

# Make some New Year's resolutions for your business

By Megan McRaney

ITS THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN, AND you're probably making resolutions to lose weight, get more exercise or break a bad habit. But let's face it, you're probably not going to stick to any of them -- so why not create some realistic goals to help your business start the year off on the right foot instead?

January is a good time for small and medium businesses to take a look at how their company did last year and where they'd like it to head this year. And with the economy improving, many businesses may need to switch gears and refocus their yearly goals to take full advantage.

Here's a list of several beginning-of-the-year goals that can steer your business in the right direction:

- Revise your business plan:** Updating your business plan should be a regular process, but if your business hasn't revisited its plan since last year, the beginning of the year is a good time to start, said Jaunta Rudison, owner of business consulting firm Rudison's Enterprises Inc. in Buford.

The marketing and financial portions of the plan are the most important and need to be followed, she said.

- Set a budget -- and follow it:** Included in the business plan, the budget is a key tool in a smoothly run and profitable business, Rudison said.

But the budget is not something to be created only to ignore it later in the year.

"If they are not following their budget or haven't followed it the prior year, businesses will probably have a lot of problems with their accounting and profit and loss," Rudison said.

Each time your business spends money that was not planned for in the budget, those funds will come out of profits or income, she said.

- Keep in touch:** If your business deals



Jaunta Rudison, owner of business consulting firm Rudison's Enterprises Inc.

with vendors, the beginning of the year is an excellent time to revisit your vendor list, said Jerry Hardiman, president of Archway Solutions Inc., a business consulting firm in Tucker.

"Obviously, if there are vendors that you only hear from in a personal way once a year when you get a Christmas card, you may want to think about that," Hardiman said.

And just as vendor connections can dry up, customer relationships can also wilt if they are not tended to regularly.

Don't wait until a problem arises to call a client, Hardiman said. Good customer service depends on keeping in touch with customers throughout the year.

**Update your technology:** A smoothly running business needs up-to-date equipment, hardware and software to run efficiently.

Be sure to replace or upgrade equipment that may be holding your business

back, Rudison said. The time lost to a slow printer may be costing your business more than a new printer would have.

- Tune up your sales force:** January is a good time for businesses with a sales force to review last year's sales figures, Rudison said.

Reviewing sales figures can reveal many things about how sales are going, from how an individual salesperson is performing to what products or services may need to be phased out due to poor sales, she said.

- Look for ways to grow:** If your business is humming along, it can be easy to get into a rut.

But as you plan for the year, be sure to take a long, hard look at customers your business could be serving or products and services that your business could offer to increase sales, Rudison said.

Technologies and industries can turn on a dime, and your business's core focus

could be thrown off target.

- Get your taxes in order:** While most businesses should have finished up their tax planning for the new year by January, it's never too early to plan for the next year, Hardiman said. But if you still haven't drawn up a tax plan for 2004, get to it, he added.

- Upgrade your Web site:** As a business shifts its focus, marketing or product and service offerings, the Web site should reflect any changes the business is making during the new year.

"There's nothing worse than a Web site that's out of date. If it's not up to date, you're better off not having one," Hardiman said.

- Take stock of your staff:** While many businesses have cut back workers or held staff sizes steady, some businesses may be ready to beef up their staff this year, Hardiman said. Assess how much you expect your business to grow or improve this year, and then find temporary or permanent staff to handle the growth, he said.

- Get involved in your community:** Many business owners belong to business and trade organizations and networking groups, but many overlook the value of business-free community activities, Rudison said.

Join the board of a non-profit organization or get involved in charity and civic organizations, she said. In addition to doing some good in your neighborhood, you can also develop enriching personal relationships with other people in your community that can become the strongest kind of business lead.

*"Specialized to Meet Your Needs"*

## Rudison's Enterprises Gives Companies Professional Image, Organization and Management

Are you looking to improve your current management strategies in order to increase profitability? Are you looking for more time to work in your field of expertise?

You are not alone...help is available.

Many entrepreneurs have drive and determination. They are specialized in their areas of expertise but they lack knowledge and experience for structuring a business.

Rudison's Enterprises can review your overall operation and provide you with the technical support you require to establish controls, implement essential changes and design a specific program which will improve organization within your business structure.

"Your daily struggles can be eliminated by use of good management strategies," as stated by Jaunta Rudison, head of Rudison's Enterprises.

"We are capable of providing training and development for your entire staff. Staff development is the key to success for all businesses," she said.

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**"Use good business practices and you can keep most fires from burning. I once had a manager that religiously utilized the 'shirk and dive' theory of management. He shirked his responsibilities and dived when the fire got hot!"**

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Jaunta began her career in management in the early 70's. She became quite proficient as a manager and developed her skills in planning, organizing and directing all phases of departmental operations.

Her background includes management positions in several leading banks where she utilized staff motivational techniques and performed as troubleshooter in various departments.

In 1986 Jaunta decided to put her entrepreneurial spirit, communications skills and sales ability to work. She founded Rudison's Typing Service. Realizing that typing is a seasonal business, she developed Rudison's Enterprises, which now provides management consulting services. This division of the company supports an expert management team



*Jaunta J. Rudison, President of Rudison's Enterprises*

which offers marketing approaches, computerized record keeping services, and training in building a business plan.

"Many businesses are started without a plan. You must have an idea of where you're going, and how to get there," she said. Her firm offers consultation on how to do research, feasibility studies, demographic studies, comparative analysis and financial projections; something most small business owners need but don't know where to start.

Communication is very important in business, "Managers should not expect their employees to be clairvoyant," she said, "Clear and concise instructions and employee manuals should always be available."

"Rudison's Enterprises is specialized in management consulting and the professional aspects of business and they are interested in promoting this philosophy while encouraging beginning, struggling and ambitious entrepreneurs.

The "*Prestigious Awards Gala*" was developed from this concept.

"It is my belief that this affair will create a network for vendors while providing them the opportunity to benefit directly

from a raffle. To my knowledge this concept has not been utilized before," she said. "This affair will also encourage vendors to participate in other trade shows to expose themselves. Meeting other successful people is a plus as well."

"We can help you develop methods for your business that will provide you the time to generate business in your field of expertise," she said.

### *"Prestigious Awards Gala"*

Honoring Bernadine C. Washington

A Networking, Fashion Show and Entertainment Extravaganza  
Win Shopping Sprees: \$150.00, \$100.00, and \$75.00 from Chicago's Leading Designers and Vendor Tables  
**Advance Tickets \$15 • With Plugger \$15 • At the door \$17.50**

**Meet Trisha Mann, Miss Black Chicago, Featured Entertainer  
Thomas A. Dorsey, Lifetime Honoree Award Nominee**

## Bernadine C. Washington To Be Honored At Premier Prestigious Award Gala

Broadcast giant Ms. Bernadine C. Washington will be honored for her outstanding achievements in the communications industry at the premier "*Prestigious Awards Gala*" to be held June 23, 1991, 4 PM to 8 PM at Mareva's Restaurant, 1250 N. Milwaukee Avenue in Chicago.

This affair, sponsored by Rudison's Enterprises, will also present gospel legend Thomas a. Dorsey with the Lifetime Honoree Award. Featured performer and winner of the Recognition Award is Trisha Mann, the reigning Miss Black Chicago.

*The Prestigious Awards Gala* is designed to give recognition and appreciation to those who have achieved levels of success in business and who have touched the lives of others with their achievements.

"Bernadine C. Washington has certainly paid her dues," state members of the nominating committee. "She is the ideal person to be honored."

During her tenure as Vice President/Manager of Broadcast Services for Globe Broadcasting Company she demonstrated her commitment to the community and is active at Pilgrim Baptist Church, where she is a member.

*The Prestigious Awards Gala* is an excellent opportunity for entrepreneurs



*Bernadine C. Washington*

to network and sell their wares. Over 500 guests are expected for this affair, which offers vendor tables and a fashion show displaying creations from exciting new designers.

Businesses who wish to participate can fill out the form below, with a check for \$85.00 to:

***Rudison's Enterprises***  
***3410 N. Lake Shore Drive***  
***Chicago, IL 60657***

# Prestigious Awards Gala honors three noted Chicago individuals

The premier "Prestigious Awards Gala" will be held June 23 at 4:00 p.m. at Mareva's Restaurant, 1250 N. Milwaukee Ave.

The ceremony will honor Bernadine C. Washing with the Pretigious Award; Thomas A. Dorsey, Lifetime Honoree Award; and Trisha Mann, the Recognition Award. The event is sponsored by Rudison's Enterprises, Jaunta Rudison, CEO. The organization is a successful management and secretarial service.

The "Prestigious Awards Gala" was structured specifically to give recognition and appreciation to those who have given a great deal back to their community and have obtained successful business careers.

The award-presenters feel it is important all entrepreneurs understand successful business people are appreciated and respected. It is equally important successful business people be given the opportunity to review their past to see



**Jaunta Rudison**

how they have touched the lives of others. In addition, an affair of this caliber will give struggling individuals and entrepreneurs the opportunity to look forward to success instead of looking back and accepting failure. An award official recently stated, "Bernadine C. Washington has certainly paid her dues in our society and she is the ideal person to be honored."

"Rudison's Enterprises spe-



**Trisha Mann**

cializes in management consulting and the professional aspects of business and we are interested in promoting this philosophy while encouraging beginning, struggling and ambitious entrepreneurs to develop their business concepts from people such as our honorees. It is my belief this affair will create a network for vendors while providing them the opportunity to benefit directly from a raffle."