



"Your guide to doing business with the City of Philadelphia"

**November
2005**

In this Issue:

Page 1

· **“Observations from 20 Year Veterans”**
By Michael P Williams, Esq.

Page 2

· **Featured Vendor of the Month:**
ZigZag.net Inc.

Page 3

· **MBEC Employee of the Month:**
Karen Cromwell, Data Services Support Clerk
· **MBEC Events and Workshops**

Page 4 - 5

· **Events and Workshops**

Page 6

· **What is the Mayor’s Business Action Team (MBAT)?**
· **Certification Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) By Kathy Padilla, MBE Specialist II**

Page 7

· **Certification Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) continued...**
· **“Know your Rights”**
By Brigitte Daniel, Esq.,
MBEC Compliance Officer

Page 8

· **“Know Your Rights” continued...**

Observations from 20 Year Veterans
By Michael P Williams, Esq.

Sometimes, it seems that if you place 10 business owners in a room at the same time, you’ll get TWENTY different responses to the following question: “How do you become successful in business?”

As many of you know, MBEC just hosted, as part of MED WEEK, a forum for minority and women entrepreneurs who have been in business for 20 years or more. It was a fascinating program that we wrote about it in last month’s newsletter. These amazing individuals shared much valuable information with the audience; they received rave reviews!

I got a chance to speak with many of the speakers after the event. While they all chose different paths to success, there was a common thread to their collective words of wisdom:

- Keep your personal credit clean!
- Initial under-capitalization is a major reason for business failure.
- Cash flow is, perhaps, the most crucial management task.
- Business plans are ESSENTIAL!
- Get legal advice before you start your business!
- Find a means to keep updated on all the laws and regulations governing your business – this includes laws governing personnel issues!
- Join trade organizations.
- NEVER get too busy to count your own money!
- ALWAYS know what’s going on financially in your business; NOTHING is too complicated!
- Focus on developing evangelists instead of on sales (i.e., create cheerleaders from your customers).



Some of you may be surprised to know that there are many businesses which do not adhere to the above seemingly basic business tenets. As MBEC begins a new era of partnership with the Mayor’s Business

Action Team (please read the article on MBAT on page 6), together we hope to provide all MBEC-certified vendors with their own personal recipes for success.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Q. How long have you been in business?

A. 8 years

Q. What made you start your business or type of business?

A. There was a market opportunity, we gathered the correct skill sets and built a business (<http://www.zigzag.net>). Zigzag's professional services include Web application development, digital media development, and full service marketing.

Q. Are you currently doing business with the City of Philadelphia?

A. Yes

Q. What type of goods and services do you provide to the City?

A. We provide full service marketing services, web application development and technology services. We provide a number of services to other cities and government organizations such as Camden NJ, Wilmington DE, Philadelphia Housing Authority, New Castle County Police, Atlantic City Airport and the South Jersey Transit Authority. We've also developed the web sites for a number of local city non-profits including the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Flower Show, the Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board, The Marian Anderson Award, Graduate Philadelphia and the Center City District. We developed the new logo for the Philadelphia Housing Authority, their website and their most recent annual report.

Q. With what City department have you worked?

A. We provide complete marketing services to the health department and we are providing web application development services to the police department. We have also provided services to the Airport and we are the original designers of the Philadelphia International Airport logo.

Q. Has MBEC been helpful to you in getting business, retaining business, getting paid or resolving a problem?

A. MBEC has been helpful in keeping us up-to-date with opportunities and helping us to understand how City contracts work. Their willingness to support our business efforts has been extremely reliable and consistent.

Q. What was your most recent project for the City?

We have been awarded the health department marketing services contract for 2005 and 2006 and we are currently providing web application development services to the police department.

Q. What was the most difficult element of doing business with the City?

A. Doing business with any large organization requires an understanding of how they do business.

Q. How has doing business with the City enhanced you or your business development?

A. City business has enabled Zigzag to positively affect the city that is our home. We feel a sense of pride knowing that the impact of our work affects many Philadelphians.

Q. What would you recommend to others who are going into business?

A. Every new business needs Money, Marketing and Management. Plan before you jump in and make sure you have the time and stamina to give it your all.

Q. What would you recommend to others who are interested in doing business with the City?

A. Understand the dynamics of the City, be patient and flexible.

Q. How long should a person wait to pursue City business?

A. If you have a product or service to offer the City, don't wait - go for it.

MBEC Employee of the Month: Karen Cromwell, Data Services Support Clerk

Karen Cromwell has dedicated five plus (5+) years of her professional life to MBEC where she has worked to increase the contract opportunities for Women, Minority, and Disabled Business Enterprises (M/W/DS-BEs). Mrs. Cromwell started in the Management Information System Unit as a Data Service Support Clerk. In this unit she kept track of all city department contracts in ACIS.

In addition to the above tasks, Mrs. Cromwell assists staff with minor computer technical problems and helps other MBEC Units including the Special Projects Unit.

Currently, Mrs. Cromwell is working full time in the Certification Unit where she completes and distributes certification letters and correspondence. She also assists in the training of new temporary certification employees.

Congratulations, Mrs. Cromwell, you are “MBEC’s Employee of the Month”! Keep up the hard work and dedication.

MBEC Events and Workshops

The Minority Business Enterprise Council presents

“Understanding the Certification Process Workshop”

**Do you have questions about the NEW certification process and application that you need answered?
Do you know what you need to become a “Certified Vendor” with the City of Philadelphia?**

If so, you should attend either workshop:

When: Monday, December 12, 2005

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Location: Municipal Services Building, 1401 JFK Blvd
16th Floor, Room C

SEATING IS LIMITED !

TO RSVP, please contact LaShawnda Ellison @ (215) 686-3872



Please Touch Museum City Project

XPOGRAPHIQ and the City of Philadelphia are working on the redesigning and reconstruction of Philadelphia’s “Please Touch Museum” for children.

They will need creative engineers, cabinet builders, artists, and other creative individuals and contractors.

Stay on tuned to this newsletter and our website for updates and other important facts about this and **ALL** other City of Philadelphia Projects



New Jobs & Money Virtual Community

Jobs & Money is building a **NEW** virtual community that is designed to help professionals and entrepreneurs work together, share news and information, and connect to more opportunities. Most of the resources, data sources and events are **FREE** and open to the public. You are invited to attend and participate.

You can visit <http://www.jam-network.com> to see more about the network.

View the latest online edition of Jobs & Money at <http://www.jobsandmoney.com/101005.htm>

U.S Small Business Administration 8(A) Business Development Program

Do you want to learn how to become 8 (A), HUBZONE, and SDB certified?

When:

Thursday, December 15, 2005

Where:

**U.S. Small Business Administration
Robert N. C. Nix Federal Building
900 Market Street, 5th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107**

To register, please contact John Banks @ 215-580-2711 or e-mail him at john.banks@sba.gov or register on line at

<http://www.sba.gov/pa/phil/philregistration>

To sign up, click on the link for seminar, scroll down and select “8 (A) Business Development Program Orientation.” Then fill in the requested information and click “submit”.

Sign in time is 8:45 a.m.

Orientation begins **PROMPTLY** at 9:00 a.m., please arrive early because of security checks in the lobby.

BRING PHOTO I.D. for security purposes.

Covad-PDP partnership helping microentrepreneurs take advantage of the Internet to build their businesses

One of the core components of Philadelphia Development Partnership’s services is **technical training**. Most microentrepreneurs believe that the most important technical skill in today’s business world is computer literacy. Computer literacy can equate to writing a business plan, ordering supplies from vendors and communicating with existing or prospect customers. PDP has computer labs in Center City Philadelphia and in the City of Chester offices to teach microentrepreneurs about computer hardware and software.

For more information, please visit www.pdp-inc.org or call (215) 545-3100.

ATTENTION MBEC VENDORS:

PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT MBEC HAS YOUR ACCURATE CONTACT INFORMATION.



Events and Workshops continued...

Mapping Pennsylvania Communities: An Introduction to GIS and Community Analysis Workshop - One Day Only

Do you want to learn:

- 👍 The fundamentals of using ArcGIS (ArcView 9.1)
- 👍 How to use the Census of Population and Housing for specific community analysis
- 👍 How to map the demographic data of your clientele

If so, attend this 1 (one) day workshop on October 25th and 26th, 2005 @ 8:30 a.m. - 4:30p.m.
New Horizons Computer Learning Center
Five Parkway Center, Suite 200, Pittsburgh, PA 15220
Fee: \$399, Checks, Credit Cards and Purchase Orders are accepted

To register visit www.urban-research.info or call
(877) 241-6576

Community Capital Works Peer Lending Program

Open House Information Sessions-**FREE ADMISSION**

IN PHILADELPHIA:

Location

First District Plaza
3801 Market Street, Room 201
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Time

Thursdays - 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
December 1 & 15

**For more information or to register, please contact
Tessa Freeman-Anderson at (215) 545-3100**

CCPA Restaurant , Retail & Hospitality Committee
Presents

CCPA's NETWORKING DINNER

Monday, December 5, 2005

Prime Rib

1701 Locust Street

6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Dinner will start **promptly at 6:00**

Here you will be given the opportunity to:

- 👍 Exchange business cards
- 👍 Meet and make new contacts
- 👍 Enjoy a delicious meal

If you are looking for a less structured networking event - CCPA's Networking Dinners are your answer.

\$40 for CCPA Members, \$50 for non-members

Includes appetizer, entrée, dessert, coffee and tea, a glass of wine, and a lot of networking.

**RESERVATIONS AND PREPAYMENT ARE REQUIRED.
NO-SHOWS WILL BE BILLED.**

TO RSVP CALL: (215) 545-7766 OR FAX: (215) 545-3634

MEET THE PRESS: REAL ESTATE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Sponsored by
Philadelphia Public Relations Association and PNC Bank

Tuesday, December 6, 2005

8:00 AM to 10:00 PM

1600 Market Street, Center Hall, 3rd Floor

One in a series of informal gatherings to promote better communication between the media and the business community. The Meet the Press panel with feature representatives from the local and national media.

Panelists:

Henry Holcomb, The Philadelphia Inquirer
Natalie Kostein, Philadelphia Business Journal

Moderated by:

Krista Bard, President, Bard Strategies & CCPA

This event is **free for CCPA and PPRA members** (\$20 for non-members) and includes continental breakfast.

SPACE IS LIMITED. RESERVATIONS RQUIRED.

**TO RSVP CALL: (215) 545-7766 OR
FAX: (215) 545-3634**



What is the Mayor's Business Action Team (MBAT)?

The Mayor's Business Action Team

The Mayor's Business Action Team (MBAT), a division of the Philadelphia Department of Commerce, is the City's one stop shop for businesses, a complete source of reliable and comprehensive business assistance.

MBAT employs a group of professional account managers who are able to provide your business with a wide range of business – related information ranging from start-up requirements to licensing and permits. MBAT also collaborates with local and state agencies to offer a full array of financing and incentive programs that benefit businesses operating in the city. MBAT's relationships with City Departments and agencies resolves business concerns and ensures full delivery of City services.

In addition to serving the needs of local businesses, MBAT works with business associations and community development corporations to assist in bringing economic development projects to their respective areas.

One call to the Mayor's Business Action Team gets you the business information you need for the following:

- Business expansion and relocation
- Demographics and market information
- Site identification
- Technical assistance
- Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Zone Information
- Assistance with licenses, permits, and City services

Discover how the Mayor's Business Action Team can become your Philadelphia business partner.

Contact them at:

Mayor's Business Action Team
(215) 683-2100

http://www.phila.gov/commerce/comm/lvl_2/mbat.htm

Certification Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) By Kathy Padilla, MBE Specialist II

Q: What types of organizations can be certified?

A: Only for-profit organizations can be certified; non-profits are not eligible for certification.

Q: If a non-profit owns a for-profit firm, can the for-profit subsidiary be certified?

A: No.

Q: Can I become certified if I'm not a U.S. Citizen?

A: A firm's owner must be a U.S. Citizen or a Permanent Resident Alien lawfully admitted to the United States in order to be eligible for certification. Noncitizens who have Permanent Resident Alien Status can become certified.

Q: Can I use a post office box as my primary business address?

A: No, a street address is required.



Q: I've been denied previously as my personal net worth was above the \$750,000 limit. I've heard that has changed, can I get certified now?

A: Yes! Under the City of Philadelphia Program there is no longer a personal net worth standard. However, the personal net worth standard is still in effect for the PA – Unified Certification Program.

Q: My firm is a corporation and I'm the only owner. Do I still need to provide copies of stock certificates and a stock transfer ledger with my application? If so - where can I get them?

A: Yes, every corporation must provide these to document who owns the firm. If an attorney or business helped you incorporate, they can assist you with obtaining these documents. Several stationary stores keep blank forms in stock if you wish to handle this yourself.

Q: I've lost my copies of my tax returns; does this mean I can't get certified?

A: You can get copies of your returns; from the IRS. Use "IRS Form 4506, Request for Copy of Tax Form" – this form is available on-line at: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f4506.pdf>

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

By Brigitte Daniel, Esq., MBEC Compliance Officer

Since its creation in July 2004, MBEC's Enforcement, Compliance, and Monitoring Unit has received complaints from our MBEC-certified vendors regarding prime contractors not fulfilling the MBEC participation goals that were set forth in their City contracts.

In most City contracts, the City establishes MBEC ranges in accordance with Executive Order 02-05. The contracts usually contain an Exhibit page which lists the name of the subcontractor, MBEC certification status, the subcontract dollar amount, the percentage of the total contract amount, and the type of service or good to be provided. The contracts additionally contain General Provisions which spell out contract terms to which all prime contractors must adhere. The section that refers to the compliance of participation ranges, as set forth on the Exhibit page, states the following:

In furtherance of the anti-discrimination policy, the City may, from time to time, establish participation ranges which shall be set forth in the Provider Agreement; these ranges are a projection of the level of M-DBE, W-DBE and/or DS-DBE participation that should be attained on a contract, absent discrimination in the selection of contract participants. Where ranges are established by the City, Provider agrees to comply with the requirements of Executive Order 02-05, including, but not limited to, the submission of documentation responsive to each of the participation ranges established for the Contract.

If a prime contractor is in violation of the contract or has not met the established participation goals as set forth by MBEC, an MBEC-certified vendor has a right to forward the occurrence of non-compliance to MBEC for investigation. Once the complaint is received, MBEC will request a copy of the contract made between the City department and the prime contractor. The two main provisions of the contract that MBEC will be looking for are the Exhibit page which lists the minority participation details and the above paragraph that cites the furtherance of the purposes of Executive Order 02-05.



If a contract contains the paragraph that references Executive Order 02-05, MBEC has full authority to: 1) enforce the participation goals; 2) suspend a prime contractor from proposing on and/or participating in any future contracts; or 3) impose fines against a prime contractor for failure to comply with the provisions of the contract.

If a contract does not contain this paragraph or if a contract did not have participation ranges established, MBEC still has the authority to commence an investigation of the solicitation and commitment made between a vendor and a prime contractor. The MBEC investigative procedure usually involves MBEC contacting and obtaining supporting and background information from the vendor, the prime contractor, and the City department that is the purchaser of the services / goods. If necessary, MBEC will hold a mediation meeting between the prime contractor, the MBEC-certified vendor, and the purchasing City department. MBEC mediations have been very useful in reconciling disputes between prime contractors and MBEC vendors.

Therefore, if, as an MBEC-certified vendor, you believe that your company has not been utilized appropriately or according to the contract's participation ranges, please contact MBEC immediately! At the very least, we can begin an investigation on your behalf and inquire as to why the ranges have not been met or why your company has not been used appropriately for the contract.







