

# OSD Link



CONNECTING MINORITY VENDORS WITH GOVERNMENT SPENDERS

## Executive Director's Section: Supporting Business Owners



Greetings to all certified minority-, women- and service-disabled veteran business enterprises! As the Florida Legislative Session ends, we have seen great support and commitment from our state leaders to small businesses.

One of our main legislative priorities was to implement a uniform certification period for all certified businesses. We are pleased to tell you the House and Senate approved the bill last week. Thanks to Senator Lawson and Representative Carroll who sponsored and championed this initiative. We also appreciate the e-mails and letters of support for this initiative you, our customers, sent.

Our office has also executed two regional MatchMaker workshops and facilitated a statewide seminar on the Florida Economic Recovery Package discussing potential opportunities for business owners. Held in Daytona, nearly 500 attendees showed up to gain information on Florida's portion of the federal stimulus package.

I truly appreciate your feedback and ideas you have shared with us. I encourage you to continue to send your thoughts, suggestions and concerns on how we can better serve you. Thank you for your continued support and I hope you enjoy this issue.

Torey L. Alston  
Executive Director

## Keep Your Eye on the Prize: Customers

*Protect your customer relationships, increase your customer base, create a feedback loop and avoid over-communication.*

1. **It's all about the customer.** The underlying message for businesses of all sizes, especially in the current economic climate is simple: Hang on to your customers. The most important actions businesses can take right now are to stay in contact with customers, assure them that your business is here to stay, listen to their needs and treat them as if they are valued.
2. **Grow your list.** Keeping a customer is less expensive than attracting a new customer. Customers want valuable information from you; you just have to make sure they know it's available. Capturing their e-mail addresses and getting their permission is essential. Begin by making every connection count—in person, on the phone and online. When prospects visit your Web site, enter your place of business or call, be sure to get their contact information so you can expand your relationship. Remember to ask their permission before you add them to any distribution list.
3. **Create a feedback loop.** In this climate, going beyond expectations means offering customers more than they expect, letting them know you appreciate their business and thanking them for their patronage. Ask a customer in your store how things are going or place a phone call to key customers to get insight and reinforce your commitment to their satisfaction.

Passionate customers can be your best source of new customers. Integrate feedback into everything that you do, so your business gets smarter, stronger and more valuable to customers. Seeing that their feedback adds to your

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## Certified Vendor Spotlight

JHG Marketing, Inc. is a Tallahassee-based hotel site selection company owned by Janet Gay. Services range from obtaining proposals to negotiating contracts to obtain the lowest price and amenities. What makes JHG Marketing's services the best? Its services are free to you. For more information about JHG Marketing, Inc. E-mail [jhg1420@aol.com](mailto:jhg1420@aol.com) or call (850) 224-5501.

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success gives customers a sense of ownership and pride, increasing the likelihood they will become an evangelist for your business.

4. **Balance the need to communicate.** Balance the need to communicate with the risk of overdoing it. Too much communication can be as damaging as too little. Be deliberate and selective in your communications. A communications calendar helps manage the frequency of communications, and measures such as e-mail open rates help measure the effectiveness of programs.

Source: Gail Goodman - Entrepreneur.com

## Tips for Success

Have you recently moved, changed your telephone number or e-mail address? Please remember to **update your contact information** and commodity codes at <https://Vendor.MyFloridaMarketPlace.com>. For assistance, please contact the MFMP Helpdesk at (866) 352-3776.

Do you need a duplicate copy of your **certification certificate**? Contact the Office of Supplier Diversity at [OSDHelp@dms.state.fl.us](mailto:OSDHelp@dms.state.fl.us) to request a copy and within 24 hours we will e-mail a duplicate certificate to the address listed in [MyFloridaMarketPlace.com](https://Vendor.MyFloridaMarketPlace.com). For more information, contact the Office of Supplier Diversity at (850) 487-0915.

As a registered state vendor, you can receive **electronic notification of solicitations** and purchasing opportunities in the State of Florida. All you need is a working e-mail address to receive the updates. Please visit: [http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/main\\_menu](http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/main_menu)

Are you a certified minority- or woman-owned business available to provide services or commodities to government buyers **before or after a natural disaster**? If you are, join the 2009 list of emergency suppliers at [http://dms.myflorida.com/business\\_operations/state\\_purchasing/florida\\_emergency\\_network](http://dms.myflorida.com/business_operations/state_purchasing/florida_emergency_network). For more information, e-mail [flemergencynet@dms.MyFlorida.com](mailto:flemergencynet@dms.MyFlorida.com).

## Dates to Remember

### Big Bend Regional MatchMaker in Tallahassee

May 20 tentative | 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### Southwest Florida Regional MatchMaker in Fort Myers

May 28 | 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



## Bid Opportunities

The University of Central Florida solicits bids for the maintenance and cleaning of its parking garages and surface parking lots. For more information about bid 9023LCSA, visit [http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/main\\_menu](http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/main_menu) or call Luis Aviles at (407) 823-5889.

The Florida Department of Health solicits an Invitation to bid (ITB) to purchase and have hurricane shutters installed for Volusia County Health Department facility located at 1845 Holsonback Drive, Daytona Beach. For more information about ITB DOH08-106, visit [http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/main\\_menu](http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/main_menu).

The Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission requests bids for the purchase of a pasture renovator(s) for the Southwest Region of Florida. For more information about solicitation FWC 08/09-105, visit [http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/main\\_menu](http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/main_menu).

The Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission requests bids for the purchase of equipment for the continued build out of the Florida State Regional Domestic Security Task Force Waterborne Response Teams (WRT). For more information about solicitation FWC 08/09-70, visit [http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/main\\_menu](http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/main_menu)

## News Alert:

### Delaware Hosts Florida's Office of Supplier Diversity

At the end of March Office of Supplier Diversity (OSD) representatives and an Insight Center for Community Economic Development representative visited the State of Delaware's Office of Management and Budget Office of Minority & Women Business Enterprise to continue the state peer-to-peer initiative. During the visit, the OSD representatives met Delaware's key stakeholders and offered advice and suggestions for their program.

### Election of new Council Members to the Small and Minority Business Advisory Council

Welcome to our newly appointed and reappointed members of the Florida Advisory Council on Small and Minority Business Development. The Council advises and assists Secretary South in carrying out duties related to minority businesses and economic and business development. For more information on the Council, visit [www.dms.MyFlorida.com/OSD](http://www.dms.MyFlorida.com/OSD).

## Important Links to Remember

### Veterans' Business Outreach Center Program

Provides valuable information for Florida's Veterans.

<http://www.vboc.org/>

### Florida Procurement Technical Assistance Center

Assistance to all Florida firms during any phase of conducting business with federal, state and local governments, at no charge

<http://www.fptac.org>

### Florida Small Business Development Center

Assistance to start, grow and succeed, as a business in Florida.

<http://floridasbdc.org/>