

FACETS NEWSLETTER

Productivity. Growth. Profits.

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Lean & Green

Get Lean and Go Green

In today's uncertain economic climate, companies are looking for new ways to cut costs and streamline business processes to become more competitive. At the same time, a new age of social responsibility has shifted public awareness toward preservation of the environment and a call for companies to "go green." Both trends have created a compelling business case for going paperless. Whether it's Sage MAS 90 and 200 Paperless Office or a full-featured document management system, you have fantastic options available to you. Let's take a closer look.

Paper is Slowing You Down

When examining typical business processes, paperwork has often been identified as a major bottleneck. Whether it is the storage, retrieval, or

The Many Facets of Emerald TC

Welcome to the first edition of "Facets", news and updates for our clients and affiliates. Facets isn't just about Emerald TC and what we do or sell. Our goal is to provide you with information that you will find informative, helpful, and insightful. We are just as interested in helping you grow your business as we are in growing our own.

This issue is a great example. We've included an article about the power of

"word of mouth" referrals and how to encourage use of this powerful marketing tool. We are also concerned about the environment and are trying to do our part to promote "green" practices. The paperless office is a great way to go green (and save some green too!). We even have a clever way to earn some green for your favorite charity!

We would love your feedback on our newsletter and ideas for future issues.

Word of Mouth Takes Action

Adapted from The Entrepreneurial Mind by Jeff Cornwall, from the 7/6/08 Tennessean

A recent poll found that 82 percent of small businesses use word of mouth to grow their business, and that 15 percent rely almost exclusively on word of mouth. However, what many entrepreneurs fail to recognize is that word of mouth rarely just happens. They fall victim to the myth of "if we build it, they will come." Nothing could be further from the truth.

My favorite question to ask entrepreneurs who plan to use word of mouth is this: "What is a product or business that you, as a consumer, could not wait to talk about with friends, family and even strangers?" Most of the time they start to squirm in their chairs, finally admitting that they can't remember a specific example.

Spontaneous word of mouth is a rare event. Successful word-of-mouth promotion requires actively finding ways to motivate customers to talk about a business in a positive way.

Here are some ways to encourage it:

- Motivate customers to talk about you through excellence in customer service. Customer service is not what it used to be, so if you can create an exceptional experience people will tend to talk about it. The service must be consistent, genuine and enthusiastic.
- Create incentives to spread the word

through a referral or thank-you program. Offer customers a future discount or send them a small thank-you gift, such as a gift card, for each new customer they send your way.

- Ask your customer to "sell" for you. There are certain businesses that the customers desperately want to see succeed. This most often happens when you fill a niche that has not been

addressed in the market. In this case, ask your customers to spread the word. Let them know that you cannot succeed without their help bringing in new customers.

According to Robert Lambert, professor of marketing at Belmont University, "When a product is complex and difficult to evaluate, and when risk is involved in

the buying process, consumers often look to others to provide strong word-of-mouth endorsements. "This form of advertising can be more effective than any paid advertising. It has the added benefit of reducing the costs of attracting new customers" for the business owner.

Although word of mouth is often considered free advertising, it is most effective when some time, energy, and even a few marketing dollars are committed to it. Did we mention that we love referrals too?



"Emerald TC's solution transformed our operations. It trimmed overhead, streamlined field operations, and positioned us for even more dramatic growth."

D.J. Romano, Vice-President, Power Distributing

Read all about this story and more on our website at www.EmeraldTC.com

Take Advantage of Tax Breaks

Economic Stimulus Plan Offers Businesses Expanded tax breaks

For tax purposes, the IRS Code Section 179 provides accelerated write-offs for capital operating software that small businesses purchase and own. Between now and December 31, 2008, businesses purchasing \$800,000 or less in capital operating software during any tax year can deduct up to \$250,000 of that expense on their tax return.

To take advantage, managing your company's purchases is critical. If your business acquires more than \$800,000 in capital assets during 2008, the deduction decreases by \$1 for each dollar you spend over the capital expenditure limit.

Financing can help maximize your tax benefits

By offering great financial flexibility, financing might be the best way to preserve your company's ability to use the

Section 179 deduction. Equipment purchases exceeding the \$800,000 limit could jeopardize the amount of Section 179 write-off, if any, a company is eligible to take.

With financing, you do not run the same risk. Financing acquisitions that exceed \$800,000, allows the finance company to be the tax owner of those assets and enables your company to retain its Section 179 deduction. Plus, using a tax lease to finance acquisitions allows you to trade in un-used tax benefits in return for an overall lower cost of financing.

As with all equipment financing, depending on the structure, a lease could result in improved cash flow and financial statement ratios. We'd be happy to talk to you about finance companies, but be sure to consult your financial and tax advisors first.

(Continued from Go Lean)

processing of paperwork, improving the ability to instantly view and access these important documents has been shown to *significantly* increase workplace efficiency.

Sage MAS 90 and 200 Paperless Office converts your documents to PDF format and allows you to store them in a secure and searchable format. These documents can include Journals and Registers, Period-End Reports, Orders and Invoices, Purchase Orders, and Direct Deposit Pay Stubs. You can enter a variety of search criteria to retrieve documents *and* they can be accessed simultaneously by employees on premise or away from the office. No more wasted time digging through file cabinets or searching for a misplaced invoice!

In addition, the powerful electronic forms delivery feature of Paperless Office allows you to email or fax documents directly from within Sage MAS 90 or 200 to your customers and vendors - timely delivery without the paper, envelopes, and postage!

A full-featured document management solution is designed to go above and

beyond the capability of Paperless Office. In addition to storage and retrieval of documents after they've been posted, document management solutions incorporate electronic workflow processing and routing through the use of customized business rules.

Documents can be viewed, approved, and annotated before being routed to another department or employee for further processing. Users can also rubber stamp approvals electronically, track invoices that are currently in authorization or resolution status, view documents or vouchers side-by-side, and manage information more effectively to assist with regulatory compliance related to the protection of information such as Sarbanes-Oxley or HIPPA.

Putting It All Together

Whether you take a first step with Paperless Office or graduate to a full-blown document management solution, going paperless will have tremendously positive implications for your business. Perhaps best of all, you're demonstrating corporate responsibility by getting lean and going green! Contact us to learn more about document management solutions.

Dress Down for A Good Cause

Promote employee moral and do something for a good cause, by offering "Dress Down Friday For Charity".

In return for wearing casual attire each Friday, employees are encouraged to make a donation into your 'Good Cause Jar'.

Donated contributions to non-profit organizations selected by the employees. You'll not only raise money but also awareness of local charities.

Did You Know?

Mileage Rate Increase

The mileage rate increased from .505 to .585 in July '08.

We Love Referrals

Do you know of a company that is struggling with their business information systems, not getting enough support with their current system or both? Let your colleagues know that we are available to assist them and that we would be honored to have an opportunity to earn their business.

Our customers get personal attention, prompt support and solutions that match their needs. We can save the day and you can be a hero!

