

February 2009

DIRECT

from your Cobb Chamber of Commerce

Supplement to Georgia Trend magazine



COBB
Chamber of Commerce

Cobb Chamber introduces Cobb Chamber Business University

The Cobb Chamber of Commerce is proud to present the Cobb Chamber Business University. Business U is a place for business owners and their employees to stay up to date on important issues, learn new skills and overcome business challenges. Chamber members and the Cobb business community can use Business U to accelerate business growth, receive business advice and discuss business issues with other Chamber members.



Business U will use seminars, articles and the latest in technology to keep your business in the know about trends and issues in the business world.

As part of this new initiative, the Chamber is offering its first ever business blog at www.cobbchamberbusinessu.blogspot.com. Chamber members can read articles about the economy, current issues, upcoming events and business opportunities as well as guest columns from experts in a wide-range of business-related fields. Chamber members can become a part of the blog by going online and posting comments or submitting questions they would like to see answered online.

An e-newsletter also will be used to distribute the most up-to-date information. To subscribe to the Business U e-newsletter, email Katy Cleveland at kcleveland@cobbchamber.org.

For more information on Business University, go online to the Chamber's Web site

www.cobbchamber.org or contact Katy Cleveland at 770-859-2336 or kcleveland@cobbchamber.org.

Become a part of Business U blog at www.cobbchamberbusinessu.blogspot.com.

Cobb Chamber Business University Presents:

Human Resources in the Electronic Age

This seminar will focus on four hot-button areas including company policies on email and the internet; protecting trade secrets and other confidential information; preventing cyber harassment; and the 10 commandments of email. Learn from Daniel Shea and Michelle Johnson of Nelson Mullins Riley and Scarborough LLP how to guard electronic information from misuse and misappropriation, avoid cyber harassment and defend against problems that may arise from email and internet misuse in the workplace.

This seminar will take place on Feb. 5 from 8 to 10 a.m. Members: \$25 online; \$35 at the door. Non-Members: \$40. Online Registration closes on Wednesday, Feb. 4 at Noon.

The SalesMind Unplugged: How to Sell in a Recession

Worried about the economy? Need sales now? What's different about a SalesMind who knows exactly how to close more sales regardless of the economy? Award-winning author and speaker Doug Trenary will show you how to get the most from yourself, maximize your selling power, and increase your income in less time—whatever pressures you face. Bring your whole company!

This seminar will take place on Feb. 25 from 8 to 10 a.m. Members: \$25 online; \$35 at the door. Non-Members: \$40. Online Registration closes on Tuesday, Feb. 24 at Noon.

All seminars are held at the Cobb Chamber.

To register, go online to www.cobbchamber.org.
For more information or for discounts on groups of two or more, contact Katy Cleveland at 770-859-2336 or kcleveland@cobbchamber.org.

Nominate Your Flexible Workplace Program for the National Sloan Award for Business Excellence

Applications are now open for the 2009 Alfred P. Sloan Awards for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility. This prestigious award recognizes employers in select communities nationwide that are successfully using flexibility to meet both business and employee goals.

As one of only 30 select communities chosen to participate in this national, community-based initiative, Atlanta will enjoy the opportunity to learn, grow and be recognized for innovative business practices in workplace flexibility.

Commuter Club established a partnership with WellStar Health System to help promote the *When Work Works* Workplace Flexibility Initiative. *When Work Works* is a project of Families and Work Institute (FWI) sponsored by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation in partnership with the Institute for a Competitive Workforce, an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the Twiga Foundation.

For more information on qualifications and the application, contact Dana Stanzel at dstanzel@commuterclub.org or 770-859-2331.

Chamber taking nominations for Top 25 Small Businesses

The Cobb Chamber of Commerce is accepting nominations until Feb. 20 for the Cobb Chamber and AJC Media Solutions' 2009 Small Business of the Year awards. The 2009 Small Business of the Year will be selected from among the Top 25. Individuals can nominate themselves or other businesses.

Nominees must:

- be a member of the Cobb Chamber
- demonstrate an increase in sales and/or unit volume
- have been in business at least three years
- show evidence of contributions to community oriented projects
- comply with the U.S. Small Business Administration's size standards in defining a small business (www.sba.gov/size)
- be for-profit

The 2009 Cobb Chamber Small Business of the Year winner will participate in the Georgia Small Business of the Year competition.

Go online to www.cobbchamber.org to complete a nomination form or for more information, contact Katy Cleveland at 770-859-2336 or kcleveland@cobbchamber.org.

2009 Business-to-Business Expo

Mark your calendars for the 2009 Business-to-Business Expo on Thursday, June 4 at the Cobb Galleria Exhibition Hall.

The 2009 Cobb Chamber Business Expo is one of the largest Chamber sponsored business-to-business expositions in the area. As an active Cobb Chamber member, you will not want to miss your chance to become an exhibitor before time runs out!

More than 150 companies will showcase their products and services to more than 1,000 attendees. Network with potential customers, vendors,

executives and business owners.

This one-day event keeps participants on the competitive edge with networking, idea sharing, product introduction and service solutions. There will be an Economic Seminar prior to the Expo and an After Hours cash bar on the show floor at 5:30 p.m.

Exhibitor registration opens February 16. Receive a \$25 discount for early registration at www.cobbchamber.org. Early registration closes March 16 at Noon. Come and be a part of the best in Cobb County!



For more information, contact Megan Stambaugh at mstambaugh@cobbchamber.org or 770-859-2337.

Cobb Chamber Online Event Registration

The Cobb Chamber is asking all members to register and pre-pay for Chamber events online. Members who register online will take advantage of cost savings. Online registration deadlines are posted for each event. Please print out confirmations and bring to each event.

Refunds will not be given for those who register and do not attend. Any person who has made an online reservation may cancel and receive a full refund if the Cobb Chamber has been contacted by phone or email by the events' registration deadline. Event registration refunds will be issued after the conclusion of the event.

The Cobb Chamber looks forward to providing you better service through this new policy. If you have any questions, please contact Holly Bass at 770-859-2326 or hbass@cobbchamber.org.

Get the word out about 2009 events through online community calendar

Have you ever wanted a quick, easy way to get the word out about your events to the entire community? Have you been looking for a centralized place to find out what's going on in Cobb County? The Cobb Chamber has the answer you're looking for.

Check out the Chamber's community calendar at www.cobbchamber.org. You can enter your event information yourself by filling out a simple form, and once the Chamber approves your submission, it will be posted within 48 business hours on the community calendar. Member businesses can post their open-to-the-public events, while community organizations and non-profits are encouraged to submit concerts, fundraisers and other special events.

For more information, contact Samantha Ducote at 770-859-2349 or sducote@cobbchamber.org.

ACES Event



Carlton Washington and Lindsey Lanier of BB&T strike up conversation at the Dec. 4 ACES event held at The Georgian Club.

Next Business-After-Hours at Southern Polytechnic State University

Strike up some new business contacts at the Chamber's next Business-After-Hours on Feb. 19. The event will be from 5 to 7 p.m. at Southern Polytechnic State University's Architecture Gallery.

The Chamber's Business-After-Hours events are a great opportunity for business people to connect in a casual environment while enjoying complimentary food and drinks.

Business Showcase tables can be purchased for \$150 to display information and promotional materials, as well as recognition from the lectern. Availability is limited. For more information about Business Showcase tables contact Sharon Mason at 770-859-2369 or smason@cobbchamber.org.

Reservations are required. RSVP deadline is February 17 at Noon. Free for Members online; Members \$20 at door; Non-Members \$30. To RSVP, visit www.cobbchamber.org.

For more information on sponsoring a Business-After-Hours, contact Alexis Taylor at 770-859-2320 or ataylor@cobbchamber.org

Discounted health insurance for Chamber members

The Cobb Chamber is proud to offer discounted health insurance to small businesses. Cobb Chamber members that have between two and 50 full-time employees and that are located in Cobb County may receive a three to five percent discount on their group health insurance.

Through a partnership with MemberCare Alliance of Cobb County, group health insurance and other employee benefits are provided at reduced premium rates. The group health insurance plan is underwritten by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia.

The products are distributed through Chamber-member independent insurance agents. These professional agents play a key role by helping small business owners sort through the complexities of offering employee benefits.

For more information, contact Sharon Mason at 770-859-2369 or smason@cobbchamber.org or Lee Arledge of Purchasing Alliance Solutions at 770-579-1214 ext. 3035.

Showcase Your Business at a Cobb Chamber Event

Did you know that for a nominal cost, your business can have a table display and receive recognition during the program at some of the Cobb Chamber's premier events?

First Monday Breakfasts, the Area Council events (Smyrna, East Cobb, South Cobb, Cumberland, Marietta and Northwest Cobb Area Councils) and Business-After-Hours, all have the opportunity for your business to be recognized and stand out in the crowd.

A Business Showcase placed in a prime location at these events includes one table to display information and promotional materials, as well as recognition during the program.

For specific dates and pricing details on each event and to reserve your Business Showcase tables for 2009, contact Sharon Mason at 770-859-2369 or smason@cobbchamber.org.

Welcome New Members!

The following businesses joined the Cobb Chamber from November 16 to December 15, 2008:

Ashford Advisors, Inc.

Baker Supply

Carman Adventist School

Cheeseburger Bobby's

Coldstone Creamery

Comfort Suites Kennesaw

Commercial Lending
Solutions

Cornerstone Bank

Dickenson Gilroy LLC

Dr. Larona Gore,
Chiropractor

Facteon, Inc.

Georgia Building &
Maintenance Services

Golden Medical Corporation

Gymnastics Academy
of Atlanta

H&W Printing, Inc.

Jefferson Wells

Jennifer L. Smyth, Herbalife
Independent Distributor

Jocoba Marketing

John H. Pruett Construction
Company Inc.

KD Resource Group

Larry's Giant Subs

Local Edge

Metro Atlanta Automobile
Dealers Association

National Peanut Board

New Horizons for Children, Inc.

Paul Robinson, Inc.

Primrose School at
Brookstone

Send Out Cards/Loyalty.com

Shred-It

Sonic Drive In



By Jean Creech Avent
Georgian Bank, Vice President
Marketing & Communications

Relationships, Relationships, Relationships

“*I*n real estate, the most important thing is location, location, location, and in business it is relationships, relationships, relationships,” said Roz Lewis, executive director of the Georgia Women’s Business Council, at the *Atlanta Woman* magazine panel discussion, “Building Your Business in a Dried-up Economy.”

Ms. Lewis’ comments confirmed the importance of building and maintaining business relationships. As the economy weakens and the business landscape reconfigures, relationship building and retention take on higher priorities. Panel member Patricia Sibley, CEO of MediaSolutions, said she doesn’t conduct business with unpleasant people and recently fired a client with bad behavior, a hard decision, in hard times. She received loud applause, though, supporting her decision to put healthy business interaction above profits.

Relationships are intangible yet arguably a company’s most critical asset. How do business owners, sales managers or consultants know if their companies have built deep relationships that carry top-line impacting benefits like customer loyalty, customer collaboration, and, most important, word-of-mouth referrals?

The term *relationship* is used frequently, but the work and dedication to make the word meaningful can sometimes fall short—so much so that marketing guru Ron Scharbo says it is almost a “bankrupt term.” Who can clearly define it?

Research institutes have been attempting to measure relationships by testing certain aspects and behaviors like customer loyalty and satisfaction, with satisfaction being the most widespread measure. Relationships are built on more than simply satisfaction, though. Six indicators of healthy professional relationships have emerged through the research of academics in the public relations and communications field. The indicators are trust, satisfaction, control mutuality, commitment, communal and exchange. The last two indicators are types of relationships. When businesses measure relationships based on those indicators, they better understand the full relationship, capturing its dynamics, not

just slices of it. Many companies have some sort of customer research in place, typically measuring satisfaction, but the tactics may need updating to remain meaningful in today’s economic environment.

By enlisting relationship measurement based on the six indicators, a company gets a widescreen view of the relationship, which leads to a better understanding of clients’ attitudes and behavioral intention toward word-of-mouth referrals.

We’re most familiar with trust, commitment and satisfaction. Control mutuality, on the other hand, is not as readily defined. Control mutuality seeks to understand the power dynamics in business relationships, according to Drs. Jim Grunig and Linda Hon. We can all recall times when we were in control of a business relationship, and times when we didn’t control the power. Control mutuality measures the recognition that there is power in the relationship and that the power changes and is negotiable. This indicator is especially important in today’s economy, because for many businesses, power has shifted.

Grunig and Hon say that communal relationships indicate selflessness, a giving relationship where nothing is expected in return. Nonprofit organizations rank high in the communal category. Exchange relationships are typical in for-profit businesses. It is recognition that I, the consumer, want something a company manufactures, and I’m willing to pay (exchange) money for it.

The six indicators can be powerful tools to review and measure client relationships, and measurement offers you a fresh perspective.

The Internet displays more than three million pieces of information on “building customer relationships,” validating the business world’s desire to build and sustain healthy relationships among organizations and their publics. Healthy relationships make customers stay, but more than loyalty, they make customers and companies collaborators, leading inevitably to mutual growth and success.

Jean Creech Avent may be reached at javent@georgianbank.com.

ACES in February Networking: The Basics and Beyond



Achieving Chief Executive Success

Your ability to network successfully can be the difference between being okay at your job or being great at it. We all want to be great, don't we? Come learn (or relearn) the fundamentals and a whole lot more. We want you to be great.

The event will be held at Host Sponsor Dave and Buster's on Feb. 26 from 5:31 to 7:29 p.m. The speaker is Pam Fennimore of the Cobb Chamber of Commerce. \$20 online; \$35 at door.

Reservations are required. The RSVP deadline is Feb. 24 at Noon. For more information, visit www.cobbchamberaces.org or call Alexis Taylor at 770-859-2320 or ataylor@cobbchamber.org.

Chamber taking nominations for Glass Ceiling Award

The Cobb Chamber is accepting nominations until April 3rd for the 2009 Glass Ceiling Award presented by Cobb Executive Women (CEW) at the May First Monday Breakfast.

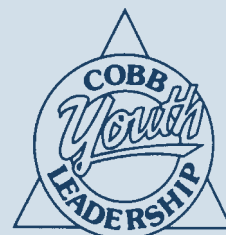
The honor recognizes an individual who has helped or allowed women to break through the "glass ceiling" by promoting women and championing their role in the business world.

This is the 19th year that CEW, an organization that promotes the advancement of women in business, has sponsored the award.

The winner can be a man or woman and does not need to be a member of CEW, but must be a member of the Chamber. Past winners include Fred Bentley, Jr. of Bentley, Bentley & Bentley, Joe Daniell of United Community Bank and Dr. Lisa Rossbacher of Southern Polytechnic State University.

Go online to www.cobbchamber.org to fill out a nomination form, or for additional information, contact Alexis Taylor at 770-859-2320 or ataylor@cobbchamber.org.

Chamber now accepting applications for 2009-2010 Cobb Youth Leadership Program



The Cobb Chamber of Commerce, under the direction of the Leadership Cobb Alumni Association, is accepting applications for the 2009-2010 Cobb Youth Leadership program. The program focuses on developing leadership skills through interactive participation. The participants meet local, state and national leaders helping to frame their leadership style for the future. Another element of the program

provides students from different schools a chance to meet and learn from each other as they expand their own leadership skills. Our community will reap the benefits from these relationships, as these students ultimately assume leadership positions in the future.

Each participant must be a high school junior for school year 2009-2010 and a resident of Cobb County or attend a school in Cobb County.

Applications are available online at www.cobbchamber.org. The deadline to turn in applications is April 24. For additional information, please contact Katie Edfeldt at 770-859-2334 or kedfeldt@cobbchamber.org.

Cumberland Galleria Turns Spotlight on its Success

*K*nown for decades as one of Atlanta's premier suburban office submarkets, Cumberland Galleria has taken great strides in recent years to become an urban center with live, work, play amenities. Come hear the area's success story and take a sneak peek at what the future holds at a special breakfast event on Wednesday, February 11 at 7 a.m. at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre. Tickets are \$65 each and are available online at www.cumberlandgalleriashowcase.org.

For more information, please visit
www.cumberlandgalleriashowcase.com.

Nominations sought for 2009-2010 Leadership Cobb class

*L*eadership Cobb, the Cobb Chamber of Commerce's leadership development program, is seeking nominations for members of the 2009-2010 class.

The program, which is in its 26th year, provides a learning environment that enhances personal and professional growth while benefiting the community and the region.

Nominees should be able to assume increased community responsibilities, as the program demands significant time and effort for nine months. Class members will be selected from business, industry, education, government and the other professions as well as from volunteer, civic and religious organizations.

Attendance is mandatory for all regularly scheduled events, which usually are held one day per month plus retreats in the fall and spring and periodic evening sessions. The program begins this fall and runs through spring 2010.

Take advantage of Chamber's resource center

*T*he Cobb Chamber's Walter Kelly, Jr. Business Resource Center provides research and data tailored to your needs. The center is a source of up-to-date information for companies or individuals searching for custom market data, new operation sites or expansion opportunities.

The resource center has acquired world-class database systems to assist those in need of demographic data, company profiles, available commercial properties and additional economic and community resource information. Our staff is available to assist you every step of the way.

The resource center accepts appointments between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Call the resource center for price information. All Chamber members are eligible to receive one complimentary basic research request.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact Katy Cleveland at 770-859-2336 or kcleveland@cobbchamber.org.



The 2008-2009 Leadership Cobb Class celebrates the holiday season at The Strand Theater.

The deadline for nominations is Feb. 20. Fill out a nomination form at www.cobbchamber.org or fax the nominee's name, title, employer, mailing address, email address, business and mobile telephone number to Ruth Evangelista at 770-763-4295.

Brittney Gray of the Georgia Department of Economic Development and Fitz Johnson of The Custom Suit Shop will serve as 2009-2010 co-chairs of the program.

New Advertising Opportunities for 2009!

Looking for a great way to advertise your business? Chamber members now have three new ways to showcase their company. Members have the opportunity to advertise in the Chamber's e-newsletter, printed *DIRECT* newsletter, as well as *DIRECT*'s online version through a banner ad which is featured on the Chamber's newly designed Web site, www.cobbchamber.org.

For more information, contact Christina Jones at cjones@cobbchamber.org or 770-859-2355.

Cobb in Focus goes digital

Cobb in Focus is turning over a new leaf. You can now read each issue at www.cobbchamber.org. *Cobb in Focus* is the Chamber's bi-monthly publication reaching over 58,000 readers per issue covering topics such as business, education, healthcare and arts and recreation. Visit the Chamber's Web site today and click on the *Cobb in Focus* link to view the magazine online.



For information about advertising, please contact Jamie Ryan at 770-650-1102 ext. 142.

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Chairwoman: Lisa Rossbacher of Southern Polytechnic State University
President and CEO: Bill Cooper
Marketing and Communications Manager: Lindsey Barnes
Publication and Production Coordinator: Christina Jones

EVENT SNAPSHOT

Visit www.cobbchamber.org for reservations, directions and to keep up with Cobb Chamber programs and events. For more information, call 770-980-2000.

Monday, February 2

7:30 a.m.
Members: \$20 online; \$35 at door
Non-members: \$50
Online Registration closes on Thursday, Jan. 29 at Noon

Tuesday, February 3, 10, 17, 24

7:15 to 8:45 a.m.
\$5 (Members Only)

Wednesday, February 4

7:45 a.m.
Members: \$15 online; \$25 at door
Non-members: \$35
Online Registration closes on Monday, February 2 at Noon

Thursday, February 5

8 to 10 a.m.
Members: \$25 online; \$35 at the door
Non-Members: \$40
Online Registration closes on Wednesday, Feb. 4 at Noon

Thursday, February 5, 12, 19, 26

3:15 to 4:30 p.m.
\$5 (Members Only)

Tuesday, February 10

Tuesday, February 10

7:45 a.m.
Members: \$15 online; \$25 at the door
Non-members: \$35
Online Registration closes on Friday, Feb. 6 at Noon

Friday, February 13

11:30 a.m.
CEW Members: \$20 online; \$35 at door
Online Registration closes on Wednesday, Feb. 11 at Noon

Thursday, February 19

5 to 7 p.m.
Members: Free online; \$20 at door
Non-Members: \$30
Online Registration closes on Tuesday, Feb. 17 at Noon

Friday, February 20

5 p.m.

Wednesday, February 25

Members: \$25 online; \$35 at the door
Non-Members: \$40
Online Registration closes on Tuesday, Feb. 24 at Noon

Wednesday, February 25

7:30 a.m.
Members: \$10 online; \$20 at door
Non-Members: \$30
Online Registration closes on Monday, February 23 at Noon

Thursday, February 26

5:31 to 7:29 p.m.
ACES Members: \$20 online; \$35 at door
Online Registration closes on Tuesday, February 24 at Noon

Monday, March 2

7:30 a.m.
\$20 (\$50 non-members) online
\$35 (\$50 non-members) at door
Online Registration closes on Thursday, Feb. 26 at Noon

Tuesday, March 3, 10, 17, 24

7:15 to 8:45 a.m.
\$5 (Members Only)

Public Meetings at the Cobb Chamber of Commerce: The Development Authority of Cobb County meets the third Tuesday of each month at 11 a.m.; and the Cumberland Community Improvement District meets the last Thursday of each month at 7:30 a.m. Call to confirm: 770-859-2357.

First Monday Breakfast

Location: Atlanta Marriott Northwest
Speaker: U.S. Congressman Tom Price
Program: Update from Washington
Sponsor: The Atlanta Opera

Business Builders

Location: Cobb Chamber of Commerce

Northwest Cobb Area Council

Location: The Georgian Club
Speaker: Dr. Sanford Chandler, President, Chattahoochee Technical College
Program: One College, Multiple Campuses — Leading the Way in Educational Change
Sponsor: NorthWest Bank & Trust

Human Resources in the Electronic Age

Location: Cobb Chamber of Commerce
Speaker: Daniel M. Shea and Michelle W. Johnson of Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough
Program: Seminar

Leads to Success

Location: Cobb Chamber of Commerce

Principal for a Day

Location: Various Schools throughout Cobb County

East Cobb Area Council

Location: Indian Hills Country Club
Sponsor: Freeman, Mathis and Gary

Cobb Executive Women Luncheon

Location: The Georgian Club
Speaker: Brigadier General Maria L. Britt, Commanding General of Georgia Army National Guard, NAS-Marietta, Georgia
Program: "HERstory"
Sponsor: Safe Path Children's Advocacy Center, Inc.

Business-After-Hours

Location: Architecture Gallery on the campus of Southern Polytechnic State University
Sponsor: Southern Polytechnic State University

Small Business of the Year Nominations Due

The SalesMind Unplugged: How to Sell in a Recession

Location: Cobb Chamber of Commerce
Speaker: Doug Trenary of Doug Trenary's Fast-Track, Inc.
Program: Seminar

South Cobb Area Council

Location: Coach George E. Ford Center
Speaker: Dr. Roger Tutterow, Professor of Economics, Mercer University
Program: 2009 Economic Outlook
Sponsor: Six Flags Over Georgia

ACES

Location and Host Sponsor: Dave & Buster's
Speaker: Pam Fennimore, Cobb Chamber of Commerce
Program: Networking: The Basics and Beyond
Sponsor: Northwestern Mutual

First Monday Breakfast

Location: Atlanta Marriott Northwest
Speaker: Jim Lientz, COO State of Georgia
Program: Campaign Kick-off
Sponsor: Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

Business Builders

Location: Cobb Chamber of Commerce