

INTRODUCTION

With spring right around the corner let's focus on how to generate new business.

We have great marketing resources for you to help determine and reach your target market and most effectively promote your TSB. In March we also highlight two businesses whose services are in high demand from procurement agents – **Business Furnishings & Design**, specializing in office furniture and supplies and **Paarlance Creative Writing**, a TSB providing valuable advertising, public relations, and promotions expertise. This month's agency spotlight is one of the largest state agencies, the Department of Administrative Services (DAS). Read more about how your business can work with DAS under the "Procurement Spotlight".

TSB SPOTLIGHT

Paarlance Creative Writing

Since 2002, organizations have partnered with Paarlance Creative Writing for advertising, public relations and copywriting expertise. Owner Ruth Paarmann brings over 17 years of advertising agency, corporate and nonprofit experience to planning, writing and editing news releases, brochures, newsletters, scripts and many other materials. That experience has endowed her with a unique perspective on creating messages for a wide variety of industries.

"My goal is to help organizations communicate better and save them time in the process," says Paarmann.

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Marketing Tools for your Targeted Small Business

Budgets are tightening, customer expectations are growing and competition can be both global and fierce. To distinguish your business and services in today's world you need a marketing advantage — effective, targeted and smart marketing. How do you efficiently and intelligently market your business in today's expensive and media-frenzied world?

Every business owner should start the process by answering the following questions:

- What products (goods, services or ideas) am I offering?
- To whom am I offering this product (the target market)? Who has the greatest need for this service/product?
- How will I inform potential customers of the offering?

Being able to answer these questions puts a business owner well on the way to creating a solid marketing plan.

Having a marketing plan is important part of your business's overall successes. If you already have one in place – congratulations! If you don't have one now or have never developed a plan, don't sweat it. It doesn't take an MBA to market your TSB. However, you will need to set aside some time to develop your plan. Make the decision today to learn basic and efficient marketing strategies such as market research, customer service, advertising, targeting, packaging, pricing, e-marketing, public relations and promotions. Investing the

time to develop a sound and integrated marketing plan will generate returns both now and long-term.

There are a whole slew of very good and inexpensive resources available to you to learn these marketing basics. The United States Small Business Administration is one resource that offers the following free online training courses which can be easily completed within 30 minutes:

- Building Your Brand
- Identify Your Target Market
- Advertising Your Business
- Promoting Your Business
- E-Mail Marketing
- Marketing 101: The Fundamentals *
- Conduct a Marketing Analysis *

Visit <http://www.sba.gov> for more information or to register for any of their courses, many of which are available in multiple languages. Also visit their site for valuable resources through the Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) <http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/sbaprograms/sbdc/index.html>. SBDCs provide management assistance to current and prospective small business owners by providing a wide variety of information and guidance. The program is a cooperative effort among the private sector, the educational community and federal, state and local governments and is an integral component of Entrepreneurial Development's

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TSB SPOTLIGHT

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“We focus on engaging their target audience with a memorable, compelling message. Then, our design and media partners can help complete the communication pieces.”

Paarmann received ADDY recognition for print and interactive copy. In February, she was named 2007 Ad Person of the Year by the American Advertising Federation: Cedar Rapids-Iowa City. See www.paarlance.com for select Paarlance Creative Writing samples or contact Paarmann at ruth@paarlance.com to discuss your specific marketing needs.

Business Furnishings & Design

Lauri A. Weissenburger established Business Furnishings & Design in January 1989 and was certified as a targeted small business that same year. Coby K. Koester joined the firm in 2006 with background in sales and education. The firm has combined experience of over 30 years in the industry and sells several seating lines, filling, case goods, reception furniture, shelving and ergonomic products. Business Furnishings & Design prides itself on customer service and timely delivery of quality products and enjoys long-term relationships with various state agencies. The company delivers and installs throughout the state of Iowa and surrounding area. For more information contact Coby Koester via e-mail at businessfurn@aol.com or at 515.226.0185.

TSB and GSE – The Vendor Process

The Iowa Department of General Services (DGS) was a member of the first TSB Task Force established in early 2004. Since that time DGS has become an enterprise (General Services Enterprise) within the Department of Administrative Services and continues to support TSBs both by promoting TSBs to state agency purchasing staff and through quarterly meetings.

For assistance in establishing a TSB contract, please contact Pam Dickey directly via e-mail at Pam.Dickey@iowa.gov. She will help you navigate among appropriate purchasing agents and will make it much easier for state agency personnel to purchase from specific TSBs through a contract process.

State agencies may purchase up to \$10,000 in goods or services from a certified TSB without conducting a competitive bid, but if agencies don't know about your company or your TSB certification, they will likely take that business somewhere else.

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network of training and counseling services.

Other critical resources for you available within Iowa include your local Community College or the Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Institute nearest you at <http://www.pappajohn.com/entrepreneur/index.html>. Finally, you may want to consult the listing of TSB businesses that specialize in marketing services at <https://dia.iowa.gov/tsb/index.php/search>.

Whatever resource you choose to develop and execute your marketing strategy, the sooner you get started, the sooner you'll see the results.

More TSB News:

TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDERS: The TSB Program currently has 5 technical assistance service providers to help you with a variety of business needs. HF 890 provided funding to contract with these service providers to ensure the ongoing success of TSBs. Recently, these service providers attended training in Des Moines to learn more about initial and ongoing expectations and to collaborate with each other on services provided to TSBs throughout the state. When a business receives an award under the TSB Program, it is automatically paired up with a technical service provider for one year. Contact Margo Kromminga to take advantage of the great services and experiences offered by this terrific group!

FEBRUARY 2008 TSB AWARDS

In February the TSB Program announced three loan awards for businesses in Des Moines and Iowa City.

Faythe and Sarah Dornink, owners of Faythe Dornink Custom Dress Designs in Des Moines were awarded a \$15,000 loan with an interest rate of four percent over a five-year period to purchase equipment, furniture and supplies. The mother-daughter custom-made garment business is relocating from their home to a larger commercial space in the East Village District, allowing them to showcase their original designs for custom gowns and accessories for bridal, evening and everyday wear.

Kye Sun Steward, new owner of Aoeshe Restaurant in Iowa City was awarded a \$50,000 loan with an interest rate of four percent over a five-year period to purchase inventory, supplies and plants. The previous owner of Aoeshe Restaurant retired after 20 years. Steward plans to keep the restaurant's existing name while increasing services and improving the facility.

William Kinney, owner of a restaurant d/b/a Pop's Place and d/b/a Bibbs So Food was awarded a \$26,000 loan with an interest rate of four percent over a five-year period to purchase a food trailer. A regular vendor at the Iowa State Fair and the Drake Relays, Kinney's food trailer will be equipped with a commercial-sized freezer and air conditioning to provide additional catering services in Polk County and the surrounding area.

CHECK HERE FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

www.iowalifechanging.com/business/tsb.html

