



The Link

to Supplier Diversity

Indiana's Minority & Women's Business Enterprises Division

December 2013

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Business Voice: Black and White Investments (BWI)

Black and White Investments (BWI) was started in 2005 when Gary Hobbs and his wife became involved in real estate investment.

They started out by buying an apartment complex here or a strip mall there, until in 2009, they found their niche in affordable housing.

BWI's core business is as an urban development company. They focus on multifamily affordable housing that serves special need populations such as seniors, those needing assisted living, single parents looking to get their education, etc.

"The brick and mortar allows us to pay our bills, but impacting lives and leaving a legacy is what we're all about," said Mr. Hobbs.

The Hobbs family takes a listening approach to development, putting more emphasis on the service aspect. They try to create a beautiful facility with the engagement of the community. Mr. Hobbs' ultimate goal is to positively impact the lives of his tenants and to make the community a better place to live.

While striving to reach his goal, Mr.

Hobbs faces many challenges as a business owner. The challenging part about running his business is structuring new real estate that creates a balance between making a profit for his business and what works for the community and his potential tenants.

Recently, Mr. Hobbs had to face a greater challenge when there was a fire at one of his business properties. Thankfully no one was hurt as a result of the fire.

In 2013 BWI was awarded the MBE firm of the year by the mayor of Indianapolis at the Indiana Black Expo. BWI also had the honor of being ranked 16th in the nation in Fortune magazine.

The Hobbs are focused on improving their 33 employees' training and development.



Mr. Gary Hobbs
Black and White Investments

Continued on pg. 3...

Nominate a Business for the 2014 National Small Business Week Awards

By: *ngoriel, SBA.gov Community Moderator*
Posted Nov. 21, 2013 2:06 p.m.

Are you a small business owner with an amazing success story to tell? If so, submit your nomination today for the 2014 National Small Business Week Awards. Nominations are currently being accepted online at <http://nationalsmallbusinessweek.sba.gov/>.

For more than 50 years, National Small Business Week has recognized the outstanding achievements of America's small businesses for their contributions in their local communities, and to our nation's

economy. Winners will be announced during National Small Business Week – May 12-16, 2014.

Are you the next winner? Apply online today: <http://nationalsmallbusinessweek.sba.gov/>. In addition to the portal, nominations can also be sent directly to SBA District Offices, which can be located online at district offices. All nominations must be submitted online, postmarked or hand delivered to the SBA no later than 11:59 p.m. ET on January 17, 2014.



6 Ideas to Turn Your Customer Holiday Gifts Into a Marketing Tool

By: Rieva Lesonsky, *SBA.gov Guest Blogger*

Posted Dec. 3, 2013 11:55 a.m.

Hopefully you've already created your annual customer and client holiday gift list. Whether they've been naughty or nice, all clients should get recognized in this holiday ritual. But how can you make your holiday gifts do double duty—not only as a “thank you” for the past year’s business, but also as a marketing tool to encourage more business in the new year? Here are some ideas.

With these simple tips, you can turn holiday business gifts into the gift that keeps on giving—giving you more business, that is.

①

Remind them of you

The simplest way to make your holiday gift a marketing tool is to choose a promotional product with your company’s name and/or logo on it. But for best results, make sure it’s something your client will actually use—ideally, in a setting when they’ll be thinking about buying what you sell. Also make sure it matches your brand and is relevant to your business.

② Personalize it

A promotional product with your logo isn't the only way

to put your personal touch on a corporate gift. For instance, if you own a graphic design business, you could design your own wrapping paper or gift boxes for your gifts (be sure to add a label that says you designed it!). This way, you're subtly reminding clients of your talents while they open your gift. If you own an interior design firm, you could make gift wrap or ribbons out of leftover fabric swatches. You get the idea.

③ Give what you make or sell

This not only saves money because you're using your own inventory, but also reminds the client of your quality product. Every time the client drinks a cup of coffee made with your fresh-roasted beans, uses your handmade stationery or puts his iPad in your leather case, he'll be reminded why he does business with you.

④ Deliver your gifts by hand

If your clients are local, make an impact by delivering your holiday gifts yourself. Make a brief appointment so you're not interruptive, and spend the time catching up with the client. Don't make this a hard-sell sales call, but listen for cues as to how you may be able to help them in the future.

⑤ Give the gift of time

Instead of giving a physical gift, take key clients out to breakfast or coffee—something brief that provides a break in their busy days, but also gives you time to reconnect. You'll stand out from the crowd of social media connections by simply being present in real life, and you'll be top of mind when the client turns to next year's budget.

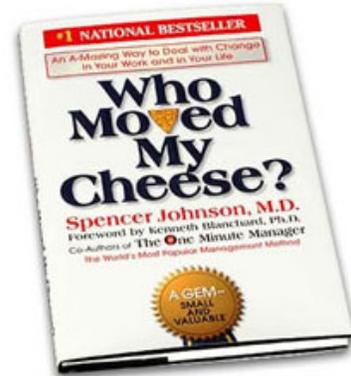
⑥ Give the gift of information

A business book or magazine subscription that's relevant to your client's industry, challenges and interests shows you put some thought into what will help her get ahead in the coming year. Plus, you can follow up later by asking the client how she likes the book and why you thought it might be helpful to her...seguing nicely into how your business might be helpful as well. And if you've procrastinated, this is a quick and easy gift.

Business Reads

"Who Moved My Cheese"

Dr. Spencer Johnson



This is a brief tale of two mice and two humans who live in a maze and one day are faced with change: someone moves their cheese. Reactions vary from quick adjustment to waiting for the situation to change by itself to suit their needs. This story is about adjusting attitudes toward change in life, especially at work. Change occurs whether a person is ready or not, but the author affirms that it can be positive.



Happy Holidays

The Indiana Minority and Women's Business Enterprises Division office will be closed Tuesday, December 24; Wednesday, December 25 and Wednesday, January 1 for the state holidays.

Subcontractor & Other Bidding Opportunities

Project Name	Due Date	Contact Information
SRC Bike Storage Addition - Bid Number B0022651	Tuesday, Dec. 10	Indiana State University Scott Tillman Phone: (812) 237-8198 scott.tillman@indstate.edu
Purdue University Softball Stadium	Thursday, Dec. 12	Weigand Construction Phone: (260) 490-7449 Fax: (260) 490-6449 rlough@weigandconstruction.com

Congratulations to the Certified MWBEs

Tools for Success: The Myth of Certification...

By: Terrie Daniel, MWBE Deputy Commissioner

Many businesses have the mind-set that once they are "certified" they will be inundated with contracting opportunities from the entities they have been certified with, but that is a myth that has to be dispelled.

You should look at minority-, women- and veteran-owned business certification as only one aspect included in your business' overall marketing tool-kit. Your desire as a business owner should be to have a great business model providing a quality product, service or supply and then be able to mention "oh by the way, I happen to be a certified vendor."

Secondly, you have to be prepared and make sure your business has the capacity to handle the opportunities you are seeking. Be realistic and don't try to grow too quickly.



Terrie Daniel
MWBE Deputy Commissioner

You can quickly go out of business by trying to take on what you don't have the capacity to handle.

Remember, your product and pricing has to be better than your competitor, period! Yes, it is great to be certified and there are many benefits that come along with your certification but ultimately, your success is up to you and not based on your status as a certified vendor.

Also, once you land the big contract, it's important to perform well. Good news travels fast and bad news travels even faster. Just like always, word of mouth is the best form of marketing a business can have and it can help you or harm your business quicker than anything else.

Happy Holidays to each of you and may you prosper and be fulfilled in all you do!



Business Voice Cont...

"We think what it'll be a competitive advantage if we can be more strategic on how we develop our people in all aspects of technical skills and soft skills including leadership and project management," said Mr. Hobbs.

Looking into the coming years, BWI is trying to get an understanding of the new health care law. The Hobbs family is currently providing health care for all of their employees and wish to continue doing so.

They are expecting big things for their business in 2014. BWI hopes to create more jobs and have a larger impact in the community in the coming years.

Business Q&As

Q: What might someone be surprised to know about you?

A: They may be surprised to know I'm a pianist. I'm been playing since elementary school.

Q: What is your personal philosophy when running your business?

A: My personal philosophy in handling business is God first, wife and family next and then business and other things after that.

Q: When you're not running your business, what are you doing instead, or what would you like more time to do?

A: My wife and I both like to travel and enjoy playing golf. Visiting Australia, Israel, and Africa are still on my bucket list.

Certified M/WBEs

Thomas & Reed, LLC E. Thomas (317) 920-2800 sreed@trllc-cpa.com	M/WBE	Central Asbestos Services, LLC Rudy Funez (317) 755-3417 rudyfunez@casofindy.com	MBE
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Certified MBEs

America's Finest Filters, Inc. Michael White (502) 587-1937 mwhite@americasfinestfilters.com	MBE	Durkin & Villalta Partners Engineering Alvaro Villalta (317) 472-3883 avillalta@dvpe.net	MBE
Aristocrat Limousine Service, Inc. Paul Harris (317) 923-5351 shaun_harris@sbcglobal.net	MBE	Fairfield Service Company of Indiana, LLC Krishna Murarka (219) 872-3000 smurarka@powerdrive.com	MBE
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C3 Billing Services, LLC Charles Lopez, III (317) 695-4997 C3BillingServicesLLC@gmail.com	MBE	Prestige Cleaning Service Kenneth Stringer (317) 603-1705 kstring79@att.net	MBE

Congratulations to the Certified MWBEs

Certified MBEs Continued

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Certified WBEs

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Pay Audit System Training
for Prime & MWBE Subcontractors
December 11
1p.m.-3p.m.
Indiana Government Center South

Certification Clinic
for minority & women-owned businesses
December 18
1p.m.-3p.m.
Indiana Government Center South

- ACROSS**
- 2 Qualifies MBE/WBEs for subcontracting opportunities on state contracts
 - 3 One that competes with another
 - 5 On the bucket list of the BWI owner
 - 9 The ability or power to contain, absorb, or hold
 - 10 A day of special celebration
- DOWN**
- 1 Commonly known as the best marketing
 - 4 Communicating the value of a product
 - 6 Author of Who Moved My Cheese
 - 7 Different
 - 8 A legendary story



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