

client: morefocus group inc.
web site: businesscafe.com
contact: Cassie Johnson
delivery address: morefocusblogger@morefocus.com
blogger: Janet Muniz
word count: 242
post date: 042108

Continuing Education

How do you keep up with all the new things going on in your own industry?

My husband just returned from attending a three-day seminar on project risk management. His company budgets for a plethora of education classes they offer to their employees, some required by law and some not. These instructional confabs are scheduled as business trips or as one-day retreats from the office or in the workplace. Any way, there's a whole lot of information being disseminated.

Do you read trade publications? Attend conventions and trade shows? Participate in seminars, continuing education classes, webinars, teleseminars? How about books, newsletters, newspaper columns, web sites, memberships, radio or television shows—do you read blogs?

So many sources exist these days that it may be a daunting task to actually create a budget for keeping up with the times and to schedule this stuff into your day planner. I've worked for companies that don't like to have their managers away from the office for more than a couple of days, at the most. I've also worked for companies that don't like sending their people to trade conventions for fear of recruitment by another company—yes, many take an opportunity at conventions to find qualified people for their businesses.

If your company buys new technology, many times the agreement includes training for employees. Such a deal.

What's become your favorite way to stay connected to your business today? Send a comment!

Janet Muniz

client: morefocus group inc.
web site: businesscafe.com
contact: Cassie Johnson
delivery address: morefocusblogger@morefocus.com
blogger: Janet Muniz
word count: 148
post date: 040708

The Green Revolution

It's interesting to see how our color choices are affecting our business. With all the re-thinking, re-prioritizing and re-cycling going on in the business world today, you could say that it's sparked an eco-friendly revolution.

Not only are companies making plans to reduce their carbon imprints on the globe with a timetable, consumers are taking a personal interest in them. It's more than just "the coolest" to care about the environment now. For consumers as a whole, they are requiring it from the products they buy—and the companies that make them.

It makes me think about the history of industry, like the days of the industrial revolution. What a time of new ideas, innovative productivity and change. The industrial revolution also prompted a robust economy back then.

Let's hope the green revolution helps to inspire our current economy to embrace another color: black.

Janet Muniz

client: morefocus group inc.
web site: businesscafe.com
contact: Cassie Johnson
delivery address: morefocusblogger@morefocus.com
blogger: Janet Muniz
word count: 137
post date: 022108

TO DBA OR NOT TO DBA

DBA stands for “doing business as.” It’s a handy—and generally inexpensive—tool for those offering freelance services. You can come up with a name for your business, legally open a checking account with it, and begin to grow a brand using that name.

You can create your new business name, i.e., DBA online or by visiting your state agency. You may need to check a database to find out whether your business name is actually available before you register it. Generally, the process takes little time, comparatively speaking, to say, setting up an LLC.

My DBA came in handy when a client of mine felt more comfortable issuing payment to a business name instead of an individual. But I think the branding opportunities offer the real value of a DBA.

Your thoughts?

Janet Muniz

client: morefocus group inc.
web site: businesscafe.com
contact: Cassie Johnson
delivery address: morefocusblogger@morefocus.com
blogger: Janet Muniz
word count: 137
post date: 031708

Employee Happiness

What makes employees happy?

According to our current businesscafe.com pole, 77% of you agree with the statement, "Companies need to realize that happy employees are productive employees." Well, how can companies realize this?

I operate with the notion that I create my own happiness—in life as well as in business—so what responsibility does a particular company have for my happiness as an employee? As a full time employee and as an independent contractor, I generally know what the company values, then I decide if I can be happy working under those conditions. Now, this process could take years, as I've continued with jobs I'm not happy doing. Or I take the project and walk away from the company after I complete it.

In what other ways can this statement be interpreted?

Janet Muniz

client: morefocus group inc.
web site: businesscafe.com
contact: Cassie Johnson
delivery address: morefocusblogger@morefocus.com
blogger: Janet Muniz
word count: 239
post date: 032708

Cyberbullying

I come across some information about cyberbullying during one of my reading sessions recently. This form of harassment has gotten itself an updated name, as it's happening through email, cell phones, and text messages. It also seems to be more prevalent among children these days as they get broader access to these ways of communication.

Cyberbullying is electronic attacks against a person or persons such as sending mean, vulgar or threatening messages or images, spreading private information about another person to a wide group of people, or using a person's identity to send messages with the intent to make that person look bad.

A study by Magellan Behavioral Health Services gives some good tips if you think your child—or you—are a victim of cyberbullying:

1. Do not respond to any suspect message
2. Save the suspect message or image as evidence; Do not erase them
3. Try to identify the author of the suspect message; your Internet Service Provider (ISP) may be able to help here
4. Check out the possibility of blocking future contact
5. Investigate whether the messages are being sent over your school district's Internet system; School administration has an obligation to intervene
6. Analyze the seriousness of the messages and consider contacting an attorney
7. Contact your local police if the cyberbullying includes threats of violence, extortion, obscene or harassing phone calls or text messages, stalking, hate crime or pornography

Janet Muniz

client: morefocus group inc.
web site: businesscafe.com
contact: Cassie Johnson
delivery address: morefocusblogger@morefocus.com
blogger: Janet Muniz
word count: 262
post date: 041008

Truth in Advertising

I'm working on a writing project for a freelance graphic designer's web site, and I'm wondering just how far I can stretch the facts about the designer's business.

Sometimes a written presentation of a company or brand can sort of expand on its description, using the "we" pronoun when it really means to use "me." For instance, including a sentence like, "We design award-winning work..." to infer that the company is full of employees verses being the business of a single artist.

Is it a toss-up? I think not. Crafting these marketing messages is my game, and I intend to capture the essence of the product – in this case, the work of a talented designer – in an authentic way.

When the CourtTV network re-launches itself as TruTV, I watch a trailer about it before a movie. I think the transformation is brilliant. The network's trademarked tagline is, "Not Reality. Actuality." With reality programming being all the rage all over the remote, TruTV raises the bar on it by defining their particular brand of reality programming as actual events. In reality, much of the content does indeed happen (no pun intended). Plus the marketing message could be on its way to inserting the concept of "actuality" into American vernacular—if, of course, the network can build viewership. Wow. Hire that branding company!

The point? Advertising is a powerful medium. It's really not a place to try and trick the consumer by glossing over the essence of a product. Use those attributes to paint an accurate picture for them.

Janet Muniz