

Departmental Report

a. Novi B.A.T.

(Business Assistance Team)

Outreach to Small Businesses

6-27-07
To: Mayor and City
Council Members



NOVI BAT CITY COUNCIL PRESENTATION

Prepared by Cindy Uglow – Neighborhood and Small Business Manager, *C. Uglow*
Neighborhood and Business Relations Group

During one of my Oakland County Business Center Classes, it was brought to my attention that cities such as Rochester Hills, Royal Oak, Berkley, Wixom to name a few, had started a BAT program. BAT stands for Business Assistance Team. On April 16 of this year, the City mailed approximately 900 packets to our small business community (defined generally as up to 20 employees) explaining this program and received 34 responses for the team's assistance.

The City of Novi's team represent expertise from the private and public sector for small business owners to help themselves. Team members consist of representation from Oakland County Business Center, Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), National City Bank, for general financing, Chamber of Commerce and myself with the assistance from Matt Pegouskie, Community Relations Coordinator.

To date, the team (with their expertise) has visited 17 of those 34 small businesses addressing business related issues including, but not limited to the evaluation of potential product, service and initiatives. These Novi businesses vary from insurance, cosmetics, printing, medical and auto repair. We serve as an informational and networking resource, sounding board and generally assist the business to be as competitive and successful as possible. This program is complimentary and all information and discussions are strictly confidential. No business development questions are allowed by our private sector team members. There is a team captain for each meeting and is responsible for taking notes. These meeting highlights are then put in a follow-up letter after the meeting so that the business owner shouldn't be concerned about remembering what was discussed.

Common themes have been business plans, or lack of, defining who exactly their customers are, networking possibilities and marketing versus advertising.

This positive and pro-active program for our small businesses is only the beginning and addresses a few of the Economic Development Goals and Objectives by City Council as adopted on December 4, 2006; namely, retain (2.), working cooperatively with partners (4.), and sharing information with the community (5.).

DATE

123 SMALL BUSINESS
456 STREET
NOVI, MICHIGAN

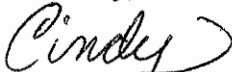
Dear Owner:

It was a pleasure meeting you during the Novi Business Assistance Tour (Novi B.A.T.) on May 31st. Thanks for the warm welcome. The team certainly enjoyed the visit.

As promised, I did want to summarize some of our points of discussion:

- You need to narrow down your target customers. It must be defined and focused.
- Once you focus on the type of customer you want to attract, target these businesses by working off a list and setting a time/goal (Thursdays from 2 – 4) and target 5 businesses per day. Follow-up within 48 hours.
- Network through existing memberships such as the Chamber groups, BNI or LBN groups.
- Need to build a relationship with the Small Business Association. You are also not listed in the SBA's Small Business Resource Book.
- Advertising has included Val Pak, effective mailer and direct mail post cards. Too much money spent with little return.
- Check out the competition – what are they doing different.
- Think about writing an article about yourself and get it into local newspapers or check out Novi.org
- Our team member from SCORE can assist you with forming a business plan. This plan is a living document that should be updated yearly.
- Holding staff meetings on a regular basis to brainstorm ideas, address concerns and strengthen your staff's relationship.
- Attend College "Career Days" to host workshops.
- Your exterior signage should have the 'lighting' color replaced. Window arrangements need to be rearranged or replaced to highlight the product line.
- Devise a system to track lost business and why.
- Delegate some of your tasks to your staff, with incentives, so you can concentrate on big-picture issues/expanding customers.

Sincerely,



Cindy Uglow, Manager
Neighborhood and Small Business
City of Novi, Neighborhood and Business Relations Group

NOVI BAT Outreach Initiative Spring 2007 Participation Request Application

Return request by Tuesday, May 15 to: **NOVI Business Assistance Team** (NOVI BAT) Attention: Cindy Uglow at (248) 735-5684
Questions? Call Cindy at (248) 347-0437



Tell us about your business

Business Name: _____

Owner(s) Name(s): _____

Address: _____ Zip: _____

Phone No.: _____ E-Mail _____

Business Structure: Sole Proprietorship Partnership Corporation

Non-Profit LLC Building: Own Rent
(If renting, please provide name and address of building owner) _____

Number of Employees: Full-time Part-time

Number of years in business: _____ Briefly describe your business: _____

Describe your major business challenge: _____

Describe your needs: Business Planning Building
 Marketing/Advertising Financial Management
 Remodeling/Construction Other: _____

Financing: Equipment Real Estate Construction Inventory

Working Capital Refinancing Contract

Other (explain): _____