Ins welcome!



Security

By Steven Emmer

Steve Emmer is in small business sales for ADT Security, which provides security solutions from alarms, intrusion protection, camera systems and remote systems for small and medium size businesses. He can be reached at (651) 724-8612 or semmer@adt.com. www.adt.com.

It wasn't that long ago that security for your business meant a burglar alarm to thwart break-ins. Because of the explosion in technology – internet, smartphones and more – security now means managing your work environment to protect your employees, your information, your inventory, your bottom line as well as keeping out the bad guys.

The new technology that we're deploying at ADT Security Systems allows you to monitor 24/7 what is going on at your office, store or building. Using your smart-phone, you can control the whole system from anywhere you get 3g service!

Whether you have a home office or a large commercial space, you need to be aware of your security risks and options. Here is What Every New Business Should Know about security sys-

tems:

1) Protect your investment. Insurance may replace whatever might be stolen or damaged by thieves and vandals, but the reality is you're better off if you can either stop or minimize the event in the first place. Features to consider: Monitoring for forced entry, hold-ups and duress events. You might even get a break on your insurance premiums as well.

3) Use smartphone technology to manage your security system. Receive real-time alerts on your smartphone about what is going on back at the office, when the first employee arrives to open up, if the last employee to leave activated the alarm or even if the coffee maker was left on (You can turn it off from your phone). Going to the office on Saturday? Remotely turn up the heat two hours before you get there. If you just need

and a late delivery arrives at the office, you open the door for them and reactivate the alarm when the leave.

4) Keep more of the money you're already making. Just about any aspect of your operation can be monitored and controlled by this technology. When the alarm is set at night, we tie in lighting and temperature levels so that you reduce electricity and heating costs.

5) Work with experienced professionals. Resist the urge to pick up a do-it-yourself security kit that comes with a six-pack of mini-cameras. You want a solution that is right for your location, fits budget and is done right. Our years of experience have taught us where best to put cameras, motion detectors; whether to use key-pad entry, key fobs or ID cards; how to create extra protection zones that limit employee access to highly sensitive areas. And you want a system that is reliable and that provides real time reports you can respond to.

Call To Action

Call today for your free risk analysis at your site and a demonstration the Pulse System (651) 308-6769 and its amazing features.