

# IT'S YOUR BUSINESS

CONNECTIONS FOR SUCCESS

Volume 3 • 2011

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## THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

JULY, 2011

Susanne Morreale-Leeber CCE



In response to member input, each newsletter issue will be focused on a specific area that could benefit you and how you conduct your business. This issue is devoted to technological tips and how to use technology in marketing your business. I would like to thank our contributing authors: **Karen Callahan**, @dventures Online; **Debra Murphy**, Masterful Marketing; **Emily Greenwood**, EKG Networking Inc.; **Mitch Freundlich**, AccelaGraphics of New England.

Please visit the Marlborough Regional Chamber website to experience the updated information and the expanded member events calendar as well as the monthly "BizSnips" videos on the home page. These short videos are produced to inform and teach the viewer about business, techniques for better business and various offerings. If you are interested in participating and taping a "BizSnip" for your business, please email me at [susannem@marlbroughchamber.org](mailto:susannem@marlbroughchamber.org).

Another new feature of [www.marlbroughchamber.org](http://www.marlbroughchamber.org) is the Chamber Blog. The button appears at the top of the Home Page. Postings appear every two weeks and all the previous BizSnip videos are on the blog pages. Please visit the blog and take advantage of the information posted there. Participation is the key to your expanded contact list. By attending the various Chamber events, you can take the time to develop relationships that will lead to new clients and referrals. One of these opportunities happens the first Tuesday of the month, we offer this free networking event called, **First Tuesday Business Talks at Main Street Café** on Main Street, Marlborough from 9:00am to 10:30am. Every business person is invited to participate in an informal networking meeting with me to not only to find out how to utilize the chamber resources and events, but to let the other attendees know what you and your business offers and to get to know about other Chamber member businesses.

This is only one of the many opportunities to expand your contacts with tips to make them customers. Please visit [marlbroughchamber.org](http://marlbroughchamber.org) to see what other opportunities are available to you and your employees.

Your Connection For Success!

Susanne Morreale-Leeber, CCE, IOM  
President & CEO




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## **QCC Announces Programming in Marlborough Options Available for Fall Semester, 2011**

On June 28, 2011, QCC announced plans for new programming at a luncheon meeting hosted by the Marlborough Regional Chamber of Commerce at the Marriott Courtyard Boston Marlborough. In the fall, QCC will be offering a Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Certificate training program as well as Photovoltaic Training, ESL, and General Education classes at Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School in Marlborough. Options include day and evening classes and credit or non-credit/certificate credentials.

Prior to the announcement, QCC worked diligently with a Leadership Team for many months, examining business community, educational and economic needs in the Marlborough-area, in relationship to QCC's goal of shortening the distance to make higher education more accessible in the communities it serves.

QCC President Gail Carberry addressed the gathering, noting that "...we are currently facing a knowledge-based economy and MA is positioned to thrive on its brainpower." She thanked the Leadership Team comprised of local business leaders, elected officials, Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School officials, Nichols College personnel, Marlborough Chamber of Commerce members, as well as QCC faculty and staff for their dedication and partnership, saying that "...creative solutions require strong partnerships." She added that community colleges are an affordable pathway that students can use as springboards for higher education and that QCC is poised to be able to offer educational opportunities for students as well as the communities they live in, to succeed and thrive.



President Carberry turned the program over to Dale Allen, QCC's Vice President for Community Engagement, who discussed market analysis data in support of the Leadership Team's vision to add QCC programming in Marlborough. Data was gathered by surveying High School students, business employers and a local adult population for responses on higher education options, gaps in training for businesses and job opportunities for skilled employees. Data concludes that the need for a higher education facility in the area is existent and well-established.

**Quinsigamond Community College is the most affordable higher education in Worcester County.** As a regional leader in education and workforce development, QCC serves the diverse educational needs of Central Massachusetts by providing affordable, accessible, and high quality programming leading to transfer, career, and lifelong learning.

## The Top 6 Must-Have Plugins and Widgets for WordPress® Blogs

### All in One SEO Pack

Provides a behind-the-scenes mechanism for bloggers to help themselves **get found**. For each page and post you can define the *meta data* that can help a search engine like Google better understand who you are and what you do (i.e. help yourself get a better ranking for a more qualified audience). <http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/all-in-one-seo-pack/>

### TweetMeme

Displays a button before or after your post that allows viewers to retweet your post. You need a widget like to help your audience **take you viral!** <http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/tweetmeme/>

### Email This Post/Page (WP-Email)

Help your audience *help you*. Add this to your WordPress blog so that your audience can **take you viral!** This includes a log of who sends which posts to whom. The log information is kept private to your blog, and it gives a good sense of what the hot issues are and who your "advocates" are. <http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/wp-email/>

### Subscribe to Comments

This is a must-have in order to **build community** and encourage conversation. A reader who leaves a comment would click this so that he/she can be notified via email whenever someone else leaves a comment... they can follow the conversation and...leave another comment. And so on...and so on... <http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/subscribe-to-comments/>



### Cforms

Use this plugin to easily create forms in your blog. A form encourages your audience to connect with you, and when created with some thought, you can design a form that actually pre-qualifies prospective clients. This is a very robust plugin with lots of functionality that helps you create connections that breed familiarity...and people want to do business with people they know and like.

### And my newest favorite for blog presentation management...

### Dynamic Widgets

When you add widgets to the sidebar, they generally display on every single page. This plugin allows you to designate on which pages to display the widget and on which pages to exclude the widget. <http://wordpress.org/extend/plugins/dynamic-widgets/>

*Karen Callahan is owner of Adventures Online and has installed and customized over 50 WordPress blogs starting way back in 2004. She provides in-person and over-the-phone WordPress training, as well as consults to businesses regarding blogging strategy. She can be reached at 508-480-8833. Learn more about Karen at <http://www.adventuresonline.com/adventures-online-web-design/karen-callahan>.*

### Why WordPress?

BlogWorld New York, May 2011  
→ "Almost 15% of websites in the world are WordPress-based". WordPress is not just for blogging these days. Companies are choosing WordPress for its Content Management (CMS) capabilities

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## Protecting Your Business' Most Valuable Assets.

In the news recently we have all seen weather take its toll on towns and businesses. There are basic steps a business can take to ensure its equipment is as safe as it can be in a storm and backed up against damage.

American Power Conversion (APC) produces battery backup units which protect against power surges, brownouts and lightning strikes. The regular \$8.00 surge protector purchased at the local store is designed to protect against one power surge or hiccup but will need to be replaced after that. A battery backup unit is designed to withstand multiple surges and brown outs and will keep the equipment on for a period of time during a power outage. Software is available with certain units to monitor the power and in the event of a loss trigger a safe shutdown of the equipment. After the power is restored, the software can be configured to turn the machine back on. For desktop models, an APC BE 750G is appropriate and retails for approximately \$94.00. For servers an APC SC 1000 is appropriate and retails for approximately \$235.00.

Backup solutions have become much easier for businesses to attain and use. An easy solution for a small business is Norton Ghost with two external usb hard drives. This will create a backup solution to each hard drive of the system. One drive can be rotated offsite for disaster recovery. The software can be configured to email a backup status update each day letting the company know its systems are backed up. Even if using an online solution, a business should always make sure they have created a reliable backup.

Emily K. Greenwood is co-founder with Ted Dutter of EKG Networking, Inc. a technology services business providing support to small businesses as their "IT Department". EKG Networking has been in business for over 15 years in the Marlborough area. We can be contacted at 508-460-1920 or [www.ekgnetworking.com](http://www.ekgnetworking.com).

# BUSINESS CONNECTIONS



## Creating Solutions For Business

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Maureen Letendre  
 President, In Demand Coaching

**Be our guest for lunch any first Friday of the month, and see our group in action. Just call the Chamber office to reserve a seat: 508-485-7746.**

## QR Codes offer convenience to customers, profits to businesses

A young couple out on a leisurely drive happen upon their dream house, with a “for sale” sign in front. But how many bedrooms? Baths? It’s too late the call the real estate agent, but there’s an icon of black squares on the sign, and they have a smart phone. Within seconds of holding up the phone’s camera, they find out the home has three bedrooms, two baths, and a pool in the back yard. There’s even a link to a YouTube video, where they can tour the home before making an appointment...



A businessman at a trade show is handing out business cards by the hundreds. He’s quick to point out the series of black squares on the back, and the fact that, when scanned by a smart phone, his contact information pops up, ready to add to the phone’s address book. He’s also handing out mugs and t-shirts; the square icons on those items take users to his mobile-friendly web page. It’s his best show yet...

Those squares of black are called QR (Quick Response) codes, and they’ve been around since the mid-90’s, although only recently has the marriage of mobile web browsing and multi-channel marketing allowed them to become commonplace in this country. QR codes can be used to display text to the user, to add a vCard contact to the user’s device, to open a specific web address, or to compose an email or text message. You’ve seen them in magazines and subway ads, and with mobile browsing set to overtake desktop browsing in the next few years, you’ve only seen the tip of the iceberg.

Any web destination, including video and social networking sites, can be encoded. The codes can be sent electronically, or printed on anything you can apply ink to; business cards, brochures, t-shirts, bumper stickers, umbrellas...your only limit is your imagination.

Brochures with QR codes added can link to more product information, demonstration videos, or a site where users can purchase the product they’re reading about. Direct mailers can link a QR code to coupons or limited-time offers. Make that page accessible only to those who scan your code,

and you can track the effectiveness of your campaign with incredible precision. Get Facebook “likes” and Twitter followers by linking the code to your social networking sites. Put them on window decals so

users stopping by after hours can get information about you when you’re not open for business. Print them on your invoices with a link to where they can pay online. Billboards, ads, letterhead, trade show give-aways...they’re all a natural fit for including a QR code. A few “don’ts” are in order as well. Don’t make your web address so long it can’t easily be read—find a site that will shorten your URL, and your code will be cleaner. Don’t link users to a site that’s not mobile friendly, or they’ll quickly leave your page in frustration. Don’t forget to test your code—while there’s a 30% error margin built in, meaning you might be able to alter its appearance, there is a limit to how much you can change the code for design purposes, or how small you can make it. Don’t forget to make your destination page interesting to users who take the time to scan your code.

But don’t ignore QR codes. The practical applications of the technology are overwhelming, and the convenience to your customers is more than reason enough to include them in your next direct mailer, or to reprint (with your contact information on the back) your half-full box of business cards.


*Michael Koykka has been a graphic and web designer for Accelagraphics of New England for over 16 years. The QR code for Accelagraphics.com is displayed above.*

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## 10 Marketing Tips for Gaining Online Visibility

Here are my top 10 marketing tips to help your small business gain more online visibility with your target customer.

1. **Create a vision and set realistic goals for your business.** What's that have to do with marketing, you ask? Knowing your vision will help you make decisions on what types of activities you will need to get where you'd like to go. Goals break the process into smaller pieces to allow you to get there one step at a time. Without a vision and a set of goals, you may make some decisions that lead you nowhere.
2. **Know what makes you different and make sure you are able to communicate it clearly.** Most of the time, it's not something complicated. In fact, many of us overlook our key strength because it seems too simple to us. Once you identify what it is, clearly communicate why this is of value to your ideal client. Stay focused and develop your expert reputation around this unique skill.
3. **Understand your ideal client intimately and know what keeps them awake at night.** If you know your ideal client, you will be able to create the content they need and the services that will attract them to you. This knowledge also helps you avoid tactics that won't work, wasting time and money with little to no return.
4. **Develop your list of keywords and use them strategically throughout all of your online properties.** Knowing how people search for what you have to offer is critical to your online visibility. Do your research and make it a habit to use these phrases throughout all of your online profiles to help the search engines index your material more effectively.
5. **Create a top notch WordPress website for your business.** As the center of your online presence, your website/blog is the most important marketing tool you have. Don't risk your image with a website that is poorly developed and hard to maintain. A WordPress website enables you to easily add new, relevant content that your audience needs.
6. **Be generous with your knowledge.** Give away valuable content that will attract prospects to you. Write an ebook, develop a white paper or write in your blog regularly. This content demonstrates your capabilities, builds your reputation as an expert and will help people decide whether you can help them solve their challenges.
7. **Be consistent with your brand.** Think through what you want all of your web properties to look like before you create them. Start with your Website and then develop your Facebook Business Page with the same look. Create a consistent Twitter background and don't forget to brand your email newsletter. Try to create a user name that you can use across all social media sites that is relevant to your business.

8. **Create a complete and consistent local business listing in all the search engines.** Add images, a keyword rich profile and point it back to your website or blog. Get satisfied clients to write reviews as these can be incorporated into the listing. For your Google Places page, reviews are also compiled from third-party websites. There are many directories on the Internet, but start with the following:
  - Google Places Page (formerly Google Local Business Listing)
  - Bing Business Portal (formerly Bing Local Listing Center)
  - Yahoo! Local
9. **Get involved with social media.** Start with a blog and post regularly based on what makes sense for you. Then incorporate other social media activities that make sense for your business. If your target market is not regularly on Facebook, don't immediately set up a Facebook Page. If you want to reach the CFOs of major companies, set up a rich profile on LinkedIn. You can determine what sites will be best for your business based on mastering tip number 3.
10. **Don't be afraid of online marketing.** Although it seems overwhelming at times, online marketing is a process that can be planned, tracked and measured. Create a realistic plan (and get help doing so if you need to), put activities into motion and track them to see how they work. Don't let fear paralyze you from taking action because doing nothing is riskier than doing something not quite right.

**Final piece of advice:** Take a little time to learn enough about online marketing so you can tell when someone is claiming they can do something that they cannot. Seek help and guidance from someone who can walk you through the steps. However, beware of those who claim to be online experts because they know how to use Facebook or Twitter. Find an experienced marketing resource that has the experience to connect what these tools do with how to use them for marketing.



*Debra Murphy is a small business marketing coach and trusted marketing advisor who specializes in online and social media marketing strategies. As president of Masterful Marketing, she empowers small business owners to take control of their marketing for better results. You can read more about online and social media marketing on her blog at [www.masterful-marketing.com](http://www.masterful-marketing.com) and through her Facebook Business page at [www.facebook.com/MasterfulMarketing](http://www.facebook.com/MasterfulMarketing).*

## Massachusetts Association of School Committees Recognizes Contributors to Assabet Valley

Recently the Massachusetts Association of School Committees Immediate Past President, Kathleen Robey, visited Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School to make three presentations to significant contributors to the school. The three awards were Outstanding School Partner, Community Leader for Public Education, and Friend of Public Education Award.

For the category of **Outstanding School Partner**, Suzanne Morreale-Leeber accepted an award on behalf of the Marlborough Regional Chamber of Commerce. Morreale-Leeber, CCE, IOM, President and CEO of the Marlborough Chamber for the past 24 years, has fostered and maintained a twenty year relationship with Assabet Valley. She has assisted Assabet in establishing strong business and industry partners for the high school's technical and academic programs, including, but not limited to, Intel Cooperation, Raytheon, Boston Scientific, Marlborough Hospital/UMASS Medical, NStar and National Grid. The Chamber also supports the overall education of Assabet's students, in part through the following examples: the chamber's invitation and request for active participation of Assabet's superintendent as they pursue a college presence in the city with a focus on a partnership with Assabet Valley and Quinsigamond Community College; support of and participation in Assabet's State Scholars Program,; marketing and program support through the Chamber's Educational Showcase, Biz to Biz events and School Business Partnership,; annual scholarships to eligible Assabet students; and internship opportunities for Assabet's Business Technology students at the Chamber office.

The Marlborough Regional Chamber of Commerce is a not-for-profit, private organization that has been serving the community since 1924. Under Morreale-Leeber's leadership the Chamber created the Marlborough Regional Community Foundation, Inc, a 501 ©3 non-profit corporation so that the Chamber can legally collect tax-exempt contributions and disburse the funds in support of non-profit community activities. This Foundation is a valuable resource for education, business and economic development. Additionally, the School Business Committee has worked with Assabet in providing intern and extern programs



for teachers and students along with school to career partners. Through the efforts of Morreale-Leeber and her staff, the Marlborough Regional Chamber of Commerce, representing over 650 businesses, received accreditation by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Only about 15% of the Chambers of Commerce across the country have received this distinction. Leadership recognition for Ms. Morreale-Leeber have been extensive; Outstanding Citizen Award, Chamber Executive of the Year for New England Chamber of Commerce Executives Award, Business Person of the Year - Framingham State University, Founder and participant on the steering committee for the 495 Metro West Partnership, Founder of the United Way of Tri-County, received the George Reynolds United Way Award and Chairperson of Metro West Economic Council.

The **Community Leader for Public Education Award** was presented by Robey to Catherine Gregory Mogavero. For the past twenty years, Cathy Mogavero has been actively involved with Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School. She promotes the high school through her participation on Assabet's State Scholar Committee, Program Advisory Committee, School/Business Partnership Program, the Cooperative Education Program and Scholarship Committee, attending regular meetings for these initiatives and providing valuable insight from the business perspective. She contacts business leaders to support the school as members of a technical program advisory committee, guest speakers and/or prospective cooperative education employers. Furthermore, as Executive Vice President of the Chamber of Commerce, she meets a tremendous amount of people who work and live in the city of Marlborough. Often, parents meeting with the school's Admissions Coordinator will indicate that Cathy Mogavero encouraged them to visit the school and enroll their children. For more

## New Member Investors to the Marlborough Regional Chamber of Commerce

### **Dream Collaborative, Gregory O. Minott**

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### **Bay State Alarm Security Inc, James McStay**

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than 30 years Mogavero has worked in the field of nonprofit development, holding such positions as Director of Alumni Affairs and Associate Director of Admissions for a two year college in Boston, a Director of Development for a private educational institution with grades kindergarten through high school and for over 9 years was the Executive Director of the former Hudson Youth Center, now the Boys and Girls Clubs of Metro-west. Her professional affiliations include: Avidia Bank, Board of Corporators; Massachusetts Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives, Board of Directors 2004-2013, Association of Fundraising Professionals Central MA Chapter, Boys and Girls Club of Metro-west Board of Governors and Together We Can Family Network (formerly Assabet Valley Family Network). In addition, Mogavero holds the designation of Certified Fundraising Executive and is a graduate of the Chamberlain School of Retailing in Boston. She earned a Bachelor's degree from Mt. Ida College and also has a Certificate in Development from CSM Associates, Madison, CT.

## HALF OF SUCCESS IS JUST SHOWING UP!

Friday, July 15, 2011	<b>Professional Development Series</b> Sheldon Prenovitz of Administrative Business Resources Chamber Conference Room - Bring Your Own Lunch (BYOL)	11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Wednesday, July 20, 2011	<b>Annual Steak &amp; Lobster Cookout</b> Hudson Elks Pavilion, 99 Park St., Hudson, MA	5:00 - 7:30 pm
Friday, August 19, 2011	<b>Professional Development Series</b> Michael Lashua of Edward Jones Chamber Conference Room - Bring Your Own Lunch (BYOL)	11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Friday, September 9, 2011	<b>Women's Business Council, Luncheon and speaker</b> Embassy Suites Hotel 123 Boston Post Rd West, Marlborough, MA	11:45 am - 1:15 pm
Thursday, September 15, 2011	<b>BIZ2BIZ Showcase</b> Marlborough Courtyard by Marriott Route 20 West & Felton St, Marlborough	4:00 - 7:00 pm
Friday, September 16, 2011	<b>Professional Development Series</b> Ralph Navarro of Navarro Computing Chamber Conference Room - Bring Your Own Lunch (BYOL)	11:30 am - 1:00 pm

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