

Small businesses boost earning (and learning) power through weekly workshops

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Tech Thursdays small business enterprise (SBE) events provide weekly presentations, exhibitor and sponsor resources, as well as raffles for attendees. *Blue Ocean Logic; Greater Southwest Development Center*

CHICAGO, IL – Between podcasts, books, blogs, webinars and social media content, there’s never a shortage of information on how to grow one’s business online. While searching through the battery of information available online, it’s easy to become overwhelmed. How can one know what information to use and which to dispose of? Fortunately, these issues (and more) are being addressed by local, savvy *small business* owners – just like you.

Tech Thursdays Chicago – an annual small business enterprise (SBE) workshop and curriculum series that presents practical technology and marketing solutions to help aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners with identity, positioning, technology and finances – has been in full swing during the month of October. Hosted at *Malcom X College* – located at 1900 West Van Buren, Chicago, IL 60612 – the weekly series promotes practical and affordable technology solutions to advertise, accelerate and manage business growth.

Small business workshops schedule and agenda

Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

- *October 8: Keep Them in Your Site.* Web content, navigation and calls-to-action.
- *October 15: Simplify Your Money.* Managing cash-flow online.
- *October 22: Maximize Your Marketing.* A social approach to integrated marketing.
- *October 29: Business at Your Fingertips.* Producing in the Cloud - Introduction to easy-to-use cloud-based productivity tools which can create seamless desktop and mobile information management platforms, dashboards and reports.

Greater, logical partnerships and leadership

Host and Executive Producer of the weekly *Tech Thursday* presentations, the **Greater Southwest Development Corporation** is a non-profit enterprise that offers a wide range of business, housing, financial, as well as senior housing services throughout Chicago. **Blue Ocean Logic** – a technology-based solutions provider of sales, marketing and project management-based initiatives – services business enterprises small and large, public and private, as well as international organizations within the federal sector overseas. *Blue Ocean Logic* was the event’s Program Director.

Free and discounted business resources offered by *Tech Thursdays* event partners ranged from free ground shipping of select items through *Microsoft*, to free trials offered by **Constant Contact** (e-mail marketing), **Hootsuite** (social media marketing) and **ZOHO** (customer relationship management).

A moment in the spotlight

During an opportunity to leverage her small business, event marketer and *Tech Thursdays* exhibitor Cat Wallace of **Cat’s Event Logistics**, spoke to October 22 workshop attendees about the importance of web presence. Wallace shared social media hacks she employs to spur engagement with her tribe, as well as tools and resources she uses in video marketing.

Blackwell Energies – an environmental consulting company that audits clients' monthly business expenses and provides premium office carbon reduction strategies for businesses, nonprofit organizations, and religious organizations – was one of many of the small business enterprise exhibitors, as was the **US Small Business Administration - Illinois District Office**.

Tech Thursdays event attendee and professional services copywriter Sharon Riley of *Riley's Resource Center* asked presenters how small businesses can convert social media followers to e-mail subscribers. Independent social media strategist and *Tech Thursdays* keynote speaker **Heather Carper** shared the importance of consistency in sharing relevant content and engaging with one's audience.

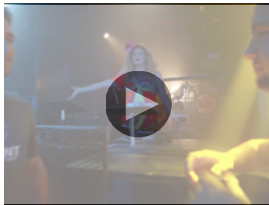
The October 22 workshop concluded with closing remarks by Chief Small Business Officer of the *City of Chicago Small Business Center (SBC)* **Roxanne Nava** and *Greater Southwest Development Corporation's* Director of Commercial and Technology Service, Christine (Tina) James. Nava and James emphasized the importance of small businesses working smarter by supporting one another, as well as taking advantage of the free business workshops and resources available through *Greater Southwest* and *City Hall's SBC*.

To register for the final week of *Tech Thursdays*, visit www.techthursdayschicago.com; tel.: 866-420-0296. These events are free and open to the public. Register to get on *Greater Southwest Development Corporation's* and *Blue Ocean Logic's* e-mail distribution for 2016 *Tech Thursdays* exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities.

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