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Direction for Business

June 2011

Chamber Connector's

The Chamber Connector program is accepting applications. The deadline is June 24, 2011. Contact Rhonda at 382.9210 or rveleba@gichamber.com for more information.

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The Future for Nebraska Education

A Message from your Chamber President

I admit to being intimidated. After spending two days last week attending the Effective Educator Summit – Vision 2020, I am convinced the world is moving too fast for me, especially from a technological perspective! You'll learn why as you read on.

The 64 Summit attendees were presented with a two-part challenge: 1) review the current and trending information relative to Nebraska Public Schools; and 2) contribute to a dialogue on the changes necessary within the educational system and teacher instruction programs to meet the challenges faced by the State. Representatives from the business community were invited to the table to share ideas and concerns relating to the current education delivery model and the resultant impacts on business. We appreciated the invitation.

Consider for a moment the following demographic information:

- Of the 251 school districts in Nebraska, 137 have less than 390 students.
- McPherson County has only 83 students while Omaha has 48,796.
- Of the State's 298,314 students in preK-12 grade, 41% qualify for free and reduced price lunch; 6.5% qualify as an English Language Learner and 16% require special education services.
- 66% of all jobs will require some post-secondary training beyond high school.

These changing dynamics would suggest that reformulating the educational services delivery systems in Nebraska is warranted. I don't envy the Commissioner of Education; this is a massive institutional undertaking requiring the commitment of numerous stakeholders. Grand Island will be well-represented during the ensuing conversations; Bill Mowinkel with Northwest High School and Lynn Cronk, Member of the State Board of Education. The business community is

President
Cindy Johnson

fortunate; both Bill and Lynn recognize the important link between education and economic development.

Sarah Arnold
Mary Berlie
Janell Folkerts
Rhonda Veleba
Micki Ward

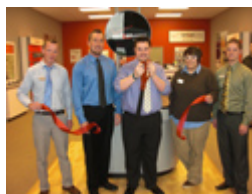
Now, let me share three examples that contributed to my urge to enroll in information technology classes.

- One study suggests that by 2015 tools and automation will eliminate 25 percent of labor hours associated with IT services. As the IT services industry matures, it will increasingly mirror other industries, such as manufacturing, in transforming form a craftsmanship to a more industrialized model. This new paradigm brings with it the potential to transform the industry from a high-touch custom environment to one characterized by automated delivery of IT services. As a result, productivity levels for service providers will increase, leading to reductions in their costs of delivery.
- By 2015, 10 percent of your online 'friends' will be non-human. By 2015, efforts to systematize and automate social engagement (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) will result in the rise of social bots – automated software agents that can handle interaction with communities of users in a manner personalized to each individual.
- TelePresence, a set of technologies which enable people in distributed locations to collaborate as if they were in the same room (and, in fact, give the appearance of being present) will change the way we 'meet'. Cisco projects the worldwide revenue opportunity for telepresence and related services will reach \$5 billion by the fifth year of the offering. Network and service revenue in the first five years are estimated at \$3.8 billion, 45% for services and 55% for connectivity.

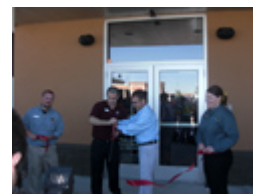
While these examples are simply illustrations of possibilities, they do cause one to realize that increased Internet-based education, further erosion of employee soft skills, and the reduction of face to face conferences and Summits might become our new reality. See you in IT class.



Sam & Louie's invited the Connectors to a ribbon cutting on May 6, 2011 to celebrate their opening and new Chamber partnership.



Z-Wireless invited the Connectors to a ribbon cutting on May 13, 2011 to celebrate their new Chamber partnership.



Buffalo Wild Wings invited the Connectors to a ribbon cutting on May 31, 2011 to celebrate their opening and new Chamber partnership.



Big Island Diner invited the Connectors to a ribbon cutting on May 27, 2011 to celebrate their new Chamber partnership.



Gelous Nails invited the Connectors to a ribbon cutting on May 13, 2011 to celebrate their new Chamber partnership.



Sylvan Learning Center celebrated their relocation with a ribbon cutting on May 20, 2011.



Super Bowl celebrated their recent bar renovation with a ribbon cutting on May 12, 2011.

Tom Dinsdale with the Ticket to Ride winner, Verna Galloway, at Business After Hours, May 26, 2011.

Ticket to Ride Business After Hours at Tom Dinsdale Automotive, May 26, 2011.



Chamber Annual Golf Outing

The Grand Island Chamber of Commerce's 18th Annual Chamber Golf Outing is sponsored by Chief Industries, Credit Management and Tom Dinsdale Automotive.

Event information is as follows:

Friday, July 29, 2011
Indianhead Golf Club
18-hole, best shot scramble
1 p.m. shotgun start
Golfer check-in starts at noon

- \$80 per person (if received by July 8)
\$85 per person July 9 or later
- Payment required by July 15
- Last day to cancel with refund is July 15
- Limited to 136 golfers
- Team entries will be accepted or we can assign foursomes
- Golf registration includes: 18 holes of golf, cart, burger & brat buffet, one free putt in the putting contest, free

beverages (one each) from H & H Distributing, Nebraskaland Distributors and Pepsi Bottling Group

- Contact Micki Ward at 382-9210 or mward@gichamber.com to register today!

2011 flag sponsors:

Bank of the West
Bolles Heating and Air
Case IH
Doane College
Eakes Office Plus
Family EyeCare Center, PC
Five Points Bank
Freddy's Frozen Custard
Gary Thompson Agency
Global Industries
Hayes Home Improvement
Home Federal Bank
JBS Swift
Nebraska State Fair
Saint Francis Medical Center
Sunheat International
Tiffany Square

Business After Hours open to all Chamber partners starting at 5:15 p.m. Cost is \$10 if attending only the Business After Hours for the meal.

We have fantastic raffle prizes; tickets may be purchased at Indianhead Golf Club during the event, or at the Chamber prior to the date. Prices are \$2 for 1, \$5 for 3, or \$10 for 7 tickets.

2011 raffle sponsors:

Associated Staffing, Inc.
Buffalo Wild Wings
Central Community College
Great Lakes Airlines
Indianhead Golf Club
McDermott and Miller, P.C., CPAs
Midwest Outdoors
Paul Davis Restoration
Rejuvenation Salon
Z-Wireless

Thank you to all of our sponsors for your support!

10 Amazing Online Tools

by Micki Ward

Today's fast moving business world makes it vital to stay up to date with the latest and greatest tools designed to help you survive and thrive. While there are great ways to achieve success utilizing professionals in the field, there may not always be a line item in a company budget dedicated to all of your business' needs. For those businesses short on money and willing to do the work, here is a top 10 list of FREE online tools!

1. Craigslist – A known classified site to sell or buy furniture, kid's items, items for businesses or even a car. Craigslist can also be used to post job listings for a company, totally free of charge. Check it out at www.craigslist.com
2. Doodle – Scheduling meetings between multiple individuals can be difficult at best. Doodle offers an easy scheduling alternative and also allows users to connect calendars to keep track of meeting requests. This site is fun and very easy to use www.doodle.com.
3. Log Me In – This site allows remote access to computers with a free download! Remote control of a user's computers allows desktop access from anywhere. Log Me In also can also start a sleeping computer. Go visit www.logmein.com!
4. Mint – A financial online site that does a little bit of everything. At www.mint.com users are able to categorize transactions, set budgets and keep track of savings goals.
5. Phixr – Phixr is an online photo editing software made for easy use and navigation. Some of the things users can do on this site include resize images, take out red eye and even change the coloring and brightness. Find a fun photo and go check it out at www.phixr.com!
6. Policy Map – This online site is extremely versatile and fun for data lovers out there. This site allows users to access data maps for analysis in addition to providing geographic information and indicators that pull trends from local neighborhoods. Policy map can also create reports for a specific area using their mapping software. One more perk from this site is that users can load collected data and make an interactive map for a website. Visit www.policymap.com.
7. Survey Monkey – Survey Monkey is an easy way to collect data from customers! Users can create and publish custom online surveys. The survey results are formed into easily readable charts www.surveymonkey.com.
8. Weebly – This drag and drop website builder is extremely user friendly. They offer hosting (for a charge), a large variety of professional website themes, easy blogging, professional support and multimedia features. Weebly knows how to make building a website easy. www.weebly.com.
9. You Send It – This file sharing site allows users to share files up to 50MB with the free version and have a maximum download of 100. When a file is too large to email, try out www.yousendit.com.

10. Yugma – Yugma is a web conferencing site that allows anyone, anywhere to instantly share their desktop and ideas online with others. With Yugma's free package, users can invite up to 2 attendees for up to 15 minutes! Start conferencing today at www.yugma.com.

There are many more wonderful free online tools available. Choosing the top 10 was challenging. Go ahead...check them out. What do you have to lose?

Multi-Tasking

by Mary Berlie

Why is it there is never enough time in the day? Is life truly that busy or is it our time management skills? I, as many other people, am a self-proclaimed "multitasker"; I have this overwhelming power to be able to perform numerous tasks at the same time. As I write this article, my brain and body drift to my incoming email, Tailgate with Dr. Tom reservations, facebook status updates, a ringing phone and vacuuming my living room. A seemingly simple article has taken approximately 2 days and 45 minutes to write... Although, I am very busy during the work day, by not giving 100% attention to one task at a time, I am proving to be inefficient. Studies show multitasking is incredibly deadly to productivity, taking away key components of focus and attention to the task at hand.

Below are a few quick tricks to funnel focus, improve productivity, and keep the boss happy!

1. Admit multitasking is bad! Acknowledge a lack of efficiency.
2. Organize a to-do list according to priority every morning. Whether using sticky notes or a blackberry that automatically synchs to your calendar...write it down! It will feel good to be able to cross off tasks as they are completed.
3. Pay attention to the boring and tedious tasks too. These chores might not be the highlight of the day, but by giving them full attention you are more likely to complete the objective faster.
4. Check email on a schedule. Productivity decreases when each email is answered as it is received. Turn off email notifications and try to limit checking your account to 2-4 times per day. In an emergency situation people will call your office or cell phone.
5. Piles of "to-do" documents can be overwhelming. Start at the top of the stack and work down. "Touch" the job once and complete it 100%.

Following these tips can be difficult, as life truly is busy. However, doing so can increase satisfaction and lessen stress.

Now that I have armed you with these helpful tips I have to answer my emails, call my mom and possibly paint my finger nails...

New Chamber Partners

June 2011

Auto Fleet
Mike Westerby
3426 West Capital Avenue
Grand Island, NE 68803
308.675.1490

Big Island Diner
Tonia Reeser
2028 East Highway 30
Grand Island, NE 68801
308.384.1991

Midwest Outdoors
Andy Leighty
1719 Aspen Circle
Suite 1
Grand Island, NE 68803
308.675.1717

Napolis Italian Restaurant
Luke Mize
3421 Conestoga Drive
Grand Island, NE 68803
308.675.1771

Quality Cleaning Plus
April Hardy
PO Box 291
Wolbach, NE 68882
308.380.7823

U-Haul Moving & Storage
William Jensen
1730 South Locust
Grand Island, NE 68801
308.384.2877

Winfrey Plumbing & Heating Inc.
Nick Winfrey
808 West North Front Street
Grand Island, NE 68801
308.382.2692

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