Business FORWARD
Breakfast 2013
Tickets on sale Now!
Tuesday, April 2 | 7:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
ATLANTA MARRIOTT MARQUIS
Call 770-499-3228 or visit www.theedgeconnection.com

Social Media Stats

- 9 out of 10 Businesses Use Social Media. (Source: eMarketer) *What this means:* Most businesses are on social media in some form and will continue to improve their use of this platform. Therefore, to be competitive, you need to be there as well.
- Social Media Drives Sales. (Source: comScore) By providing platforms where customers discover information they need to make purchase decisions, social media supports the buying cycle. *What this means:* It’s important to be present on social media sites where your target audience congregates and seeks information. This is particularly true for LinkedIn and Pinterest.
- Pinterest Is the Best New Source of Traffic. (Source: Shareaholic) This has value for marketers using social media to drive lead generation. *What this means:* Put your product into visually alluring images and post them on your Pin boards.

TalkBack Poll
What’s the best way for a business to attract new clients?
- Advertising
- Social Media Campaign
- Networking
- Referrals
- Cold Calling
- Sale/Lowered Prices
- Business Website

Let us know by voting on The Edge Connection’s Facebook page. While you’re at it, please “like” The Edge Connection on Facebook! *For every 25 new fans, we will give away a $25 gift card to one of our randomly chosen fans!*

February’s Poll Results:
If you were given $10,000 to spend on your business, how would you spend it? *Social Media and Mobile Marketing*
Are You Prepared For the 1099-K?

While the Internal Revenue Service took measures last year to ease burdens placed on small businesses by 1099-K filing requirements, that form is still causing loads of stress.

"Small-business owners need to be prepared for the 1099-K form. It shows what their revenue for the past year has been. If the revenue figures reported by a business in their tax return do not match the 1099-K, it is a trigger for the IRS to issue an audit. As we all know, audits are no fun! So it is crucial to make sure your tax return numbers match your 1099-K," Outright.com CEO Steven Aldrich says.

Additionally, starting this month, payment processors have to withhold taxes at 28% for any small business that does not have a tax identification number. This is because they can't issue 1099-Ks to people without TINs, Aldrich says.

"As we can see, the 1099-K is just as crucial in 2013 as it was in 2012. It is imperative that small-business owners keep track of it and ensure their records are in order," he says a new job, or concentrate on their business, rather than on a tax form."

From the January 3, 2013 article by Laurie Kulikowski, "7 Biggest Small Business Trends in 2013" on www.thestreet.com

The Entrepreneur’s Wheel

"Creating and maintaining a successful business is akin to creating a wheel," says Costco member Brian Evans, author, former Radio host, CPA and personal financial specialist. "If you are missing a one-eighth section of a wheel, it will spin, but not well."

If you are contemplating starting your own business, or already run a business, Evans suggests focusing on eight essentials (IMPACT ME) to help your entrepreneur’s wheel spin smoothly.

IDEA Create a product or deliver a better service than your competition. Customers come to you because you are the best at what you deliver.

MARKETING Stay relevant with new forms of communication. Your business should have its own branding, and all of your employees should be able to articulate what it is that makes your business special.

PROFIT Greed may be a bad word, but profit is not. Find a way to qualitatively replicate your product or service so you can obtain adequate economies of scale.

ACCOUNTING Running a business without timely and accurate data is like flying a 747 in the clouds without and instrument panel.

CASH FLOW Not only must upfront financing be adequate, but lack of ongoing cash flow can destroy a business even when sales are high.

TIMING Support the evolution of your product or service model to adapt to changing times or your competitors will pass you by.

MANAGEMENT Great companies have strong leadership and vision for their customers, their employees and their business mission.

ENGINEERING Be ready to redesign your product or delivery systems for the inevitable problems that will surface.

To read the full version of the white paper from which this segment was taken, visit Evans’ website at www.brianevansceo.com.

Looking for a CASH INFUSION for your business?

AEO is accepting applications for the 2013 Citi Microentrepreneurship Awards (formerly Power of One Awards)

WIN UP TO $200,000 IN CASH!

Share your story and apply online today at www.aeoawards.com.

The SBA Celebrates Women’s History Month

The celebration of Women’s History Month gives us a chance to reflect on the important role women business owners play in our economy. In fact, woman-owned businesses represent one of the fastest-growing segments of the economy. According to the National Women’s Business Council, women-owned firms grew 44% from 1997 to 2007, twice as fast as male-owned firms. There are 7.8 million women-owned businesses in the US and 88% of these are small businesses. That is why all of us at the SBA are committed to helping women start and grow businesses.


The edge women’s business center
Empowering Women for Success

Win up to $200,000 in cash!
Success Story of the Month

Pamela Little

**ECO-WISE CIVIL DESIGN AND CONSULTING**

Little’s company, Eco-Wise Civil Design and Consulting is an engineering firm that provides site planning, grading, drainage, utility plans, hydrology studies, storm water runoff treatment design as well as other civil engineering and property due diligence services.

In business for over three years, Little has had the entrepreneurial spirit since adolescence. It was ultimately the recession that prompted her to begin her own business, “I was working for a firm that had about 60 people working there and it shrank to about 15 people. Going to work everyday was depressing, I wanted to start something new to give myself new opportunities and to create jobs for other talented design professionals.”

Little shares her thoughts on her changing description of success, “If someone had told me three years ago that I would have to work this hard for this little money I would have told them I was going back to my job. Fortunately I’ve had an amazing journey while growing my business. I have grown as a person, learned new skills, gained confidence in myself, and I feel like I am becoming the person I always wanted to be.

“I would definitely choose the “hard road” again. I am happier than I have ever been and each day brings a new experience.”

Little also shares how the coaching, training and support she received from The Edge Connection helped her to keep motivated when times were hard, “I would not have had the inner drive or the plan to start my business without The Edge Connection. I have shared the wisdom I learned from Jeff Packer in Plan for Profit with others, even things that I didn’t fully believe when I was still in class. I’m not sure I was capable of putting all my faith in myself before taking the Plan for Profit class. In fact, it still took over 2 years before I fully believed in my ability to make this work. The Edge Connection is a great resource for so many different types of business owners.” The tools Little received while working with The Edge Connection help her to be a competitive force in a traditionally male-dominated industry. She anticipates reaching her milestone of $100,000 in annual revenue this year.

Little offers a few pieces of advice to other entrepreneurs. She encourages business owners to “meet as many people as you can” and “limit your exposure to negativity and naysayers.” Her only regret is starting her business is that she didn’t do it five years sooner! Don’t delay! Let The Edge Connection help you fulfill your dreams of being in business for yourself.

Look for Pamela in the February/March 2013 issue of “The Georgia Engineer Magazine” in an article entitled “Engineering Entrepreneurship.”

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**Chat Us Up!**

We want to hear from you! We invite all readers to post their questions on our Facebook page. Experts will respond and advise and we will select several questions each month to publish in the next month’s newsletter.

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**March 2013**

**Classes | Workshops | Seminars**

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR INNOVATIVE, RELEVANT, AND INSPIRING CLASSES**

**Plan for Profit: Marketing for Success**

Begins March 11th for 4 consecutive weeks

Mon/Wed, 6-9 pm

Registration closes on March 6, 2013

**Straight Talk About Business Credit & Financing**

March 14, 3pm-6pm, $25

Registration closes on March 11th at 5pm

Facilitated by Lita Blount, Sr. Consultant, The Edge Connection

**Hot Topic of the Month – Breaking Through Barriers**

Thursday, March 21, 11:30 am-1:30pm, $35 (includes lunch)

**Go Viral: Developing a Social Media Plan**

March 28, 10am-4pm

$50

Max class size 15 - Hurry this class is hot!

**For event details, visit The Edge Connection’s website (www.theedgeconnection.com) and click the “Calendar” tab at the top of the page.**

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**Alumni : ReENGAGE**

The Edge Connections has SPECIAL ALUMNI RATES for 2013!

Contact Monique Wilson, Program Director for details: mwils101@kennesaw.edu

Be proactive, Stay Connected, Re-Engage!
IMPORTANT NOTICE

Edge Kitchen Clients MUST be ServSafe Certified

The Edge Kitchen requires that all kitchen users be ServSafe certified. The Cobb Board of Health will teach a ServSafe class and administer a ServSafe exam on Monday, March 11th and Tuesday, March 12th, at 8:15 am. The 2 day class will take place in the conference room of The Edge Kitchen, 2750 Jiles Rd, Suite 101, Kennesaw, GA 30144. The cost is $150, which will cover the book and exam. Payment must be by check or money order only and will be collected the first day of class.

Referral Incentive! Do you know anyone who might be interested in becoming a member of the Edge Kitchen? Call the Kitchen Manager today to find out how you can earn $50 and 10 extra hours towards your next kitchen usage purchase!

March (Cookie) Madness!

Try out this delicious GLUTEN-FREE sugar cookie recipe shared with Get Connected by Toul Argenti of 2B Whole.

**Gluten-Free Sugar Cookies**

Yield: 72 Cookies

Preheat oven to 400°F

Ingredients:

- 3 1/4 cups of gluten free flour mix
- 1 1/2 cups of sugar
- 2/3 cups of shortening or butter
- 2 eggs
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons xantham gum
- 4 tablespoons of milk
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Instructions

1. In a large bowl, measure all ingredients and add into a mixer bowl. At medium speed mix until well blended.
2. Shape dough into a ball; wrap with waxed paper; refrigerate for 2-3 hours until easy to handle.
3. Preheat oven to 400°F (375°F at The Edge Kitchen)
4. On lightly floured surface, roll half dough at a time. Keep the remaining dough refrigerated.
5. For crisp cookies roll paper thin; for softer cookies roll 1/8 inch to 1/4 inch thick
6. Use floured cookie cutters to cut dough into shapes
7. Roll dough trimmings and continue to cut into shapes.
8. Place cookies 1/2 " apart on greased cookie sheet.
9. To make a glaze: brush tops of cookies with milk or beaten egg white and water mixture.
10. Sprinkle cookies with toppings.
11. Bake 8 minutes or until very light brown.
12. Cookies can also be decorated once cooled.

What’s Cooking in the Kitchen?

Did you know about these great classes offered free of charge to Edge Kitchen clients? ($20/person for non-clients)

- Costing, Time Efficiency and Management: Time lines, Prep Lists, Mise en Place (Organization), and Purchasing
  - Saturday, March 9th, 2013, from 12pm - 2pm in The Edge Kitchen Conference Room.
- Catering Fundamentals
  - Saturday, April 6th at 12pm - 2pm, in The Edge Kitchen Conference Room.

Now Trending

Gluten-Free Foods

Americans will spend an estimated $7 billion this year on foods labeled gluten-free, according to the market research firm Mintel.

The University of Maryland Center for Celiac Research estimates that approximately 6% of the U.S. population, or 18 million people, suffers from gluten sensitivity.

Check out this month’s recipe for gluten-free sugar cookies!