

Getting biz down to ness

BUSINESS INNOVATION ZONE



Upcoming Events

September 21

Lessons Learned while Bootstrapping Business: The Non-Fundraising Path

If you're looking to start a business and get rich quick, skip the September Business Insights and Networking Luncheon. If you want to build a business from the ground up, while fueling your passion and enjoying your life, serial entrepreneur [Brian Hemesath](#) is happy to share a few stories on his insights gained over a decade of practice.

\$12 admission fee (lunch

Matthew Smith and Real Estate Fan Page Builder Advance to the Finals of the Dream Big, Grow Here contest

Matthew Smith of Des Moines was selected as the Central Iowa regional winner in the Dream Big, Grow Here contest. He won \$5,000 and the chance to compete with the other seven regional winners throughout the state for a \$10,000 statewide prize.

Smith's business idea, a Facebook fan page generator for real estate agents, received more crowdsourced votes than any of the other business ideas submitted. By the final tally, Smith's idea received 3,765 votes to the 2nd place's 3,187.

"One of the best aspects of this competition has been meeting all of the other entrepreneurial minded Iowans out there. There were some really amazing



included)

11:30 A.M.
September 21, 2011
Greater Des Moines
Partnership
700 Locust St., Suite 100
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October 19: Get a grip on your business

Even the most successful entrepreneurs occasionally find running a business more challenging than they expected. Many work longer hours and get less return on their investment of time and money than they would like.

On October 19, Jeff Garrison will introduce you to the Six Key Components™ of successful businesses. To get better results, Jeff will arm you with a set of simple and practical tools, which you can begin using right away.

\$12 admission fee (lunch included)

ideas submitted," Smith said, "it's been an honor to compete along side them."

The contest was open to emerging and existing Iowa small business owners who have an idea/dream for a business that they would like to build here in Iowa. Each contest participant uploaded a 1-5 minute pitch video and then worked to earn the most votes.

In partnership with University of Northern Iowa Regional Business Center, Central Iowa's Business Innovation Zone (BIZ) sponsored the contest and served as the Central Iowa region's host.

"People don't realize just how many innovative business ideas are incubating here in Iowa," BIZ Executive Director Mike Colwell commented. "They just need some support early on, and that's what this contest is all about."

Matthews plans on investing his \$5,000 into the development of his new business. He's anxious to compete at the state level and is counting on his network to help him put up a good fight for the grand prize.

Central Iowa sponsors include: Biz Innovation Zone (BIZ), Brown Winick, LWBJ Financial Capital Investors, Greater Des Moines Partnership, McGowen Hurst Clark and Smith, Silicon Prairie News and McLellan Marketing Group.

About Dream Big Grow Here



serve them.

A statewide contest entitled Dream Big Grow Here was launched, featuring \$1,000 monthly grants awarded online to emerging and existing Iowa entrepreneurs.

Given the success of Dream Big Grow Here and increased interest in online resources among innovators, the RBC approached a small group of statewide sponsors to provide matching funds for this year's regional contests and the statewide pitch-off.

In June of 2010, the University of Northern Iowa Regional Business Center (RBC) developed a partnership with the Iowa Bankers Association and the Community Vitality Center. Their goal was to attract and link emerging Iowa entrepreneurs with the capital resources available, within the state, to

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Pitch and Grow is Sept. 29

Don't forget to attend [Pitch & Grow V](#) set for Thursday, September 29. It is a great venue to "test drive" your pitch. If your not ready to pitch your company, think about attending to get some great ideas on how you might pitch in the future.

Who pitches: Entrepreneurs at virtually any stage in the business life cycle who want to practice their pitch in the areas of: Investment, Sales or Business Development.

Each entrepreneur provides a 10-minute pitch, and then receives 30-minutes of constructive feedback and ideas for taking their businesses to the next level. Audience members

take home new ideas on growth strategies for their own businesses. Everyone gains a rich networking experience in an open environment with other entrepreneurs, funders and business leaders. Pitch-Off: The top four pitches advance to a final round where entrepreneurs make a pitch and attendees vote on their favorite. The overall winner gets a sweet prize package.




Image via [Wikipedia](#)

ZEMANTA 

McLellan emphasizes the digital universe

Tackling trends, reminding us that the more things change the more they stay the same and setting the tone with the requisite Facebook photo of the crowd from his iPhone, marketing Guru [Drew McLellan](#), Top Dog at [McLellan Marketing Group](#), nationally known speaker and blogger, and (even more to the point as a trend spotter) father of a teenage girl, spoke to a packed house of more than 70 attendees at the August Biz Luncheon.



For the second consecutive year,  McLellan shared his views on current trends in marketing with an emphasis on the digital universe.

“In 2010 I told you about some things that were cutting edge that we won’t see impact your business for five years or more, the stuff we are going to talk about today, is impacting your business today.”

Before jumping feet first into the latest, McLellan reminded the group of an old marketing maxim that is particularly true with the cautious clientele we face in the post-recession marketplace; an axiom he would return to later:

First the client must KNOW you, then LIKE you and finally TRUST you.

In what could have been titled “Marketing in a Reluctant Recovery,” McLellan revealed trends in three intersecting spheres of technical, brand and society. In true sagely fashion, he eschewed one size fits all answers while choosing instead to leave the faithful with a series of questions on each trend designed to help them maintain their relevancy in an evolving profession.

Technical

In a nutshell, we have all become plugged-in 24/7 because mobile is becoming everything. Increasingly our access to information is channeling through our smartphones. Citing a series of startling statistics including that one half of the American population will have a smartphone by years end, McLellan concludes holding his smartphone aloft, “This is the Swiss Army Knife of this generation, it does everything for us.” He then presented a series of questions that all marketers should be answering, including:

- What does my website look like on a mobile phone?
- Should I take mobile payments?
- How can I use QR codes to help my clients?

Societal

Beginning with the observation, “Simply put, it’s scary out there. We are still nervous consumers.” McLellan revealed a recent study that indicated for the first time today’s adults do not believe their children will be better off, underscoring his theme that we face a marketplace of uncertain customers who are unwilling to commit in a struggling and volatile economy. Among the key questions he urges us to ask in this environment:

- Is there a competitive advantage to be found in this uncertainty?
- Can I build enough trust to dispel this uncertainty?

Brand

The third sphere of trends investigated is brand, where it is increasingly critical that the consumer understand your expertise. “You cannot be everything to

everyone, you have got to narrow your market, you have got to niche yourself and identify the target that you can consistently hit." Here, McLellan argues that content has become king. "Why? Because all we do is consume content 24/7 because our computer is in our pocket." Noting that the average person Googles five or more times a day, key questions coming from this discussion include:

- What platform should you use to share your expertise with potential customers?
- Are you talking about yourself or what the consumer wants to talk about?

Drew admonishes us to allow feedback, because if you listen, you will build trust.

Which brings us full circle, for in review we discover that the brand trend is the consumer encouraging sharing through content; the technology trend is telling us the consumer wants to connect where and when they are comfortable using their 24/7 access; and the societal trend is telling us they are afraid and want us to ease their fear. Stated even more simply, sharing becomes knowing, connecting where I'm comfortable becomes liking, and easing my fears becomes trusting.

And so Guru Drew brings us home again to the tried and true, of "Know, Like and Trust" emerging from the trends of 2011.

Check out all the key questions you should be asking with the full presentation and slides [here](#).

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