

BY CAROL BUCHANAN — MARCH 7, 2015

Entrepreneurs Learn to Market Themselves at Small Business Camp



Crystal Eubanks, left, Charmaine Gumbs, Earlene Wagner, and Dwane Honore discuss Gumbs' plans to start a bed and breakfast

[1] During a three-day workshop on St. Croix, Andrew Morrison engaged and stimulated residents interested in starting a small businesses by teaching them how to talk about themselves.

Morrison, founder of the entrepreneurial training and marketing services firm Small Business Camp, had participants engaged Saturday – writing news articles and media releases

promoting their business, ideas, services, and themselves. He encouraged them to start thinking in step-by-step plans how to market their business on radio, social media, and even how to write a book in a weekend. And participants got involved in making promotional videos, doing photo shoots and learning website development.

Attendees learned how to generate sales, package their ideas for profit, build a team, attract investors, and more.

The Virgin Islands Economic Development Authority's Disaster Small-Midsized Enterprises Incubation Program and the Small Business Camp hosted the free Small Business Camp Weekend training program for entrepreneurs, executives, non-profit leaders, and anyone that has a business idea.

Anthony Stewart, who plans to start an empowerment program for fatherless boys, said the timing of the workshop and information he got worked perfectly for him.

“I've been stuck with how to proceed and what I need to do to move forward with my ideas and plans,” Stewart said. “Maybe from this workshop I can even team up with people with similar concerns.”

Dwane Honore, a participant in the workshop, said his mind was going crazy with ideas and thoughts of farming and a security business combined. He said now he can really begin to organize his ideas and plans.

Morrison told participants to find their calling. He told them if they find their earthly calling they won't have to work hard.

“That calling could be something you do effortlessly that you don't value,” Morrison said.

Morrison gave five steps for growing any business in 16 weeks.

He said the steps are taking inventory, listening for opportunities, developing a business model, building a team, and planning on reaching a milestone by 16 weeks.

Beginning Monday the more than 100 participants are encouraged to stick with a 16-week challenge.

Morrison said the challenge holds people accountable for what gets done on a daily and weekly basis. Morrison is available for support in the 16 weeks. Afterwards there is communication via Facebook.

Morrison said the books written in a weekend are not meant to be bestsellers, but brand-building books that are topical and obsolete in three years.

“Having to write articles positions you for the basis of the book,” Morrison said. “Get in the habit of writing about what you know and you have a book.”

Richard “Keba” Petrus, of Magic Frame Photography, said he attended the workshop to learn how he can expand in his photography business.

“In particular I want to figure out how to work with youth and show them the island in a different light,” he said.

Cusa Holloway, VIEDA Incubator Program manager, said they 35 people attested a similar program in October, with a waiting list of 50. The agency is offering a series of programs on a larger scale. She said they had 125 registered for the weekend, and EDA plans to offer 3 workshops and outreaches integrating all the services of VIEDA and small business service providers. She added they will offer a business workshop for children.

Morrison's company provides strategies for entrepreneurs, executives and non-profit leaders. Andrew has trained thousands of entrepreneurs from Hawaii to Nigeria, lectured at Harvard University and appeared on Oprah. Previously he built a multi-million dollar company by providing innovative direct marketing services to Fortune 500 companies. He was featured in the Wall Street Journal, Entrepreneur Magazine, The Network Journal and Crain's Magazine 40 Under 40 and Advertising Age. In New York, Andrew hosted the “Money Making Mondays” radio show heard on 98.7 KISS-FM and in his earlier days was the recipient of the prestigious Young Direct Marketer of the Year.

The program was held at the Gov. Juan F. Luis Hospital, Cardiac Center in the Bennie and Martha Benjamin conference center. The Small Business Camp Weekend is hosted by VIEDA and is funded by the U. S. Department of Commerce- Economic Development Administration.

More information about the Small Business Camp is online at www.smallbusinesscamp.com [2]. Those interested also can contact Cusa Holloway by calling 1-340) 719-2037, ext. 40, sending email to atcholloway@usvieda.org [3], or visiting the VIEDA's website at www.usvieda.org [4].

Local news

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