

**Meeting Summary**  
**Marketing Your Agency**  
**December 15, 2004**  
**Lyon County Courthouse, Room 3**  
**Marshall**

**Present:**

Pat Thomas – Southwest ABE - Marshall  
Karla Roisen, Southwest ABE – Granite Falls  
Denise Myhrberg, MN DEED/Work Force Center (WFC)  
Jim Muchlinski; SW Marketing Advisory Center  
Mike Rich, SW Marketing Advisory Center  
Jennifer Pickerry, SW Marketing Advisory Center  
Juanita Lauritsen – SW MN Private Industry Council  
Carolyn Fransen – MN West Technical & Community College  
Tracy Veglahn – Marshall Area Chamber of Commerce  
Chris Harris, Lyon Co. Enterprise Development Corp.  
Bonnie Ludeman, U of MN Extension Regional Center - Marshall  
Lois Schmidt – Bremer

**Purpose:**

A lunch hour to informally discuss how each of our agencies is involved in promoting or marketing our services to the for-profit sector – to small businesses, to industry, to employers, to economic developers, to others (including consumer publics). Further, to consider advantages and obstacles to marketing to the private sector in a joint, cooperative manner.

Today's agenda was to review what each of us sees as outcomes from this effort, preview services from Southwest Marketing Advisory Center, share samples of marketing materials, and determine how to move on/move forward.

Mike Rich and Jim Muchlinski shared a proposal developed for the group to provide services to the participating agencies regarding the shared marketing issue. Any further questions on this proposal should be directed to Mike or Jim.

Mike Rich described his group's understanding of our aim/purpose, and his observations:

- We're looking for an umbrella to move all of our organizations forward – survival is going to mean adapting to the needs of the marketplace.
- We have some similar functions and some differing functions. If we work as a collective body, and do this effectively, result is that the public understands what we do; our differences and similarities.
- We are a collection of agencies that came into being at different times and for different purposes. Over time the environments that we work within change – politics and policies come in and out of favor. We do the best we can to adapt.
- This potential joint marketing project is innovative both for the agencies at this table and for the SMAC.

Specifics presented by Mike and Jim about the marketing services proposal:

- The Southwest Marketing Advisory Center (SMAC) is about determining what the needs of businesses in this community are.
- SMAC has gained experience in working with 120 projects with the goal of businesses/organizations understanding their own client base.
- SMAC would find out the thoughts of businesses that would be our clients.
- The market analysis process used has the advantage of resulting in services and approaches that resonate with businesses because services we provide (assuming they are designed to meet stated needs) are responding to what the businesses say they need.
- SMAC delivers factual, unbiased information. Sometimes clients hear what they don't like to hear.
- The process can incorporate avenues for interviewees/focus group participants to voice their frustrations (on confusing messages from our agencies – difficulty in discerning who does what); get these comments “out of their mouths into our ears.”
- The SMAC proposal includes focus group and survey components. A copy of the 5 page proposal draft with costs estimates was distributed.

Disregarding the cost, the group is asked to consider this proposal/idea for merit.

Group reviewed MN West Technical College informational packet as an example of an institutional promotional piece developed for a specific audience. Carolyn also shared MN West's experience over the years in learning to determine – by asking various consumer sectors – how they prefer the college to communicate with them. This is key to developing a relationship.

The group decided to schedule another lunch meeting. The SMAC folks will allow the rest of the group to discuss the market analysis proposal without them present. We will also consider a presentation to Marshall Rotary for the future as we get clearer on our path. One final thing to consider is the purpose we wish to accomplish. In light of identifying the actual purpose, we will then be able to make a decision on the proposal.

**Next lunch meeting:**  
**Wednesday, January 12, 2004**  
**12 noon – 1:00**  
**Lyon County Govt. Center, Room 3**  
**Lunch Provided by SW ABE**  
**RSVP to: [pthomas38@hotmail.com](mailto:pthomas38@hotmail.com)**  
Or call 537-7046