

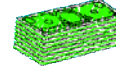
WOMEN'S SOURCE



Newsletter for all Women's Source Communities

April 2009
Special Edition

Is It a Recession? Sure Feels Like It!



MN Women's Small Business Expo and Sale 2009

The 2009 Minnesota Women's Small Business Expo and Sale is scheduled for June 6th at the Hopkins Pavilion in Hopkins, MN.

We are opening 100 vendor tables for this event! We are excited to see many fresh new faces for the event as well as long time supporters of the event.

Spots are still available but filling fast! You can find all information for this event at www.weneverstandalone.com

We have limited sponsor slots available for this event if interested, please visit the website for more information.



I guess it depends on who you ask and on what day you ask them what answer you will get to the question - Are we in a recession. I don't know the answer, you can look at all the data, compare to times in the past and make your own conclusion. Some of us are not feeling the effects and others of us are finding it is hard to pay the monthly bills. All I know is that it is a hard time to be in business for yourself! Frustrations are around every corner on a normal day, these days it seems they are not only waiting around the corner but behind us pushing as well!

Since I believe it is rarely a good idea to mix business and politics, we will leave politics at the door for now and try to explore ideas to keep your business going, to keep you motivated, to help get your team motivated and to offer some practical ideas for you as moms and wives during this tough economical time.

As I always seem to be preaching - NETWORKING is the key! I see such a need for it now more than ever before. Can you imagine trying to get your business off the ground or trying to continue growth in sales and your team without the aid of your networking partners? Right now more than ever we need to be there to lend support, ideas and even just an ear to vent frustrations

to each other. We all have times when we hit the wall - even in good economic conditions - doing so now may prove to be a bit harder to recover from but is not impossible! Especially with the help of our networking partners and our community as a whole.

I love the idea of giving back to the community. It was a founding principal of Women's Source that we find ways to give back to the communities in which we live. There are ways to give to the community and also take a little selfish diversion - a way to get the word out about your business. I love how you can combine the two in a tasteful way and everyone wins! Those are the kinds of things I think we will need to gravitate toward until people are ready to once again freely open their pocket books to non-necessity shopping.

I want you to all keep in mind that you are not alone in your frustrations, you are not alone while you are trying to think of creative ways to make sales, you are not alone trying to stretch your advertising dollars and you are not alone in trying to find quality

networking partners. I know it may not seem like much comfort to **hear** that you are not alone but maybe if you really **know** you are not alone, it will make you feel a bit better.

I invite you to keep sending your suggestions for trying to beat these tough economic times. I encourage you to reach out to other women in business so that you can brainstorm ideas that will benefit your business and theirs. I hope you will continue to build your networking base and lean on your networking partners when you need to. I pray that we can all conquer these tough times and come out the other side not only in one piece but better for the experience.

I don't believe that business is just business, there is a human aspect to it - there are feelings and connections and moments of personal growth - if we embrace those things in our business, add a human element to it, all of a sudden we are able to connect to others and our businesses start to grow!

Blessings-

Heather



Quick Tip:

Recycle greeting cards! Keep the top part of a card to use as a note card at a future time. If there is writing on the backside, simply cover with non see thru paper! This is a great way to send handwritten note cards to customers without spending a lot of money!

Are You Looking for Affordable DIY Website Builders?

We have personally used all of the web builders on this list. All are affordable and easy to use with professional results!

One and One www.oneandone.com - All the bells & whistles at very reasonable prices.

Only Business www.onlybusiness.com - Awesome for e commerce businesses!

Weebly www.weebly.com - Free to use with great features.

Homestead www.homestead.com - Various packages starting from free. Good features.

Bravenet www.bravenet.com - Various packages starting from free. Good features.

DIYestores www.diyestores.com - Wahm owned! Built in shopping cart and great features.

TriPod www.tripod.com - Various packages starting from free. Good features.

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How to Get Your WAHM Business on the Front Page

Written by Denise Williams

Do You Shop at a Co-Op or Warehouse Store?

Why not? What a great way to save some pennies or even dollars! Pantry staples are a great thing to stock up on at a co-op or warehouse store. If stored properly items like flour, sugar and rice can last forever!

Another great idea - share! Gather other moms in your area and shop together - divide up the large quantities into smaller portions and you each have some! This is great for smaller families or families with small children who do not eat as much. Make it a mom's fun day out!

One of the best ways to get the word out about your work-at-home-mom (WAHM) business is by generating some publicity. There are many simple ways to get media attention for your business, and some of the most effective can be to help someone else. Almost every list of easy publicity-generating ideas contains something like this:

"Sponsor a charity and write a press release about your involvement."

That is an excellent suggestion. People (and the media) love stories about others who are making a real difference in the world, and supporting a charity is an effective way to do that.

The danger is though, that in your press release, the organization you're supporting might overshadow your business and the work you're doing there... the reason for the sponsorship and the release in the first place.

When your reader gets to the end of the release, you want them to pick up the phone and call you, not immediately research the charity you're supporting. They can always do that after they talk to you.

While you should definitely focus on how you're helping others in your release, be sure to always bring your readers' attention back to you and your business.

One way to do this is, before launching into the details of the event in your release, write a paragraph of information about your business. This makes it clear to your reader that this release is about you. You could also add another sentence or two about your business at the end of the release - just one more reminder for the reader to visit you.

If you remember to give your readers a good reason to visit you, sponsoring a charity or event can be a powerful way to gain publicity for your business.

Denise Willms is a professional press release writer and owner of WAHM-Announce.com, a press release submission site for work-at-home-moms. To learn more about how to write press releases and how to gain publicity for your WAHM business, please visit <http://www.WAHM-Announce.com> and download a free PR Info Pack.

Once a Month or Once a Week Cooking, Anyone?

Grab the moms you love and make a day or weekend of cooking, friendship and fun!

Decide how many dishes to make - this decides how many recipes each mom needs to provide. Figure out how many servings you need for each person so you can shop for ingredients accordingly. Gather up your favorite recipes, items that can be frozen and reheated work best, and have your friends do the same. Pick a kitchen to inhabit for a few hours, put together a shopping list and you're off!

Have all the moms bring their recipes and ingredients for the dishes they have chosen. Bring along cooking/baking dishes as well as containers to bring your finished dishes home in. Have foil, wax paper and cling wrap available, too.

Once all of the moms and supplies are gathered get to work chopping, slicing, opening cans, shredding cheese, anything that needs to be done to prepare for cooking. Roll up your sleeves - everyone pitches in!

Once all of the prep work is done start cooking! Decide before hand what order you will prepare the dishes in - figure out how best to arrange the cooking so that you can take advantage of multi tasking.

Once a dish is finished and cooled, divide among all the moms in their take home containers. Moms take their dishes home and pop them in the freezer - then on a busy week night all they have to do is take out a prepared homemade meal and heat it up!

It really is that easy and so much fun! This is a great way to save on money and create bonding moments between friends. Don't forget about dessert!

Tip: Some cooking clubs prefer to shop for ingredients separately - each participant brings ingredients for a set number of recipes.

Some cooking clubs prefer to have members contribute money and put one or two individuals in charge of all the shopping for all members.

Do what works best for your cooking club - try out different ways of preparing and cooking until you find what works for you!



Get Your Business Buzzing...

Send out coupons to customers, hand them out at home parties or leave them were allowed throughout your community. Number each coupon. If redeemed by a certain date the coupon will go into a drawing for a grand prize!

Have some extra inventory or other items to give away as the prize?

Perhaps if they book a party or refer a friend who make s purchase they get another entry?

Would you like to advertise in the next edition of our newsletter?



Visit www.womens-source.com for details!

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Help Your Community and Get Your Name Out There!

Take a look at the needs in your community - pull together some women in business and get to work!

Does your food shelf need help? Does a local shelter need blankets or clothing? Is there a cause walk in your area you can put a team together and raise money for?

Find a need and fill it! It is okay to put your business name out there as the one who is helping - although anonymous help is thought to be more humble, it really is okay to let people know who is doing the work!

Offer incentive to customers or potential customers who donate time, money or other items. Let your hostess have the option of donating her earned credit to your cause - let her invited guests know that she is doing this and their purchases are helping your cause. Make a donation of a portion of your commission toward the cause - let all customers know about it!

Distribute flyers, put a small ad in the local paper, ask local businesses to get involved in spreading the word, e mail your customers get the word out there!

Make it an annual event - give your community something to look forward to each year!

Have an Open House Or Co-Op Those Parties!

Want to make better use of your potential customer's time? Want to make better odds that they will purchase something? Here are a few ideas that may work for you!

Christmas in July - Really! This idea can be successful is put together in a tasteful way. Get your recession minded customers thinking about Christmas early - gather some other women in business and hold an open house. A weekend of fun and festivities. Hold your open house in someone's home or rent space at a community center or hotel. (These are more likely to attract customers rather than going into someone's home unless they know you personally) Offer drawings, coupons, discounted prices, demos and incentives to book parties, make referrals or become a repeat customer. Get the Christmas lights and garland out to add to the atmosphere and offer some cider and cookies! Distribute flyers, e mail your customer list and ask them to invite friends, post a small ad in the local paper and ask local businesses to put the info in their locations. You can pull together a great gathering with little cost that will benefit all involved!

Co-Op Your Parties! - Bring a mini open house to your next home party! Gather one or two other women in business who offer products that complement but don't compete with yours. Let the party goers get a chance to hear from each of you! Offer incentives for customers who order from you all or book parties with you all. Reward customers who make repeat sales or refer sales to you all. Choose a theme for your party and play it up! Hostesses will get greater rewards and customers will have a chance to do a bit more shopping! Plus it is fun!



Some of the greatest ideas and connections have been made over a cup of coffee!

Are You Looking for Consultant Tools or Team Rewards?

We love these sites!

My Girlfriend's House

www.mygirlfriendshouse.com

Business Enhancements

www.businessenhancements.com

The Booster

www.thebooster.com

Express Yourself

www.expressyourselfonline.com

Did you know we have a Message Board?

We would love to keep it growing! We have some wonderful ladies who post regularly.

This is a great way to make new networking connections, get the word out about your business and talk about other mom/woman related issues!

<http://womenssource.proboards.com/index.cgi?>

Or you can access it on the main Women's Source site.

Make Sure You are Rewarding Your Team!

Just small gestures and recognition can make the difference to a consultant who is second guessing themselves or struggling a bit! Words of encouragement go a LONG way! You are a team leader, a mentor and a role model. Taking time to recognize your team members benefits your bottom line, too!

Don't Make Giving Up an Option!