

The ESSEX FREE PRESS BUSINESS

Small Business 101

Helping you keep your business resolutions for 2007

As a successful entrepreneur, you have already, no doubt, created an action plan for the New Year. But without proper planning and organization, even the most well thought out plans can go undone. To help you start the year off right, CFIB offers the following resolutions to help you stay on track:

Grow your business. Take advantage of local small business associations, such as CFIB, government organizations such as the Canada Business Service Centers, and local colleges also offer tips and programs that can help develop business and marketing plans.

Look at recurring costs. Look over phone bills, stationery and office costs, vehicle costs, postage, electricity, etc. Update your office equipment and business software. Find savings just by converting to energy saving equipment and proper lighting.

Perform a backup of computer systems. Whether you back up data weekly or not at all, you need to take time and commit to maintaining your computer systems. Invest in a CD burner or USB key. Make a copy of

your data files and store them properly.

Update contact information and maintain business relationships by making the effort to revitalize your business network. Successful entrepreneurs network with customers, vendors, trade groups, industry specific groups, friends, other business owners, etc.



Get mobile. Investing in a mobile device such as a laptop will help you break free from your desk.

Get invoices into shape. Send out outstanding invoices right away and begin the year by keeping proper records.

Trim down your inbox. Now is the perfect time to get your inbox into shape. Handle each e-mail only once; make a decision as to what to do with it and where

to put it.

Upgrade your skills. Try e-learning. CFIB members and their employees have free access to a wide variety of e-learning courses through Vubiz and discounted courses available through the e-learning coalition. Upgrading your skills is essential to surviving in today's fast-paced, ever

changing business environment and when you take time to learn something new, you are only adding value to your business.

Promote your business. Advertise. Send out cards/e-cards, newsletters/e-newsletters, special offers, etc.

Give back to your community. Find a cause that matters to you and devote a couple of hours a month. Serve on a committee, be a

mentor, volunteer, or make regular donations to the groups in your community.

Put time for yourself on the calendar. Set realistic goals. Learn how to delegate. Make sure your business processes are written down and that you have someone to back you up.

Small business owners know that expansion and growth are essential to a successful business. Now is the perfect time to review and reflect over the past years' business decisions. Know what is working. Know what isn't and make 2007 the time to change it. We wish you continued success with your business in 2007.

Small Business 101 is an information service provided by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. It is not intended to replace legal and/or accounting advice.



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8th International Repetitive Strain Injury Awareness Day

An event to mark the 8th annual International RSI Awareness Day will be held from 10:30 a.m. till 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 28 at Holiday Inn Select, located at 1855 Huron Church Road, Windsor.

The sponsoring RSI Awareness Day Committee is comprised of the Windsor Occupational Health Service, Workers Health and Safety Centre, Ergonomic Consulting Group, Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers, Industrial Accident Prevention Association, Windsor and Essex District Labour

Council, Ontario Network of Injured Workers' Group, Ontario Nurses' Association, and the Canadian Auto Workers Union.

During the full-day program, an open panel discussion will define the scope of the Ministry of Labour's recent "Strains & Pains" campaign and learn about the guidelines that will be affecting workplaces. In addition, the sponsoring organizations will conduct five 30-minute interactive presentations throughout the day.

RSIs are a category of musculoskeletal injuries involving soft tissues of the

body by over-use or misuse. Any combination of risk factors including repetition, awkward or fixed postures, forceful movements or insufficient rest time can lead to overuse of some part of the body.

This event is an excellent opportunity for workplace Joint Health and Safety Committees to make the most of their regular meeting time and learn about the new impending 'Musculoskeletal Disorder Prevention Guidelines' and additional resources available," said Rolly Marentette, chairperson of the Windsor RSI Awareness Committee.

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