



FAST READS 4 YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS™

May 2007

Results Are In

Thanks to everyone who participated in our recent technology seminar survey. We have added the top vote getters at each proficiency level to our June Calendar of training in Fort Bragg. There are only four or five spots in each class so call to reserve your space today. Self-study courses are scheduled at your convenience in our offices.

Print Marketing Create a flyer in MS Word	<i>Introductory Level</i> Thursday 6/14	1 pm – 4 pm
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Expense Tracking in Excel Create an expense report and pivot tables	<i>Intermediate Level</i> Thursday 6/21	1 pm – 4 pm
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Cash Flow Analysis w/ Excel Create a cash flow statement	<i>Advanced Level</i> Thursday 6/28	1 pm – 4 pm
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Putting it All Together Developing a Technology Plan for your Business	Thursday 7/5	1 pm – 4 pm
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Computer Based Training

Project Planning Learn the fundamentals of project management and MS Project	Available by Appointment
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Financial Accounting Account Tracking and Features of Accounting Software	Available by Appointment
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Electronic Marketing Using email tools and understanding PDF files	Available by Appointment
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Websites Learn about website options and considerations such as e-commerce & security	Available by Appointment
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The number one benefit of information technology is that it empowers people to do what they want to do. It lets people be creative. It lets people be productive. It lets people learn things they didn't think they could learn before, and so in a sense it is all about potential. **Steve Ballmer**

Summer Evening Business Workshops in Fort Bragg

Beginning Tuesday, July 10th, West Company will offer its *Building a Better Business workshops* series on Tuesday evenings from 6 pm – 9 pm. The series of seven workshops will begin with a *Business Skills Reality Check* on the 10th and *Starting a Business* on the 17th, address marketing on July 24th & 31st, gain a better understanding of financial matters on August 7th & 14th and conclude with an overview of doing business on the internet on August 21st. To register for one or all of the classes call West Company at (707) 964-7571.

To turn really interesting ideas and fledgling technologies into a company that can continue to innovate for years, it requires a lot of disciplines. **Steve Jobs**

Consumer Action Completes 2007 CreditCard Survey

Consumer Action, founded in 1971, is a non-profit education and advocacy organization based in San Francisco, CA, with offices in Washington, DC, and Los Angeles, CA each year they conduct a survey of card issuers. The 2007 Credit Card Survey was conducted between Oct. 9, 2006 and March 2, 2007. Consumer Action examined 83 cards from 20 banks, including the top 10 U.S. credit card issuers. The survey contains 69 variable rate cards and 15 fixed rate cards. (One card from HSBC is issued with either a variable or fixed rate, depending on the applicant.)

For a complete list of surveyed cards and interest rates, go to [Consumer Action 2007 Credit Card Survey](#).

"Above all change yourself. You may well surprise yourself at what strengths you have, what you can accomplish."
~ Cecil M. Springer

Mendocino County Promotional Alliance

You may already be aware a complete redesign of the gomendo.com website is in the works. The new version of the site promises to be a valuable promotional resource for the entire County of Mendocino. They are now ready to accept your submissions for inclusion on the website. You can visit <http://www.gomendo.com/submission> to view the online form. The first step is to select the CATEGORY that best describes your business or database entry. If you have questions during the process, please contact assistant@gomendo.com.

Tips to Business Profit™

5 Start-Up Mistakes Entrepreneurs Should Avoid

According to the Small Business Administration, one-third of small businesses fail in the first two years and one-half fail within the first five years, statistics that might discourage even the most determined potential entrepreneurs from trying to realize their business dreams. But avoiding the five most serious mistakes entrepreneurs can make in the startup phase can go a long way towards helping them achieve success, CNNMoney reports.

The most deadly errors small business owners make in their first year are:

1. Too Little Cash

"The biggest issue that most entrepreneurs have is money – they're not properly capitalized," says Douglas Long, owner of a consulting firm that advises entrepreneurs. Long tell his clients that they need approximately three times what they think they need at the beginning to provide them with a cushion in a possible economic downturn.

"The real thing I missed was anticipating my cash needs and being able to weather the first year," Steve Hockett, now a successful franchise consultant.

2. Thinking Small

Even when a business has limited resources, it's not a good idea to show it. Harpit Singh founder of Intellicomm, Inc., in Philadelphia tells of a meeting he and an associate organized at a potential client. "I could see the excitement in our service quickly dwindle...when we mentioned that we were a small business with limited resources. From that day on I vowed never to let our size hold us back."

Singh learned to focus on the advantages a small firm offered in the industry.

3. Skimping on Tech

Make sure employees have the latest communication technology so they can respond quickly to customers. Small companies can often adopt new technologies more easily than older companies.

4. Underestimating The Importance of Sales

Singh says that most of the entrepreneur's attention should go to sales and revenues. Every company needs a dedicated sales pro and if that is the business owner, he or she needs to develop sales skills, Long says.

5. Losing Focus

The business owner needs to have a clear vision of everything the company does and what it will take to make each part of the business a success, Hockett says. If he had put together a detailed plan for his business, "I would have waited longer until I was in a better cash position to start. But I was impatient. I made a decision based on emotion rather than fact."

"To have a firm persuasion in our work — to feel that what we do is right for ourselves and good for the world at the exact same time — is one of the great triumphs of human existence. We do feel, when we have work that is challenging and enlarging...that we could move mountains...and dwell in a spacious house with endless horizons. "
David Whyte

Thank you for reading our newsletter. Please let us know if we can help ensure your success in any way. Please pass this newsletter along to as many people as you like. For more information about West Company, visit www.WestCompany.org or you can reach us at (707) 964-7571 or (866) 604-West (9378).