



SMALL BUSINESS MARKETING ACADEMY

About The Academy— *Comprehensive - Classroom Style - Curriculum Driven*

The Small Business Marketing Academy is an opportunity for the owners/managers of small businesses to learn, share and plan for a growing and thriving business. The program assembles 25 business owners who have been in business for at least 2 years and have 25 or fewer employees. Participants come together once per month for 6 months for a full day of learning from local industry experts and to engage in roundtable discussion to apply practical advice and best practices. The Academy runs twice per year with classes beginning in July and January. Classes are held on the last Wednesday of the month.

The Academy will cover topics such as branding, media, messaging and marketing through technology. At its conclusion, each participant will leave the program with a customized marketing plan with the help of an assigned mentor. (see program schedule for complete descriptions)

To participate in the Academy, applicants must submit an application and agree to the terms of enrollment which include payment of a tuition fee of \$150 for Members (\$300 for non-members), completion of a business assessment prior to the program and a pledge to attend all classes of the program.

Example Program Schedule*

Day -1- Branding Basics A strong foundation of branding is essential to any marketing plan. With the help of local agency experts, this class will explore the concepts of branding beyond the logo but at the same time, offer helpful tips and tricks on the important ingredients in defining the brand you build. From business cards to websites, learn the newest and most important factors in how your company presents itself to customers and how to maximize brand loyalty.

Day -2- Essential Marketing Plan Ingredients Learn the steps and components of creating (or updating) a marketing plan. From a panel of marketing professionals representing small, medium and large companies in our region, participants will develop a clear understanding of the fundamentals required in an effective plan. From situation analysis to market identification, hear how the experts map their plans down to the details.

Day -3- Media and Advertising This day explores the importance of public relations and media management as well as how to identify and understand media promotion. Panelists will include local print, radio, television, billboard, electronic and other media to present and discuss the opportunities of advertising in the Greater Augusta market.

Day -4- Marketing Through Technology Take a deep dive into the purpose, function and effectiveness of websites, facebook, twitter, emails and all social and electronic media to discover what can be most relevant for your business. Learn from local experts on where your resources and marketing dollars will provide the best return on investment and how to allocate resources so that your company is not left in the dark.

Day -5- Messaging Learn the latest in demographics and consumer habits that can impact your business and prepare you for future market shifts. Millennials, in total numbers, have now surpassed the baby boomers opening up both opportunities and risks for any business. Panel members will discuss the nuances of different target markets and the messaging that resonates for a variety of demographic audiences.

Day -6- Create A Plan The final day of the Academy is dedicated to the creation of a customized marketing plan with the help of an assigned mentor. Each member of the class will leave the program with a professionally reviewed plan that captures Academy learning with the goals of each participant in successfully marketing their business.

***Actual programming may differ.**