



Building Connections

The primary mission and purpose of Vermont WoodNet is to address the needs of the Vermont woodworking community and all those in it, professional, amateur and academic, WoodNet members and non-WoodNet members, by maintaining a network of communications, creating and sponsoring educational programs, workshops and symposiums, providing FSC certification assistance, and generally expanding opportunities and effectiveness for all those involved in the creation of “Vermont Made” products, the sustainability of forest resources, and the maintenance of a healthy environment.

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Woodworkers Symposium & Trade Show

On May 21-22, 2010, VT WoodNet held it’s first ever statewide event at the St. Johnsbury Academy in St. Johnsbury, VT. The event was co-sponsored by both the St. Johnsbury Academy and Cabot Cheese and underwritten in part by a grant from USDA-RBEG. It drew people not only from Vermont but from New York, Massachusetts and New Hampshire as well.

The two day event was packed full of interesting activities and most of all educational opportunities.

On Friday night Governor Douglas was there for a kick off keynote talk. He was presented a beautiful maple burl pen from VT WoodNet hand crafted by John Brislin. This was followed by a panel discussion by five Vermont business owners who shared their business stories, the good, the bad and sometimes even the ugly. Both events were held in the Black Box Theater at the academy, a theater in the round, an excellent setting.

On Saturday there were ten education opportunities. They were mostly small business, marketing oriented

offerings, the kind most asked for by our members. We were pleased to also have on site woodworking demonstrations by some of the best that Vermont has to offer in wood turning, scroll sawing, jewelry making, carving and basket making.

We also had a Woodmiser saw mill on site with two different models sawing logs and a new Shop Bot table top CNC making small carved parts.

The event was attended by many partners as well including VWMA, Green Mountain Wood Carvers, Woodchuck Turners of Northern Vermont, SBDC, USDA, Yestermorrow School, Guild of VT Furniture Makers, who brought to those attending a view of their offerings for their business and how those services could enhance their bottom line.

Also present were typical trade show vendors selling shinny new tools hoping to get a few more woodworkers out of the woodwork to come and see what was available.

The event was our first and who knows may be undertaken again. It’s the first of its kind in Vermont specifically for woodworkers in many years. There is certainly a need and desire by that community to have events of this kind geared to what interests them as a group, networking and education.

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Calendar Dates

Sept 25-26	Vt Fine Furniture Festival
Sept 29	Vermont WoodNet Annual Meeting Wednesday, September 29 at 4:00 PM Vermont Woodworking School in Fairfax

SAVE THE DATE!
**Seventh Annual Vermont Fine Furniture &
 Woodworking Festival**

Saturday & Sunday; September 25 & 26, 2010
 Union Arena
 496 Woodstock Rd # 3 (Route 4)
 Woodstock, Vermont

Attend this premiere woodworking event in Vermont & shop for the best Vermont made wood products. Buy wood furniture, bowls, baskets, jewelry, carvings, flooring, cabinetry, etc. Something for everyone! Free shuttle ride to the Marsh Billings Rockefeller National Historical Park where you can take Park tours, watch more woodworking demonstrations, & learn how we care for the forests that provide our craftsmen with wood.

**Enter into the
 Vermont Fine Furniture & Wood Products Design
 Competition**

The competition will be held at the Union Arena, in conjunction with the 7th Annual Fine Furniture and Woodworking Festival on September 25-26, 2010. Woodworkers who are exhibiting at the Festival may display their entries in their booths. Others will be displayed in a Design Competition booth on the exhibit floor. Judging will take place on the Arena floor.

Deadline to enter: September 7, 2010

Win Prizes from:

Berkshire Products
 Vermont Natural Coatings
 Alderfer Lumber
 Duluth Trading Company
 Super Thin Saws
 Fine Woodworking Magazine
 Ball and Ball Hardware

Our judges will be:

Mark Schofield, Managing Editor of Fine Woodworking Magazine
 Philip Lowe, Instructor/Owner of The Furniture Institute of Massachussetts

John Ostrum, Architect, Program Chair & Chapter Director of CSI Vermont

**“Going Green” in the Green Mountain State
 Competition**

“Green” is the new gold standard and it seems to be tagged to almost anything across the goods and services spectrum. We, however, have a challenge that’s about as green ... or shall we say “earthy” as it gets. Your challenge ... seriously ... is to design the Green Mountain Comfort Station... a wooden structure that will house a composting toilet.

We understand the specifications listed in the entry form can be confusing, so we wanted to clarify some things for you.

The main items to focus on in your design:

1. Match the minimum dimension of the base:
 Length: 116"; Width: 66"; Height: 48".
2. Provide access to the battery and the compost pile for removing finished compost
3. Resist the moisture inherent in the composting waste.
4. Not exceed the fairly generous load rating for the unit; 3,500 lbs.

Please remember two things, we just want you to submit the design AND the designed structure will be the outside of the existing Clivus composting toilet units. We want this to be a fun design project!

**Vermont WoodNet Annual Meeting
 Wednesday, September 29 at 4:00 PM
 Vermont Woodworking School in
 Fairfax**

Wood Crafters Needed for Children's Project

RSVP/Godnick Operation Dolls is in search of interested and willing folks who would like to help build or design wooden items for children in need.

Items such as doll cribs, cradles, wooden trucks, step stools, rocking horses, doll houses and bookcases are in demand. They have a corp group of volunteers that need your help. If interested please call the RSVP office at 802-775-8220. They want to make sure they meet their goals for the 2010 holiday season.

You can donate new or used wooden toys, trucks, cars, games, etc. Those items can be sent to:

RSVP Operation Dolls & More
6 Court Street
Rutland, VT 05701

Operation Dolls annually provides over 10,000 items to over 2,000 Rutland County boys and girls, ensuring that families can provide for their children during the holidays.

Brand Your Products!

The Vermont Quality Wood Products logo and brand position statements are available to participating companies for use on their products, in their print materials, websites, and other applications. During 2004, the Council developed several new logos that include Vermont Made, Vermont Crafted, and Vermont Milled brand logos in addition to the original Vermont Quality Wood Products logo. These are available in two sizes, and color or black and white.

The Council received grant funding through EDA to promote the Vermont Quality Wood Products brand and as such, has waived user fees for 2009. Therefore, if you are currently a brand user, you may continue to use this brand for the next twelve months, at no charge. The Council is, however, accepting voluntary \$25 donations to be a brand user. Note: Brand agreements must be renewed on an annual basis in order to continue use of logo.

If you are not currently a brand user and would like to be, we need an application form filled out and submitted

via fax (802-747-7989) or mail to the attention of Kathleen Wanner. You will be sent access information when the application is received.

Access to the brand logos is available only to registered brand users who will receive permission from the Council administrator after the application is received.

Visit the VWMA Web Site at www.vermontwood.org for all the details.



Social Media and Small Business: A Match Made in Heaven?

By Josh Stailey, The Pursuit Group

As a small businessperson, you cannot help but notice all the hype surrounding social media. It's the most important trend in business today. Its juvenile prattle, posted digitally for everyone to see (for reasons that escape many). It's an effective way to start a conversation with your customers and prospects. It's a fad that will fizzle soon and disappear from sight. Opinions both pro and con seem to run the gamut.

So what is social media and does it work? With respect to the former, social media is a mix of blogs, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube and hundreds of other tools designed to enable what the experts call "many-to-many" conversations. It's big: more than 120 million Americans visit Facebook and Twitter every month. And it's now part of business: more than a third of companies already use Twitter to start conversations with customers. With respect to the latter, the answer is yes—it works:

BlendTec, maker of industrial-strength blenders for the home, has used viral videos on YouTube to boost sales by 500%. Using the title "Will it Blend?," the company has sliced and diced golf balls, a tennis shoe, even an iPhone. Since starting the videos, they have had more than 10 million views and have expanded their Facebook presence and recruited almost 13,000 fans.

A local independent pizzeria in New Orleans set a one-day sales record using social media. Two-thirds of the day's sales came from one source: Twitter. Baker Tweet provides an application that enables bakeries to tell their customers that something hot and fresh has just come out of the oven. And Kogi Korean BBQ, a gourmet food truck in Los Angeles, sends out tweets telling customers their next stop...there's almost always a line waiting when they get there.

Case-Mate, a maker of holsters and covers for mobile phones, created a novelty "Recession Case" out of cardboard that sold for \$1.99. Thanks to a blog post by an influential techie (a relationship that actually began through a Twitter exchange); the Recession Case was all over the Web in just a day. And Case-Mate's Website set an all-time revenue record the same day. The original

estimate of sales was 200 or so; four days after the blog post, they had sold 7,000.

Thousands of niche groups are sprouting up on Linked In. Want to learn more about IT systems for small law firms...there's a Linked In group with 575 members. Interested in selling more artisan-crafted items in your store...the Ten Thousand Villages group can connect you to 130 members around the globe. Want to connect with fellow fitness trainers...there's a couple of groups for them, too. And if you can't find a group, start one. The process takes about five minutes on Linked In.

In fact, a recent in-depth study found that companies with significant levels of social media activity grew an average of 18%, while firms with the least activity saw sales drop by 6 percent during the same time period. But that's just part of the story: social media is the great leveler; small companies can play just as well as giant competitors, meaning the big-marketing-budget advantage no longer exists for savvy marketers.

From that perspective, social media is more than just a good idea that's getting better. It's a competitive advantage that small business ignores at its own peril.

This One Personal Trait Will Cost You The Sale Every Time

By Larry Prevost, Dale Carnegie Training Instructor

Back before I became an instructor/coach, I assisted in several of the San Jose communications programs in the evenings while working a technical pre and post sales support gig during the day.

During one particular program, I was coaching several participants, helping them to enhance their communication skills and diplomacy. One sales rep in particular, Big Bob, was selling high tech IT equipment and was really into the coaching piece. At every opportunity, he looked for ways to apply what we reviewed in the program to his sales environment.

Big Bob had an imposing frame because he spent as much time in the weight room as he did in front of his clients. I'm sure that it had no impact whatsoever when he stood there face to face with his prospects and told them to "press hard because the third copy is yours."

Nevertheless, he approached me one day for advice on how to address a client with a particular issue. He was at a loss because the client wanted to go in one direction with a particular technology set. Big Bob, however, wanted them to go in another direction with a slightly different technology set. As far as Big Bob's wallet was concerned, it was a wash since his company was supplying all of the technology, regardless of the solution.

So I suggested: "Big Bob, you know, one of the principles that we reviewed in this program is to let the other person feel that the idea is theirs. So when you discuss your ideas with your client, make suggestions and let them feel that they are driving the discussion. As long as you are helping them in the right direction, you should be able to move the sales process forward."

Bob's response surprised me. He said: "Yeah, but I know I'm right. My recommendation is what they need and they aren't listening to me."

I was stunned after hearing this and my response just popped out before I could stop it: "Big Bob, do you want to be right or do you want to be rich?"

Big Bob started to respond, stopped, looked thoughtfully into space, started to say something again,

stopped, breathed a heavy sigh and then sat down. I thought for sure that he was contemplating leaving the program.

'My Ego Was on the Line'

But the next week, he showed up. He pulled me aside and said, "You know, I thought about what you said. And truthfully, up to that point, I wanted to be right. My ego was on the line."

"After our conversation, I had a serious talk with myself. I decided that I would rather be rich and that I didn't have to be right all of the time. It wasn't easy, but I took my ego out of the picture, sat down with the client and listened to them."

"I know my products. I'm an expert. But they know their data center better than anyone else does. "In there, they are the experts. I didn't realize that until I took my ego out of the equation. Once that was done, I ended up putting in the right technology and closing a bigger deal with these folks."

As sales people, we need to have a big ego. That big ego allows us to do some of the things that no one else can do so we can drive business. The challenge is not to let that big ego control us. We don't need to be the center of attention, the savior of the universe and we certainly don't need to be right all of the time.

We need to maintain control over the ego and be able to shut it off when we don't need it, like when we are listening to our prospects.

There will be times when you are in front of a client and you'll want to show off the depth of your knowledge. You may want to impress them with the size of your contact list or you may even want to intimidate them with your list of accomplishments. When this happens, realize that the conversation is now about you, not their issue.

This is when you need to put your ego in check and regain control and perspective of the conversation. The fastest way to do that is by asking yourself the following question:

Do I want to be right or do I want to be rich?

Leash the ego.

Good selling!

Tips on follow-up phone calls after a proposal is presented

After you present the proposal, do not leave your potential client until you have secured the next steps. You don't want to hand over your work and leave with nothing more than "hope to hear from you soon."

Outline the next steps for them and then follow through.

If the next step involves a follow-up phone call, then let them know when you'll place that call. Then, on the appointed day, call and let them know, per your previous discussion that you are following up with them. Here are some additional dos and don'ts:

1. Don't say "I'm just calling to follow up on the proposal." The word "just" in this context belittles your efforts. And, you are not calling to follow up. You are calling for the business—ask for it.

2. Do put an expiration date on your proposal. If you have some type of special configuration, additional services or you've included a special price on the proposal, you don't want that to be valid forever. Put something on your proposal that effectively says, "this offer good until May 31, 2010." You want to maintain control of the offers that you have out there. Make it easy on yourself by having the offer self-destruct at a given date.

3. Do leverage your network within the target company to stay on top of information that may have an impact on the decision. For example, if the decision maker gets called out of town.

4. Don't leave it to the client to initiate a return call. They are busy, and you are driving the sales process. Always make sure that everyone involved knows the next steps and that you will be calling them.

Also, always make use of your trial closes to gauge how the client is positioned. When you call them, make sure that the solution still fits their needs, that there are no additions and changes, that they are ready to begin.

Remember that asking questions is a great way to get your prospect's attention and break their preoccupation, especially when opening a call. Use them whenever you can to move the client in a favorable position regarding your proposed solution.

How can I find new business in my area?

There are a few ways to find businesses in your area. First, before you go checking out every single new business in your area because you just know that "everybody can use your product or service," I would encourage you to have your market identified and segmented as much as possible. After you have performed this task, choose specific search keywords that describe specific attributes for each of those segments.

Now, here are some options available to you:

1. Search engines. When you are performing your company research, you can go to Google, Bing or Yahoo! and type in a search on specific keywords in your local geographic area. For example, if you have a service that caters specifically to hospitals, searching on "hospitals in Cleveland Ohio" will pull up a search results listing all of the hospital websites in the Cleveland area. In addition, if a company has specifically registered their company with a search engine, like Google Places or Bing's Local Listing Center, you will see them appear in the section called "Local Business Results" right at the top of the results page. However, when dealing with small companies, many don't have the time or manpower to register and maintain their business profile with each of the big three. So these results, while useful, won't be an adequate snapshot of all businesses in your area.

2. Social Networks Specific to Businesses. Social networks like LinkedIn, Plaxo, and Zoominfo all provide information specific to various businesses and the people that work in them. Recently, LinkedIn made changes in its database engine to enhance the business listing results. Now, in addition to searching through business listings by keywords and location, you also can put businesses on your follow list and get notified when someone updates the company profile. But remember that most of those changes occur when someone from the company updates the entry. So if the company that you are targeting does not have a specific person in charge of marketing through social networks, chances are good that their company profile won't be updated in a timely fashion.

3. Paid Database Listings. You can always get listings from a company like InfoUSA, D&B, or Hoovers.

Organizations like these will provide you with a wealth of information on public, private, small, medium and large companies. Recently, the online database, Jigsaw, changed its business model and became a part of the Salesforce family. So you can use specialized apps to import contacts directly from the Jigsaw database into your Salesforce CRM. Remember that these organizations have a team of people collecting and collating information. Updates will happen regularly, but they won't be as quickly as updates on a social network. And they'll cost you.

4. Manta Database. As you may have noticed, Manta just changed the look and feel of our interface. And you may know that we have more than 63 million business listings that you can search through, again using your specific keywords and location filtering. What you may not know is that we recently released a new service called New Business Select. This subscription service gives you access to the thousands of newly formed companies each week that are not as easy to find in the general Manta database—or anywhere else for that matter. Finding these new companies ahead of everyone else allows you to offer your product or service before your competition, giving you a critical advantage. Find out more about New Business Select [here](#).

As I mentioned before, before you go hunting for new businesses, make sure that you know the market that you are targeting and that you know the keywords that relate your product to the needs of your market. As always, you want to focus your time and energy on the people who have a need, the authority, and the resources to buy your product.

Classified Section

For Sale, Services, Wanted



Vermont WoodNet Board Members

Bob Bouvier, Chair, 863-5644, wdubelieve@aol.com

Pat Babcock, Treasurer, 879-3778, pbabcock0311@comcast.net

Bill Baynham, 985-9311, Baynhb@aol.com

Dale Bergdahl, 238-0728, dale.bergdahl@uvm.edu

Gerald Bouchard, 425-6291, gamjb@gmavt.net

Russ Fellows, 899-3059, skunkmen@together.net

Barry Genzlinger, co-chair, 951-2501, batcabins@aol.com

Joe Laferriere, Secretary, 879-4348, jlaferriere@myfairpoint.net

Paul Lascelles, 879-7694, paulswoodworking@aol.com

David Spooner, 229-4800, dspooner@pshift.com

Save the dates

7th Annual Vermont Fine Furniture & Woodworking Festival

September 25-26, 2010

Union Arena, WoodStrock, VT

**Vermont WoodNet Annual Meeting
Wednesday, September 29 at 4:00 PM
Vermont Woodworking School in
Fairfax**

WANTED

Stories and pictures about YOU for the next issue.

Wanted: items for Classified Section

Have you got items to sell or services others might not know about? Do you need something? Send your stuff to Barry at batcabins@aol.com and he will get them into the newsletter.