

**Meeting Summary**  
**Marketing Your Agency**  
**November 10, 2004**  
**Lyon County Courthouse, Room 3**  
**Marshall**

**Present:**

Karla Roisen, Pat Thomas – Southwest Adult Basic Education (ABE)  
Denise Myhrberg, MN DEED/Work Force Center (WFC)  
Michael Rich, Jim Muchlinski; SW Marketing Advisory Center  
Heidi Winter, Juanita Lauritsen – SW MN Private Industry Council  
Kevin Honetschlager – Job Service/DEED  
Carolyn Fransen – MN West Technical & Community College  
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)

**Job Service/DEED:** less applicant driven; more business focused; partnering is important. Key staff will be attending a training during the week of Nov. 15 on how DEED will be implementing a plan to collect information on business and employer needs in the region.

**WFC/DEED:** description above relates to new business services position focuses on listening to business needs; where are the growth industries; which services & agencies can help with business needs; then bring info back to appropriate groups to deliver. Business pilots.

**SW MN Private Industry Council:** PIC is a private nonprofit partner in the Marshall, Montevideo and Worthington Workforce Center offices. The agency is involved in a strategic plan at this time. The planning process is focusing on defining/redefining the PIC and internal benefit outcomes. The agency is not prioritizing an external structured marketing focus at this time. A newly-hired economic development/business partnership coordinator will be making contacts throughout the region with economic development and other partners to explore opportunities for fee-for-service and revenue resources for the agency.

**SW ABE:** is working with a federal directive to bring its adult education programs into workplaces; reinventing the ABE agency/concept to businesses, i.e. “we’re not just GED anymore.” A new brochure targeted to businesses and employers has been developed to communicate the workplace education focus.

**MN West Technical & Community Colleges:** have historically offered customized training in response to workforce needs. Remember that education to some extent does have a “profit” agenda. A marketing focus is not new to colleges, in that they traditionally market to the public to attract students. Tech & community colleges do bring training out into the community. New areas of focus are anything responsive to customers and employers. A new position within the system has been hired to help the institutions make these connections. MnSCU Chancellor has communicated that their system work with DEED. MN WEST is looking into a Job Skills Partnership grant

opportunity that may apply to a joint focus with the topic of this meeting. Proposal is due Jan. 3, 2005.

**SMSU/Southwest Marketing Advisory Center:** is a resource to the University and community by offering a service that helps organizations ask the public and community, “what do you think of us?” The center operates on a business model; no grants; has been involved in approx. 170 projects since starting, and has significant student payroll. The center can be a resource to a possible joint marketing effort evolving from this discussion. **Media:** general comments from Jim Muchlinski regarding experience with media career: media is bombarded with information. Several organizations working together makes message more powerful.

**Marshall Area Chamber of Commerce:** it was mentioned that Chamber has a “Grow Minnesota” Project. Chamber Director, Tracy Veglahn, was not able to attend today, but a description on this project from October *Chamber Perspectives* newsletter states: “Grow Minnesota! Is a statewide, private sector business retention and expansion initiative led by the MN Chamber of Commerce in partnership with thirty-five local chambers of commerce. ....MACC has three primary goals in joining the program, now entering its second year. We’ll be thanking business owners and CEO’s for contributing to our state’s economy; checking to see if there are any problems that we can help them solve; and gathering feedback and data to use in shaping local and state public policy agenda to better reflect the needs of Minnesota businesses.” The article goes on to report that visits to local businesses are made by a team offering one-stop resources and follow-up to identified business concerns. Visits will be coordinated with those conducted by DEED to “enable us to reduce duplication in efforts and reach as many companies as possible.” Gordon Crow, Director of Government Affairs at Schwan’s serves on the Grow Minnesota! state advisory board. Steve Strautz, MACC board member, participated in program training, and a local advisory board is being established.

**Bremer** - Bremer is a foundation-owned company – (Otto Bremer Foundation and Bremer employees own Bremer Financial Corp.) This is unlike the usual relationship in which corporate philanthropy is carried out via a corporate foundation arm or department owned by the business. Our sense is that even this financial services business with its unusual ownership structure, longstanding tradition and understanding of community responsibility and support is indicative of most private sector companies in that it is easily confused by (and possibly disinterested in) public sector projects that appear uncoordinated in their approach.

### **WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

General consensus following the information-sharing that many of the agencies represented are mandated or moving in a direction to build meaningful and specific relationships with business. We recognize the futility of undertaking this work independently in each of our individual silos. Group agreed that there is apparent value in planning marketing approaches together; let’s keep talking. **Next lunch meeting:**

**Monday, November 29, 2004**

**12 noon – 1:00**

**Lyon County Govt. Center, Room 3**

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**Or call 537-7046**

