

ASK THE SBDC ::

Insights for the Entrepreneur



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Bad Economy? Stop. Think. Go.

I know, I know. It's bad out there. But now's not the time to let a bad economy happen to you. It's time to fight...with your brain. Here are some marketing tips to consider:

- **Get your brand in shape.** Are you sending the right message? Do you like the way your business is perceived? Do you like the way you look and feel? This might be the perfect time to examine all those issues. Slow times are excellent for re-thinking your image to make certain you're focused and on target.

- **Kiss as many frogs as possible.** Or put another way: Network. Prospect. Service. When business is slow it's a perfect time to consolidate your key prospect database. And only attend those events that show promise of providing business. Now's the time to eliminate all those bad chicken dinners that do nothing for you except give heartburn.

- **Examine your digital footprint.** Web site. Proper search engine optimization. Blog. E-mail blasts. Facebook listing. Viral marketing. If you're not fully participating in the digital world, you're leaving a lot of money on the table. There are a lot of smart – usually youngish – strategists out there who can help.

- **Zig, when everybody else is zagging.** Be creative. Why hold back? There's nothing to lose. Above all, don't end up looking and sounding like everybody else. That's a sure way to lose business. Step out. Take a chance. Put yourself on the line. Make yourself a bit uncomfortable.

- **Go Guerilla!** Speaking of creativity and taking chances, open your mind and let the creative juices flow. Partner with competitors. Sponsor your favorite charity. Put that inflatable gorilla on the roof. You know you always wanted to do it.

There are resources available to help you with these issues. The Florida Small Business Development Center has offices all over the bay area. Call 813.905.5800 or check out www.sbdc.usf.edu. Their services are free. That's F-R-E-E. ■