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Did you know?



The Centre's website has been re-designed!

Along with a fresh new look, you can now register for seminars and events online!

Click the "Seminars & Events" tab along the top to view the most recent listing.

Watch for new sessions starting this Fall!

Doing Business with Government

Federal

The federal government is one of the largest buyers of goods and services in Canada with over 15,000 different goods and services (commodities) purchased.

Goods contracts under \$5,000

Many federal departments do not use Public Works and Government Services Canada's (PWGSC) procurement or contracting services for goods contracts under \$5,000. Getting to know the material managers in the departments that need your goods or services, will probably enhance your chances of obtaining contracts.

Contracts under \$25,000

Promoting your goods and services to client departments should also help you in your chances to bid on opportunities valued at less than \$25,000 (\$10,000 for printing). When departments send PWGSC a requisition for goods or services, they also list suggested sources.

Tenders usually exceeding \$25,000 are advertised on MERX. To review some government tenders currently available, please visit: www.merx.com.

To register as a supplier or to learn more about doing business with the Federal Government, please visit www.buyandsell.gc.ca or contact the Office of Small and Medium Enterprises-Ontario Region (1-800-668-5378 or visit: www.pwgsc-tpsgc.gc.ca/ontario/osme-bpme).

Provincial

The Ontario Government buys a wide range of goods and services from businesses of all sizes and types. Learn how the government makes its buying decisions and how to do business with the government at: www.doingbusiness.mgs.gov.on.ca.

Local

From a local perspective, some contracts are purchased cooperatively by the Co-operative Purchasing Group of Waterloo Region (CPGWR). Tenders can be found on local agency websites, www.merx.com, www.opba.ca, and/or www.biddingo.com depending on which agency is leading the bid opportunity. For more information on local bid opportunities and the role of CPGWR, please visit: www.cpgwr.ca.

Happy Bidding!

Cambridge
50 Dickson St.
1st Floor
Cambridge, ON
N1R 5W8
T: 519 740 4615

Kitchener
200 King St. W
1st Floor
Kitchener, ON
N2G 4G7
T: 519 741 2604

Waterloo
100 Regina St. S
1st Floor
Waterloo, ON
N2J 4A8
T: 519 747 6265

Bidding Best Practices - A Checklist

You must:

- ✓ Read all terms and conditions thoroughly.
- ✓ Meet all mandatory requirements.
- ✓ Respond to all sections, regardless of points value (Note: not all evaluations are point-rated).
- ✓ Provide the number of copies of your proposal as requested in the solicitation document.
- ✓ Make sure that all certifications are included with the bid package if requested.
- ✓ Remember that the buyer, not the end-user or department, is your only point of contact during the bid process.
- ✓ Sign your proposal and make sure to fill in and sign all required elements (e.g. certifications)
- ✓ Follow the instructions completely and submit your proposal on time and to the right place. Failure to do the above could result in your bid being deemed non-responsive or non-compliant.

You should:

- ✓ Organize your offer so that it is complete, concise and precise.
- ✓ Include the following on the front page of your proposal:
 - The reference number you've assigned to the proposal for legal purposes;
 - Agency's file number and the date of your proposal; and
 - The name, address and phone number of your contact person.
- ✓ Write an executive summary and include a table of contents with page numbers.
- ✓ While responding to all criteria, be aware that some sections may carry more points in points-rated evaluations.
- ✓ Put your logo or business name on every page.
- ✓ Have fresh eyes do a quality review of your document before submitting it.
- ✓ After the contract has been awarded, ask the buyer for a debriefing.

Source: www.buyandsell.gc.ca

Writing Tips: Idioms and Clichés

The words you use, as well as the tone and connotation of those words, are important when appealing to your audience. An occasional idiom or cliché used for a specific purpose may pass, but a piece of writing littered with them is cause for concern.

An idiom can be an expression peculiar to a language, person or group of people. While one may use "a feather in your cap" to express pleasure in another's accomplishment, there may be some readers who don't know that the term means "an achievement to be proud of". A cliché "on the other hand" refers to a term made common by overuse such as "the complete picture".

Instead of idioms and clichés, use fresh, clear language. Where necessary, explain terms in a way that the reader can understand from context.

By: Carolyn Wilker, Fine Tune Editing, www.carolynwilker.ca

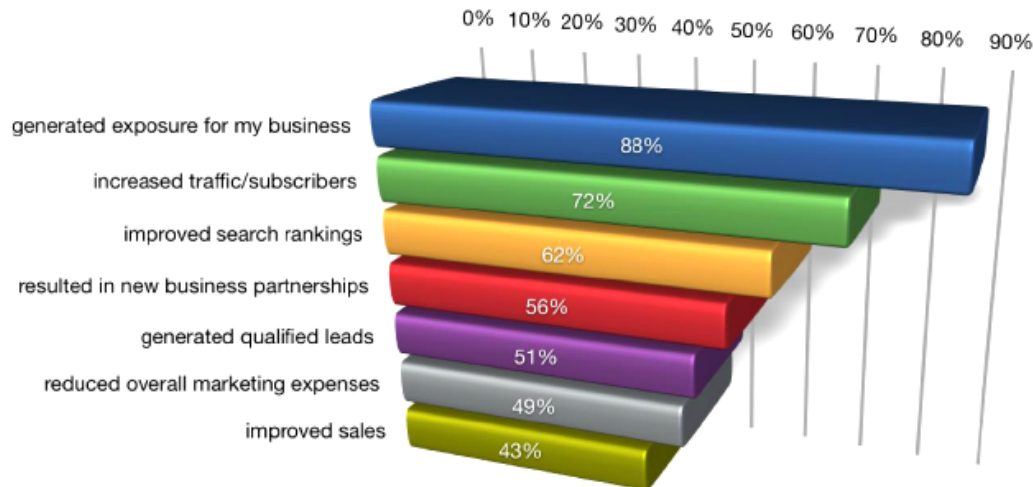
Five LinkedIn Tips To Try:

- 1. Use "Signal"** - lets you easily monitor updates within your network and filter information so you can weed through the noise.
- 2. Export your connections** - Under My Connections, at the bottom of the page click "Export Connections," which will put all this contact info in a format suitable for your address book (Microsoft Outlook, Yahoo! Mail, etc.).
- 3. Create a resume** - The Resume Builder will take some of the pain out of the resume building process. You can export the resume, share it easily, and edit as you wish.
- 4. Start and use groups** - You will find a wealth of relevant conversations within LinkedIn groups
- 5. Customize your URL** - Under "Edit Profile" tab and "Public Profile" at bottom left, click "Your Current URL". This is where you can customize your LinkedIn domain name so you can better brand your account.

Source: Fast Company, [5 LinkedIn Tips You Didn't Know](#), Amber Mac, June 6, 2011

Social Media as a Marketing Tool

In a recent Social Media Marketing Industry study by *Social Media Examiner*, they found that marketers using social media as part of their marketing efforts not only increased exposure of their businesses, but also increased traffic to their websites and generated qualified leads for their businesses.



A staggering 92% of marketers were using Facebook as part of their strategy while a slightly lower percentage were using Twitter and LinkedIn (84% and 71% respectively). Interestingly enough, small business owners tend to use LinkedIn more frequently to promote their businesses but that may correlate with who they are trying to reach. Facebook tends to be used more for Business to Consumer marketing efforts, whereas LinkedIn is used primarily for Business to Business. Twitter usage remained relatively the same regardless of the target market.

Source: 2011 Social Media Marketing Industry Report, www.socialmediaexaminer.com

Timing is everything

With over 700 million users on Facebook alone it is no secret that many consumers are using social media sites to engage, discuss and share information but we were interested in finding out how many small businesses were jumping on board as well.

Recently our Centre along with a few others in our Small Business Enterprise Network asked clients and small businesses in the community to complete a social media survey. Of the responses received, 71% said they used social networking sites regularly with majority spending more than 20 minutes on the sites per day.

When it came to frequency of use, Facebook won the toss by 49.7% connecting daily, whereas 20% used Twitter on a daily basis. LinkedIn, a professional networking site, was most likely to be used on a weekly basis.

Source: SBC Social Media Survey, November 2010

Timing Tips:



- Facebook: Weekends are best for content sharing
- Facebook: Sharing is most frequent between 10 a.m. and 12 noon
- Email: Best sent early in the morning
- Email: Newest subscribers pay the most attention but are more likely to unsubscribe if they don't like what they see
- Blogging: Weekends are best to encourage more commenting
- Twitter: Tweets seen late in the day and week are the most re-tweetable
- Twitter: To find out your most re-tweetable time, visit: <http://tweetwhen.com/>

Remember to connect often but try not to crowd your content so it's easily viewable.

Source: www.hubspot.com, Science of Time Webinar

Women in Business

The growing mompreneur trend is one that is offering many entrepreneurial mothers the balance needed to raise a family without putting a successful business career on hold.

In fact, Statistics Canada estimates that women account for 80 per cent of new business owners, and a large percentage of these women are moms. Industry figures show 70 per cent of mompreneurs are under the age of 40, while one in ten are in the 40-49 age bracket. Mompreneurs aged 50 years and older are the second largest demographic and account for 20 per cent of the segment, increasing at a rate of four per cent per year.

Tips for mompreneurs-to-be:

Do your homework – Leverage the wide array of resources and tools to learn what you need to know to set up your business, including setting up a business number, whether or not to incorporate the business and the potential tax implications, including Harmonized Sales Tax.

Weigh the lifestyle pros and cons – Think carefully about why you want to start your own business. While being your own boss can offer some flexibility compared to the corporate world, other sacrifices will need to be made over the first few years, including longer hours and potentially less cash flow, to ensure success.

Put a plan in place – Stress-test your idea and research your marketplace, including what the product and price point will be, who your audience is and what your sales targets will need to be to cover your cost.

Consult an expert – Speak to an accountant and a small business banker. Many bankers specialize in small business and can provide insight into setting up your business, market competition, personal and business finances and how they may change over time.

Source: Mompreneur Momentum BMO Says Moms in Business a Growing Force www.marketwire.com, June 13, 2011

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