

Small Businesses: Sparking The Economy

Recent events leading to a downturn in the economy have resulted in an upswing in new business start-ups. There has been an increase in entrepreneurial spirit in the region. In recognition of that spirit, the Bristol Chamber of Commerce has set aside June as Small Business Month.

According to Thomas J. Donohue, President and CEO, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, small businesses have generated nearly 70% of net new jobs annually over the past decade, driving home the point that bigger, isn't necessarily always better.

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) statistics reveal some 19.6 million Americans work for companies employing fewer than 20 workers, 18.4 million work for firms employing between 20 and 99 workers, and 14.6 million work for firms with 100 to 499 workers. By contrast, 47.7 million Americans work for firms with 500 or more employees.

For individuals who desire to take their passion and parlay it into a small business venture, the Bristol Chamber of Commerce has a number of programs and resources available through the Bristol Business Resource Center (BBRC).

The BBRC exists to aid entrepreneurs in developing and sustaining their businesses. Working with the Bristol Chamber of Commerce and other local organizations, BBRC aims to provide substantial, relevant information to both current and future business owners.

As a hub of resources, the BBRC provides a startup-question checklist for new or future small business owners, including a flowchart to walk through the process of initiating a business in Bristol. Current business owners can find applicable tools for sustaining and growing their businesses through BBRC's diverse network of organizations, firms, and small business entrepreneurs.

The Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) is also based at the Bristol Chamber of Commerce. SCORE is a free small business counseling service, comprised of business professionals who have been successful in their careers as business owners or company executives. The organization counsels anyone interested in starting a business or who has an existing business in need of business advice or problem-solving assistance.

Small businesses are a continuing source of dynamism for the American economy, representing an entry point into the economy for new groups. Whether your small business is a distant retirement dream, or an existing and thriving local enterprise, the Bristol Chamber of Commerce is a one-stop resource for small business networking and guidance.

For more information, please contact Karen Witcher, Director of Business and Education, 423. 989.4850.

The original business social network...

With a solid, century-long history of being good for business, you could say the Bristol Chamber of Commerce is the original business social networking tool.

Now that's something to Tweet about.



Benefits of Chamber Membership

Networking Opportunities:

- Business After Hours
- First Friday Business Briefing
- Annual Awards Luncheon
- Small Business Month
- Schmoosa Palooza
- Member Sponsorships
- Grand Openings & Ribbon Cuttings
- Membership Mailing Labels
- Business Referral Service

New Members Are:

Listed in weekly Monday E-mail
Listed on the Chamber's Web site
Listed in full-color Quarterly Update Newsletter
Listed in monthly Chamber Voice in the Bristol Herald Courier
Announced at First Friday Business Briefing
Eligible for participation in Member-to-Member Discount Program

For more information, please contact Kathy Blackwell, Membership Investment Director, 423. 989.4850.

New Members

New Gold Club Member:

KS Promotional Products

Kim Sproles
8693 Rich Valley Road, Bristol, VA 24202
276.669.4768
Email: kspp@aol.com
Website: www.kspromotional.com
Advertising Specialties, Promotionals, Publishers & Printers

New Members:

BumBum Soap

John Rice
18653 Benhams Road, Bristol, VA 24202
276.494.2238, Email: bumbumsoap@yahoo.com
Specialty soaps, also pet friendly

East Tennessee Mutual Insurance

Barbie Lambert,
PO Box 328, Blountville, TN 37617
423.323.5361
Email: blambertetmi@yahoo.com
Website: www.easttnmutualins.com
Property & Casualty Insurance

Keen Promotional Products

Chad Keen
1732 Edgemont Avenue, Bristol, TN 37620
423.968.5646
Email: brenda.keenpromotions@embarqmail.com
Website: www.keenpromotions.com
Advertising Specialties, shirts, caps, pens, etc.

Kountry Kennels Play-N-Stay

Kim Parks
514 Walnut Hill Road, Bristol, TN 37620
423.878.6965, Email: kountrykennels514@yahoo.com
Pet boarding & pet care

TriCities Tennessee SuddenValues

Pat Green
PO Box 332, Bluff City, TN 37618
423.366.2314
Email: p.green@suddenvalues.com
Website: www.tricityestn.suddenvalues.com
National Marketing & Advertising Company

Twin City Drive In Theatre

Danny Warden
2512 Volunteer Parkway, Bristol, TN 37620
423.764.8033
Email: twincitydriveintheatre@gmail.com
Website: www.twincitydriveintheatre.com
Family Entertainment

Yellowbook USA

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Contact Kathy Blackwell or Amy Thompson: (423) 989-4850

Or visit us online at www.bristolchamber.org