



## Central Alabama Women's Business Center

Serving Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, Blount, Walker, Talladega & Tuscaloosa Counties

# The Newsletter

A Newsletter for Women Entrepreneurs in Alabama

January/February 2003

## How To Get Free Publicity for your company

By: Ann Bryant, IdeaWorks  
Public Relations

Did you ever wonder how all of those OTHER companies seem to get their names mentioned in the newspaper, and you don't?

Why would you want to get mentioned by the news media anyway? The primary goal is to help establish your company as a well-known and highly respected name within your market area. Mentions-no matter how small - by the press help to establish your credibility. Your company may be providing an excellent service or product, but



being good is not enough. Unfortunately, great work alone will not bring clients in the door. People must hear about your company.

Most people judge businesses on whether they have heard of them or not. How many times have you heard a name mentioned and someone else would say dismissively, "Never heard of them." It's the

kiss of death.

If people have not heard of you, they think you can't be very good. If they have heard of you, you must be good. It's that simple.

Since it is not possible to go door to door, how do people hear about you? We know that many customers come through referrals, and people recommend two types of businesses: those they have experience with and those whose names they have heard a lot. For this reason, getting your name mentioned in the mass media is of primary importance.

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**Carmin Industries** specializes in the custom cutting of any material from glass to granite, steel to stone! Other operations include CNC Bending, Welding, Machining and Metal Finishing.

### Why did you start your own business?

I started **Carmin Industries** because I needed a job and had 2 children going into college.

### What do you love about being a woman in business?

It is a new frontier. I have not thought of hiring a woman or not hiring a woman, I look for the best person to propel the company. My general manager, Dorothy M. Wiltingham, who I have high regard for, earned her degree with a 2 year old on her hip and now she has an MBA in technology and is a Certified Production Inventory Manager. Women here run machines, unload, AutoCAD, to paying the



**Featured Entrepreneur:**  
Carolyn Minerich  
Carmin Industries

bills. All our employees are cross trained. This makes the business successful. I want to see that 10 years down the road my employees are successful.

### What words of encouragement can you pass on to future entrepreneurs?

Don't get discouraged—Strive and you will thrive! At the end of each day it is important for us to

ask ourselves, 'Have we done what we said we would do, and is it what the customer wants?' No one will give you anything, you have to work hard.

### Tell us about a proud moment for you.

I received U.S. and Alabama Small Business Person of the Year Award, 2002. I had to read the award letter 3 times before my husband confirmed that I had won. It was a proud moment to take my husband to Washington and receive this award.

I try to give back to the community by being a partner with the high school in a co-op program. As well as creating success stories. I am not a success story yet. I hope to continue to grow and triple the size of the company next year. I get up every morning and run then I come into work and I am having a great time.



*Dreams arise, Joy  
Struggles ensue, shiver  
Success comes forth*

haiku by:  
T. Phillips 2002

### Services:

- One-on-one counseling
- Business Plan
- Marketing Plan
- Financial Assistance
- Technology Use (Internet/ E commerce)
- Employee Management
- Mentoring Programs
- Networking opportunities
- Educational courses
- How to successfully grow/ maintain your business
- Resource/ cash flow management
- Corporate/ government procurement processes

### Central Alabama Women's Business Center

A project of the Schlarb Foundation for Women Entrepreneurs

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As a small company, you probably will not be able to afford high-priced advertising to get your name recognized. That is the great thing about publicity. It's like free advertising—only better.

People are automatically suspicious of advertising, but if the newspaper or TV station mentions you positively in a news story or feature, people tend to believe it, and it does not cost you a dime.

You do not have to begin your publicity campaign by trying to get a huge story in the newspaper. Small steps are very effective.

Start by sending short announcements to the news media on a regular basis—consistency is the key. If you send one brief article but never send another, you have wasted your time. Announcements should be sent when you:

- Add someone to your staff
- Win an award

- Open a new office
- Schedule an event which is open to the public
- Send someone to a conference
- Become an officer or member of the board of a national or regional trade group

Always try to send a photograph when you have a newsworthy item. It helps attract attention to your story. A small black and white head shot is all you need in most cases.

If you need help in preparing an announcement, we can provide samples for you.

We can also help you get your announcement to the right person at the best publications for your message. (see box)

As you prepare a news announcement remember to send it to clients, board and advisory members, civic organizations, vendors, all of the people and companies who are

interested in your progress. If you operate in a smaller community, send it also to your community newspaper, such as the Shelby County Report or to the Leeds News.

Stay tuned for Part II: How to get free publicity.

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# Recommended Reads



The Central Alabama Women's Business Center would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the Self-Directed Learning Center hosted by the Birmingham Business Resource Center. The Learning Center offers a wide variety of products that can guide you through the start-up or growth process. Products include Entrepreneur Magazine Start-Up Guides, Small Business Administration's Publications, reference materials, and various books that range from planning a business to buying a franchise. Below is an abbreviated list of what is available.

**Start-Up Guides**

- Bakery
- Restaurant
- Vending
- Catering
- Hair Salon
- Lawn Care
- Import/Export
- Consulting
- Car Wash

**SBA Publications**

- HR Management
- Strategic Planning
- Financial Management
- Pricing
- Cash flow
- Copyrights, patents & trade marks
- Budgeting
- Inventory management

**Videos**

- Guerilla Marketing
- Home-Based Business
- Making Successful Sales
- Business Planning

# Technology Corner



## Understanding Firewalls

**By: Patricia Todd, technology coach**

If you work on a company computer network you have probably heard of "firewalls". A firewall is a barrier between your computer or network and other internet users. A computer firewall works like a fire-

wall in an office or apartment building.

A firewall is a program or hardware device that filters information coming to your computer. It blocks intruders to your computer system by recognizing each computer trying to access your system. If the firewall doesn't recognize the intruder, it will block its access. Most of the times these

intruders are professional hackers that are trying to access networks. The firewall blocks "public traffic" to your system.

If you are interested in a personal firewall, check out Norton Personal Firewall 2003 for only \$59.99 or go online to learn more at [www.howstuffworks.com](http://www.howstuffworks.com)

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As a friend of CAWBC we depend a great deal on your contributions in order to continue helping women entrepreneurs.

**Your contribution is tax deductible. Check payable to : ECS Foundation**

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