

January 15, 2018

Published by The 912 Group, Ltd.

Ronda Watson Barber—Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

Volume 9—No. 1

*Small Business is Good Business*

Advocating, Informing and Promoting Small &amp; Minority Owned Businesses

Celebrating 9 Years of Publishing

**City of Columbus DPU to host Meet & Greet**

Small business owners are invited to participate in the Small Diverse Business Open House hosted by the City of Columbus, Department of Public Utilities in partnership with the Columbus NAACP. This event will serve as an informal "Meet & Greet" opportunity. Participants will have the opportunity to meet and speak with representatives from the Departments of Public Utilities, Finance & Management, Public Service, Recreation & Parks, as well as the Mayor's Office of Diversity & Inclusion and Smart Columbus. This event presents a great opportunity for networking and learning how to do or further expand business with the City of Columbus.

Event details are as follows:

Date: Monday, January 22, 2018

Time: 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Location: 910 Dublin Road, Columbus, Ohio 43215

The format will include the following:

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | City Department Information Booths (1st Floor – Auditorium)                   |
| 1:30 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. | Workshop: "Doing Business with the City 101" (1st Floor – Training Rooms A/B) |
| 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | "Speed Dating" with City Representatives (1st Floor – Training Rooms A/B)     |

Please feel free to "drop in" and take part in any or all of the activities on the agenda. For questions or additional details, please contact Jeffrey Carter at [JDCarter@columbus.gov](mailto:JDCarter@columbus.gov) or Krista McGee at [KKMcGee@columbus.gov](mailto:KKMcGee@columbus.gov).

THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**  
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR  
DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC UTILITIES



*In the End, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.* . - Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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OhioMBE welcomes letters to the editor from readers. Typed letters of 200 words or less are preferred; all might be edited. Each letter must include name, home address and daytime phone number. Some letter may appear on our website.

The 912 Group is an Ohio certified Minority Owned and EDGE business. The 912 Group is a certified FBE with the City of Columbus.

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 **The time is  
always right  
to do what is right** ~ Rev. Dr.  
Martin Luther King, Jr.

# government briefs

## Gov. Kasich recalls visit to King birthplace at MLK celebration

Gov. John R. Kasich spoke at the 33rd annual Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Celebration held at the Trinity Episcopal Church, Columbus on Jan. The event was sponsored by the Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission.



Jacqueline T. Williams

In recalling his visit to the late civil rights leader's Atlanta birthplace, Gov. Kasich told the audience, "Dr. King didn't focus on the 'big shots.' Dr. King didn't focus on someone in a faraway place. He was most concerned with what was happening to his neighbor and in his community."

Jacqueline T. Williams, director of the Ohio Department of Commerce, also was one of the featured speakers at the event. Recalling her own upbringing during the Civil Rights era, Director Williams spoke of the examples of courage displayed by Dr. King, as well as members of her own family. "Dr. King left the comfortable to be on the front lines in the battle for justice," Williams said. "Each of us," she concluded, "can choose to engage in small or large acts of

courage every single day."

Were you unable to attend the 33rd Annual MLK Commemorative Celebration? Or, perhaps you did, but you want to share it with your friends or family? Visit <http://bit.ly/2mGg2kD> to watch the entire event or fast forward to your favorite parts.

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# publisher's note

# business tip

## OhioMBE celebrates nine years of publishing

By Ronda Watson Barber  
Publisher

OhioMBE is celebrating nine years of advocating, informing and promoting small businesses. I take pride in publishing Ohio's largest Black-owned business newspaper. It has been a wonderful journey empowering small business owners with news, information, access and opportunity.

I love small businesses. I enjoy being a part of the development and growth of microenterprises. I'm inspired and impressed by the energy, creativity and the drive entrepreneurs' exhibit in an effort to succeed.

I am pleased that my small business, The 912 Group has helped improve the business climate in Ohio.

We have assisted businesses obtain certification credentials via our monthly classes in partnership with the Women's Business Center of Ohio.

Last year, through the activities of the OhioMBE Procurement Fairs, over 500 businesses had access to over \$350 million dollars in contracting opportunities.

The OhioMBE Awards highlight the good deeds of business and community advocates. We recognize the inclusion efforts of corporations and honor stellar small businesses in Ohio. Most importantly, we present local students with the Frank W. Watson Scholarships to assist with post-secondary education.

As publisher, of OhioMBE and OhioFBE, I appreciate our readers. I am very grateful to the organizations that help sustain our efforts. Many thanks those who advertise bid notices, employment opportunities and their products/services in the OhioMBE.

OhioMBE will continue to advocate for inclusion in contracting opportunities. Our ultimate goal is to make a positive difference, to pave a path for economic success and empowerment. You are encouraged to join OhioMBE in this mission. You can help by attending an OhioMBE Procurement Fair. or sending us a press release highlighting your business successes, for possible publication. Consider advertising your business in OhioMBE. Purchase products/services from those who advertise in OhioMBE. Post a business or cultural event to OhioDiversityNetwork.com. Attend a networking event.

Cheers to nine years! Small business is good business!

Just my thoughts...rwb

## What Tax Deductions Can a Freelancer Take?

If you are a freelancer or considering becoming one, you probably have questions about what kinds of tax deductions you can take.

How you are taxed as a freelancer depends on the structure of your business:

**Sole Proprietorships.** The sole proprietorship, in which the business is owned and managed by an individual proprietor, is a common structure for freelancers. Bottom line: You are the company, and as the owner, you pay taxes on business income as part of your personal income tax.

**Limited Liability Company (LLC):** An LLC protects a freelancer from personal liability, but it has a more flexible management structure than a corporation. An LLC can choose how it wants to be taxed—as a sole proprietorship, S corporation or C corporation. Profits and losses are reported on the owner's individual tax return if the business is a sole proprietorship or S corporation.

**S Corps and C Corps:** Because a C corp is the costliest and most complicated form of business, the structure is not popular (or necessary) for freelancers. However, if you plan to make more money than you would have made at an equivalent full-time job as an employee, an S corp allows you to split your profits between your employee wage and distributions of profits from your business. The employee wage portion is taxed at the higher self-employment rate, but the remainder is treated as distributions of profits from your business.

The good news: Being a freelancer allows you to claim most of the same deductions as a larger business. In general, you can deduct the costs of running your business. The IRS deems a business expense deductible if it's both ordinary and necessary. An *ordinary* expense must be common and accepted in your field of business. A *necessary* expense must be helpful and appropriate for your business.

Here are the most common tax deductions you can take as a freelancer:

**Startup expenses:** If you started your business in the calendar year for which you're filing taxes, you can deduct expenses related to startup such as research, marketing, equipment purchases, etc. You can even deduct the costs of startup if you

*See Deductions on page 4*





## Pipe Layer/Laborer

TAM Construction Inc., is accepting applications for Pipe Layer/Laborer and Operator. TAM Construction Inc., is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Drug Free Work Place, women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Apply at 6648 Hudnell Road, Athens, OH 45701 or [Tamconstruction@intelliwave.com](mailto:Tamconstruction@intelliwave.com)

## Protecting Sensitive Business and Customer Data: Practical Identity Safety Practices for Your Business

Identity thieves target small businesses to steal passwords, bank account information, Social Security numbers and more.

Join the Federal Trade Commission and Internal Revenue Service for a free webinar to learn about:

- Protecting your customers, employees and business against ID theft
- Imposter scams targeting businesses
- Business cybersecurity practices
- Responding to a data breach

To register, click here: <http://bit.ly/2DfMeVL> (offered with closed captioning\*)



## Minority Planroom



[www.OHBDC.org](http://www.OHBDC.org)

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didn't start in that year, as long as you were buying or starting a specific business. If you were researching several business ideas, however, you cannot deduct those expenses.

**Home-based business:** To take the home office deduction, you must meet two general rules: A portion of your home must be set aside for the exclusive use of running your business and must be your principal place of business. If you meet these requirements, you can use the simplified method or deduct the portion of your home expenses attributable to running your business, including utilities, security, mortgage/rent and any home improvements related to your business. Talk to your tax expert and check IRS Publication 587 for more details.

**Self-Employment Health Insurance Tax Deduction:** Under Section 2042 of the Small Business Jobs Act, self-employed individuals can take a deduction for the cost of health insurance. This deduction is taken into account in calculating net earnings from self-employment. See Form 1040 and Schedule SE instructions for calculating and claiming the deduction.

**Transportation:** You can deduct costs associated with transportation to and from meeting with clients, running business errands such as buying supplies, attending seminars and meetings and more. If you use your own car for transportation, keep a log and receipts for costs associated

**Travel:** Travel expenses associated with the running, marketing and sales of your business are deductible, including plane and train fare, car rental, hotel stays, tips, meals, dry cleaning and phone bills.

**Entertainment and gifting:** You can deduct no more than \$25 per business gift you give directly or indirectly to each person during the tax year. If you give a general gift to a company and then one to a person in the company, you can still take only one deduction. Incidental costs, such as engraving, packaging, insuring and mailing, are not included in the cost of a gift for purposes of the \$25 limit. To deduct entertainment expenses, you must be able to prove the entertainment cost was directly attributable to the expectation of a business benefit.

**Charitable contributions.** Businesses must follow very specific rules when it comes to charitable contribution deductions. Most contributions are considered business expenses, so check with your tax expert on how to claim these contributions.

**Education:** As a freelancer, you can deduct expenses for qualifying work-related education directly from your self-employment income. This reduces the amount of your income subject to both income tax and self-employment tax.

Source: [www.score.org](http://www.score.org)

# bid opportunities

To post a bid notice, call 614-522-9122 or email [news@ohiombe.com](mailto:news@ohiombe.com)

## DANIS

Newark Wastewater Treatment Plant Digester Improvements:

"Danis Industrial Construction Company, an Equal Opportunity Employer, is soliciting bids from certified DBE, MBE, WBE and SBRA subcontractors and suppliers for the City of Newark, Ohio (Licking County) Wastewater Treatment Plant Digester Improvements Project. **Fax bids to 937-228-7443 or email to [isaac.woughter@danis.com](mailto:isaac.woughter@danis.com) no later than 5:00 P.M.**

**1/16/2018.** All bids should include a completed *Form 6100-3 DBE Subcontractor Performance Form*. Items of work to be subcontracted include, but are not limited to the following: trucking, excavation, site work, fencing, paving, demolition, reinforcing steel supply/erection, flatwork, masonry, roofing, caulking, waterproofing/dampproofing, doors, windows, roll-up doors, painting, plumbing, HVAC, electrical, instrumentation, and building material supply. Bid documents are available at our on-line plan room at [CLICK HERE](#). Please contact Isaac Woughter at 937-228-1225, with any questions regarding the project."



"Attention DOT/SBA Certified MBE/WBE Companies"

Kokosing Industrial, Inc. is preparing bids for the Newark WWTP Digester Improvements project in Newark, Ohio which bids January 17, 2018. We are seeking quotes for any portion of the project listed that you are qualified to perform or provide supplies for which includes the following: Seeding/Landscaping, Erosion Control, Trucking, Paving, Reinforcing Steel, Precast Concrete, Concrete Restoration, Masonry, Masonry Restoration, Waterproofing, Insulation, Roofing, Caulking, Overhead Doors, Painting, Plumbing, HVAC, Electrical, Instrumentation & Controls. Bidding documents can be examined at Kokosing Industrial, Inc., 6235 Westerville Rd., Westerville, OH 43081 or by calling Sonja Nichols at 614-212-5701. Please have your quote to Chad Lampe by 12:00 PM January 16, 2018: e-mail [snichols@kokosing.biz](mailto:snichols@kokosing.biz) or Fax 614-212-5711.

"Kokosing Industrial is an equal opportunity employer."



## LEGAL NOTICE

### REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR DESIGN-BUILD SERVICES

The Columbus City School District announces a Request for Qualifications for the following project:

Renovation of HVAC Systems in "Design-Build Delivery Model" at four schools (under one contract). The scope of work includes but is not limited to HVAC renovation with related electrical, plumbing and architectural work required to complete the project. Criteria services for the project will be provided by Star Consultants, Inc.

An Informational meeting covering the project will be held on Thursday, January 18, 2018 at 10:00 AM at the Capital Improvements Office located at 889 E. 17th Avenue, Columbus OH 43211.

Submittals will be evaluated pursuant to ORC Chapter 153, including relevant past work of prospective firms, professional and other applicable consultants, quality control, response to CCS Community Inclusion Policy (Local Economically Disadvantaged Enterprise goal is 20% participation) and location of primary firm relative to project locations. More information can be found at <http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/rfp>

Responding firms are to submit three (3) hard copies and one electronic copy (in pdf format) of their qualifications on SAO F-110-330 Statement of Qualifications Form (most recent version) to Capital Improvements, Columbus City Schools, 889 E.17th Ave., Columbus OH 43211. Part 1 is limited to 30 pages. EDGE requirements do not apply to this RFQ. Deadline for submissions is Friday, January 26, 2018 by 2:00 PM.

The Board of Education reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. Prevailing wage Rates do not apply to this project. Direct questions to Raj Kapoor at [kapoor@starconsultants.org](mailto:kapoor@starconsultants.org).

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**We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now.** ~ Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

# bid opportunities

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## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Proposals will be received for the following by Jason Colón at [jcolon@akronhousing.org](mailto:jcolon@akronhousing.org) no later than 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 30, 2018.

Request for Proposals (RFP) for a **Comprehensive Software System for the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority (AMHA)** for a period of three years with successive optional one-year renewals.

Those interested in submitting a proposal for the aforementioned service may obtain the information package (RFP No. 2017-IT001) by contacting the AMHA MIS Department at 330-376-9774 or via email at [jcolon@akronhousing.org](mailto:jcolon@akronhousing.org).

Written questions regarding this RFP will be accepted no later than 1:00 p.m. Friday, January 5, 2018. Send written questions to Jason Colón via e-mail at [jcolon@akronhousing.org](mailto:jcolon@akronhousing.org).

Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority  
Anthony W. O'Leary  
Executive Director

## Looking for the paper copy of OhioMBE?

Not only are we online, you can find OhioMBE at the following locations. OhioMBE is published on the 1st and 15th of each month.

### Akron

- Akron Urban League

### Canton

- Community Center  
Minority Business Association Center

### Cleveland

- Cleveland Urban League

### Columbus:

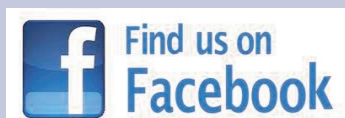
- Driving Park Library
- M & M Chicken
- Livingston Ave. Library
- M.L.K. Library
- Woodland Y.M.C.A.
- Woodland Christian Church
- Mayo's Printing- Bookstore
- Mt. Vernon AME Church
- A Cut Above The Rest Barber Shop
- Creole Kitchen
- Neighborhood House
- OSU Black Extension Center
- Shiloh Baptist Church
- 2nd Baptist Church
- Lincoln Café
- St. Stephen's Community Center
- Bethel AME Church
- Linden Library
- COWIC
- Columbus Board of Education
- Women's Business Center
- Increase CDC
- Mt. Hermon Baptist Church
- Corinthian Missionary Baptist Church
- Mt. Olivet Baptist Church
- Destiny Center
- Columbus Main Library

### Dayton

- City of Dayton - Human Relations Commission



Looking for bid notices?  
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# business tip

## How to Fund Your Business Startup: 5 Fast and Popular Options

As a startup with little to no business history, what are some quick ways to get funding?

First, it's important to understand since you won't have a great deal of revenue, the key factor that lenders will look at is your **personal credit worthiness**. As you know, personal credit reports and credit scores are tools lenders and banks use to rate an individual's credit worthiness.

Whether you are in the initial stages of starting your business or looking for additional funding to grow; prepare to be flexible and creative. Remember, your source of funding may not all come from a single place.

In fact, many entrepreneurs and small business owners piece together their funding from separate places and at various times. Funding from friends and family is a very popular option to raise funding for a startup. According to the 2012 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor report, the vast majority of startup funds (82 percent) came from the entrepreneur himself/herself, or from family and friends.

Other than family and friends, here are five quick ways to get funding for your startup:

**Business Credit Cards** – Unsecured revolving lines of credit in the form of business credit cards are a powerful tool to consider. Not only can it help keep your personal and business expenses separate, it can build your business credit file, provide access to cash and credit, and offers flexible payment options.

**Microloans** – A microloan is easier and faster to get than a traditional business loan. Amounts are usually under \$50k and used for many purposes including the purchase of equipment, inventory, supplies, and working capital. The SBA works with designated intermediary lenders across the country to provide microloans to small business.

**Crowdfunding** – One of the fastest ways to cast a big net for attracting investors to a business is through crowdfunding. There are many crowdfunding sites to participate in but be prepared to do your homework. It takes careful preparation and planning to run a successful crowdfunding campaign.

**Credit from Vendors** – Vendor credit is the largest use of capital from business-to-business and remains the number-one alternative to personal and small business loans. The Small Business Administration reports that it's the single largest source of small business lending in the United States today. As startup, you can gain access to short term financing from vendors with minimal requirements.

It is an invaluable solution that provides a business with the



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ability to purchase products and services it needs upfront while allowing the business to defer payments for a later date (net 30 accounts).

**Personal Business Loan** – Securing a traditional business loan can be a time-consuming process and uphill battle especially for a startup. In a recent Pepperdine University study, only 34% of small businesses received traditional funding through their bank, compared to 75% of larger businesses.

A personal business loan is a loan made to you, the individual, based on your personal credit worthiness. Upon approval, you can use funds to-

wards the financing of your business. Additionally, a personal business loan can take a few days compared to a traditional business loan which can take a matter of weeks.

Whether you decide to utilize one or more of these options, chances are that you may need to at some point as your business grows. Access to funding is essential to the success of a business; it's the fuel on which a business runs. Take the time to add one or more funding vehicles to your arsenal so that you have access to capital when your company needs it.

Source: [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)



# OhioMBE Certification 101 at the WBC

## Make a resolution to get your business certified in 2018!

There are several reasons why you should get your business certified:

1. Some entities have purchasing goals. Only certified businesses can participate.
2. Certification adds legitimacy to your business. You have gone through a process that has determined that your business is owned and controlled by a minority, woman or disadvantaged business.
3. Certification can afford you loan and bonding opportunities. The State of Ohio has loan and bonding programs specifically for certified minority owned businesses.
4. Certification can be a marketing tool for your business. You can add your certifications to your marketing materials, business cards, website, etc. Many consumers like doing business with veteran, minority or woman owned businesses.
5. Certification can be used in the private sector. Many companies don't have a certifying program but in an effort to have supplier diversity, will accept the certifications from some governmental agencies.



*Class dates are online at [www.OhioMBE.eventbee.com](http://www.OhioMBE.eventbee.com)*

## 7 Marketing Resolutions to Make This New Year

What can your small business do differently in 2018 to boost the results of your marketing efforts? Here are seven marketing resolutions every entrepreneur should make for the coming year.

1. **Resolve to build relationships with customers.** Consumers and B2B buyers alike have seemingly endless options for purchasing almost any product or service they could possibly want. With so much “noise” out there, how can your small business hope to stand out? By targeting your most valuable prospects and customers—those who aren’t just hunting for a bargain, but want lasting relationships with the companies they do business with. Find out what customers want and need, then personalize your marketing to help build relationships.
2. **Resolve to understand the customer journey better.** Customer journey mapping is growing in importance for 2018. Essentially, this means figuring out how your customers get to the point of buying your product. Where do they first learn about your business? How do they research products like yours? Whose opinion influences their purchasing decision? How long does it take them to make up their minds? Your website, tools for managing customer relationships, and social media analytics can help you visualize the customer journey so you can reach out to customers at the times they’re most likely to take action. (See Resolution No. 3 below.)
3. **Resolve to take content marketing to the next level.** That doesn’t mean churning out more and more content, but instead crafting *better* content. For example, your understanding of the customer journey will help you come up with content that answers your prospects’ most common questions at each stage of the process. Just 41 percent of marketers create marketing content based on specific stages of the customer journey, according to a recent study; doing so will give you a huge advantage. You should also target content to specific types of customers.
4. **Resolve to learn more about micro-influencers.** “Influencers” are celebrities, athletes, and other people with huge social media followings. For most of us, it’s not realistic we’ll get our businesses on the radar of Kim Kardashian or Selena Gomez. That’s why the rise of micro-influencers is such good news for small businesses. Micro-influencers are people with small, but devoted, fan bases—for example, a fashion blogger that your target customers love, or a local musician with a big following. MDG Advertising cites micro-influencers as one of 2018’s top marketing trends, and getting micro-influencers to review, mention, or share your product or service online can really boost your sales.
5. **Resolve to harness the potential of email marketing.** It’s hard to believe, but only 27 percent of small business owners currently use an email marketing service, according to Infusionsoft’s latest *Small Business Marketing Trends Report*. Email may be old hat, but it’s the best way to speak directly to prospects one-on-one. Plus, with the number of e-mail users in the U.S. projected to grow to 254.7 million by 2020, up from 244.5 million in

*See Marketing on page 9*



# Ohio Diversity Network

Get a weekly email from [OhioDiversityNetwork.com](http://OhioDiversityNetwork.com) notifying you of upcoming events. Sign up online!

**Tuesday, January 16, 2018 at 6:00pm**  
**Columbus WBC – INTRODUCTION TO EXCEL** - Columbus

**Wednesday, January 17, 2018 at 11:30am**  
**ECDI: Certified Payroll for State Funded Projects** - Columbus

**Thursday, January 18, 2018 at 5:30pm**  
**Columbus WBC – Excel Databases** - Columbus

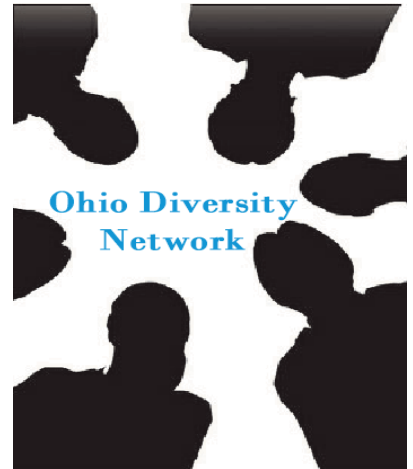
**Saturday, January 20, 2018 at 2:01am**  
**Certification 101 at the WBC** - Columbus

**Monday, January 22, 2018 at 1:00pm**  
**City of Columbus Dept. of Utilities & Columbus NAACP Meet & Greet** - Columbus

**Tuesday, January 23, 2018 at 5:30pm**  
**Columbus WBC – Be Confident When Applying: A Loan Packaging Class** - Columbus

**Tuesday, January 30, 2018 at 5:00pm**  
**ECDI – Marketing on a Shoestring Budget: Real Lessons from the Field** - Columbus

*OhioDiversityNetwork.com is sponsored by:*



**Hosting a business event?**

**Did you know you can post it on  
[OhioDiversityNetwork.com](http://OhioDiversityNetwork.com)**

Email: [news@ohiombe.com](mailto:news@ohiombe.com)  
for login information

*(Marking from page 8)*

2018, email isn't going away any time soon. If you're not using email marketing, make 2018 the year you start. If you are, make sure you're taking advantage of transactional emails, segmenting and personalizing emails, and monitoring your email analytics to continuously improve. Use eye-catching design and fun features like gifs, videos, or surveys to make your emails stand out.

- 6. Resolve to make time for marketing.** According to a survey by Infusionsoft, more than one in five small

business owners say their biggest challenge is finding enough time to properly market their business. There are two ways to make time: 1) Block it off on your calendar and treat it as sacred and 2) automate as much of your marketing as you can, using tools like email autoresponders, social media scheduling and CRM software.

- 7. Resolve to stay up-to-date on marketing technology.** Artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality and voice search are just a few of the technology trends that will transform marketing in 2018. More than two-thirds

(68 percent) of marketing executives in a recent survey say they will spend more on marketing technology in 2018.

The tools we use to market our businesses change, but the basic principles of marketing don't. Your prospects still want to know that you care about them, understand their needs, and are ready to solve their problems. If you've got those elements in place, you're well on your way to a successful 2018.

Source: [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

# OhioBizDirectory.com



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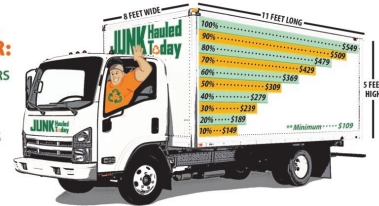
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## 5 Ideas for Kickstarting Your Motivation in the New Year

January is here, and it's back to business as usual.

Or is it?

After a holiday break filled with eating, drinking, and being merry, chances are you may be feeling the winter blahs. Psychologists attribute the post-holiday blues to a number of factors including the sudden lack of social events on our calendars, days short on daylight, cold weather, and fatigue.

But duty calls—it's time to take action and snap out of it. Your business needs you!

Now that the excitement and adrenaline of the holidays are over, how will you kick off this new year with a renewed sense of determination?

Here are 5 tips to help reclaim your motivation.

1. **Ease back into your work.** Trying to check off everything on your to-do list in the first few weeks of the new year will leave you feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. Instead, create a manageable plan by reserving dedicated blocks of time for all the tasks, meetings, etc. that you need to accomplish. That will help you stay on track and prevent you from trying to multitask, a habit that hurts rather than improves productivity.

Also, consider focusing on uncomplicated tasks first, like sending invoices, paying bills, organizing paperwork for tax time or tackling other simple administrative work. Because they require less mental energy, you can complete them more easily and build momentum for carrying out more complex responsibilities.

2. **Walk off sluggishness and stress.** The weather outside may be frightful, but provided it's not dangerously cold and you're in good health, a brisk walk can do you a lot of good. Besides the cardiovascular and muscle-toning benefits, a daily 30-minute walk can diminish feelings of stress, brighten your mood and boost your creativity. Those are solid reasons to step away from technology, and get a breath of fresh air.

3. **Reconnect with a colleague.** Whether you meet up over coffee and bagels or grab lunch at your favorite diner, re-connecting with a business colleague offers three benefits:

- It will help remedy the social withdrawal you might be feeling now that all the holiday get-togethers and celebrations have concluded.
- It jumpstarts your networking and relationship-building efforts in the new year.
- Bonus: Your discussion might shed light on new ideas for growing your business or tackling challenges.

4. **Take stock of your achievements, and envision the great things to come.** Reflect on all that you have accomplished in the past year or since you started your business. Pat yourself on the back in recognition of how far you've come and how hard you've worked.

Now, get excited about where you're going to take your business in this new year. Sit down with pen and paper (or computer), and make a list of what you want your business to achieve. You might also consider creating a vision board, a tool that uses visuals to facilitate an emotional connection between you and your goals.

5. **Find someone to be your sounding board.** Sometimes escaping a slump can be difficult on your own, so consider enlisting the help of a SCORE mentor. Our mentors have experience in all aspects of starting and growing a business. Many have faced the same uncertainties and challenges that you are encountering. They can offer valuable advice, feedback and encouragement when you need guidance, honesty, or a little push. Get your 2018 off to an inspirational start;

### Where will your business be next year?

I hope these tips will empower you to get unstuck and move your business forward. You have the whole year ahead of you—stay motivated and succeed.

Source: [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)





## OhioMBE Awards 2017 Top Advocate: Andrea Quinichett

Andrea Quinichett began her career with the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority as an entry-level Occupancy Technician in 2006. Since then, she was promoted through the ranks in the property management department, ultimately being selected for the position of property manager. In 2015, Andrea was selected for promotion to her current position of Procurement Manager.

During her tenure with CMHA, Andrea managed her schedule as a single parent, full-time employee, full-time student and faced many challenges as she remained focused on her education and employment goals. While continuing to work full time, Andrea earned her Bachelor of Science and Masters of Business Administration degrees from Ohio Dominican University. In her position as Procurement Manager Andrea procures materials and products and obtains services for the Agency.

She focuses on engaging community outreach activities and assists with developing programs which focus on economic development, expanding opportunities for MBE firms, and increasing individual self-sufficiency directly related to the Section 3 program. Andrea views it as her responsibility to help build bridges of opportunity by facilitating partnerships and other business opportunities for Minority Business firms.



In her spare time Andrea enjoys spending time with her family, watching movies, traveling and building great memories with friends and loved ones.

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