

The Kingston & Area



HOME BUSINESS calendar.htm A·S·S·O·C·I·A·T·I·O·N

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NEWSLETTER

April Showers Bring May Flowers



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What Is KAHBA?

The **Kingston & Area Home Business Association (KAHBA)** is a group of home-based entrepreneurs, both full and part-time, offering experience, education, information, and support to each other. KAHBA is proud to announce it is now in its 15th year of operation. Initial membership to KAHBA is \$55.00 for the first year, and \$45 for each yearly renewal. For more information, please contact our Membership Director, David Kempson at 544-2178, or contact any executive member on our website www.kingstonhomebiz.ca.

KAHBA's Executive

The KAHBA executive is as follows:

President - Paul Grass; Vice-President - Lorayne Bradshaw;
Secretary - Stephanie Stone; Membership - David Kempson;
Treasurer (acting) - Lyle Merriam; Guest Director - Sidney Berry;
Publicity - Gerry Koster; Newsletter Editor - Fred Georgeadis

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Web Site

our web site is:
www.kingstonhomebiz.ca

Next KAHBA Meetings

Meetings are usually held once per month. Our next meeting will be announced via e-mail and will be on the 2nd Saturday, in Apr as well as in May . Note the times for the May Mtg will also be provided separately due to the Annual General Meeting normally held in May. As well, KAHBA holds evening mtgs, to accomodate those who are too busy for Saturday mornings. This happens on the last Monday of each month, times are 6:30 - 8:00 pm. - place will be announced shortly. Come and have supper with us!!

Guests and Potential Members Are Always Welcomed

Membership to KAHBA is always Welcomed. Please take the time to bring a friend who may be considering, or already has, a home-based business. Guests who wish to just check us out, are also welcome to do so. See you at the meeting!!

This Newsletter designed by:

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Tech Tip 98 - Tips for Setting up a Home Wireless Network

By Chris Capelle

After the decision has been made to invest in a [wireless \(WiFi\) network](#), it's time to run through a few vital issues specific to maximizing productivity. Before madly buying and trying to configure, here are some tips – some obvious, some not.

The three products needed are a WAP (Wireless Access Point), a router, and a wireless-enabled computer. WAPs are typically combined into one unit with routers, usually referred to as “[wireless routers](#)” because they have wireless capability. Virtually every new laptop has built-in wireless capability, and legacy laptops can accept wireless PCMCIA cards. PCI cards or USB wireless adapters can be installed on most desktop computers.

It is important to note that because the network is connected to the Internet, the router has to be hard-wired to the Internet connection via either the DSL modem or cable modem. If Internet service activation in your area includes the installation of a dedicated wall jack for the modem, have the jack placed in a centralized location to maximize coverage area.

Take note that the operating range of WiFi networks can vary, from 300 feet to as far as 11 miles (unobstructed), and is subject to at least a dozen variables. Certain things can weaken the signal – large appliances (SubZero refrigerators are notorious culprits), chimneys, older homes with plaster walls, and of course

long distances between the router and the computer. Solutions to weak signal blues are discussed further on in this article.

Once a location has been chosen for the router, it's time to configure it. Though most of the default settings don't need to be changed, there are some that definitely should be. Within the controls of the router (usually accessed using any browser software), there are options that should be taken advantage of:

- First off, change the default password for access to the router so others cannot gain access to your router.
- Give the network a name and don't make it too personal. Remember, other people are going to see it even if they can't access it.
- Enable the option that makes the router a DHCP server and then be sure to configure each device's network settings to “use DHCP.”
- Last but not least, enable wireless security, preferably WPA (Wireless Protected Access), if your router supports it, and create a password that is not too obvious. WEP (Wired Equivalent Privacy) can be used if WPA is not available however WEP can be easily hacked therefore WPA is the preferred security method for the home wireless network.

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HOME STAGING

Staging Q&A

Linda in Bayridge asks: “My deck is a selling feature. How will people notice it when it’s still cold outside?”

First, make sure the access and view to the deck from inside are unobstructed. Make sure you always keep the snow cleaned off the deck for showings. Clear away any small clutter or debris and take down any cheap patio lights or ornaments. Send the garden Gnomes on a spring holiday!

Create a seating area with some sturdy outdoor furniture. Drape a brightly coloured blanket over a chair or bench to catch the viewer’s eye from inside. If it is still too cold for spring bulbs in planters, add some evergreen branches in large urns to give life to the scene. For showings after dark, turn on the outdoor lighting or add a strategically placed spotlight if needed.



by Martha Stanton-Smith,
Canadian Staging Professional

613 539-3233

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A Few More Important Tips

- Most printers aren’t wireless, and those that are can be tough to configure. Best to skip the wireless printer and hard-wire one to the router or to one of the networked computers, then enable its ability to share the printer.
- If a laptop hasn’t been shut down since being connected to a different WiFi network, Internet-mandatory processes (browsing, email) may not work. Reboot, and confirm that the proper network is being accessed. Power outages and other random problems occasionally disable wireless networks. A quick and dirty fix is to power down the computer, router, and broadband modem. Then, power them up in this order: modem, router, computer (wait-

(continues on ..pg. 5)

Handy Dandy Tip...

Blood stains on clothes? Not to worry! Just pour a little hydrogen peroxide on a cloth and proceed to wipe off every drop of blood.

Works every time! Now, where to put the body?

*This handy-dandy tip
submitted by:*

Paul MacGregor
613-384-0339 or
1-800-465-1638



Welcome to New KAHBA Members

Please welcome new member:

Tammy Gibson, owner and operator of

SPAW4PAWS

providing

Personalized Pampering for your Pets

1327 Montreal Street, Kingston

(613) 531-4262

e-mail: spaw4paws@cogeco.ca



Gift Certificates also available

Now accepting new clients

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ing 45 seconds apart between each step.)

- Make sure the right network is being accessed, and not a neighbor's. A neighbor's connection may allow access to the Internet for e-mail and surfing, but other activity such as printing and file sharing will not be allowed.
- Even if every computer on the network is wireless, keep an Ethernet cable handy in the event that the router needs to be reconfigured and you are unable to connect wirelessly.
- Password protecting the network is mentioned again because it is not an option. There are people who hack into networks and access personal data on computers, or use the internet connection for criminal means (such as • [sending spam e-mail.](#))

Weak Signal Blues

OK, so now the network works, but it is in a REALLY big house, and the wireless signal just isn't robust enough to get to the back room on the third floor. It cuts in and out, and inhibits productivity. The 2.4 GHz radio band is extremely crowded these days with cordless phones, RF remotes, microwaves and other appliances that can cause interference with a WiFi signal.

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Expansion of Your Home-Based Business

Summary

If you are considering expanding your home-based business, you are being presented with similar issues that face other businesses that are considering expansion. It is important to consider both the upside and the downside of the move in your decision making and evaluation process. The following is intended to briefly identify some of the issues that you should be considering:

What does it mean to expand your “Home-Based” business?

It could mean:

- taking on an extra product line;
- taking on one more customer;
- deciding to buy more equipment or tools; or
- moving out of the home and into a commercial location.

What issues should you be considering personally?

- Why do you want to expand?
- What will be the effect on you, your personal life, and your family?
- With expansion will come more potential for profits and potential for problems.
- It could possibly mean more time away from home or time devoted to the business in the home at the sacrifice of family.

- Will you still enjoy the business?
- Will there be more traffic to the home and what will be the effect on your privacy?
- Will you need to invest more personal financial resources into the business and do you have, or want to risk it?
- How do your expansion plans fit into your shorter and longer term business objectives?
- It will depend on your motivations for starting and operating your business from the beginning.
- Will it give you the extra financial return you may want and/or need?
- Is it one more step in your longer term plan that may include ending up in a commercial section of your municipality?
- Is the profit potential and return for your time and investment worth the effort?

What are the operational considerations?

- Is there a market opportunity and will there be a market reaction to your expansion?
- Have you researched the idea?
- A number of people start a home-based business to try out an idea at as minimal cost as possible to see how the idea develops.
- Have you a promotional plan?

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Now what?

One solution is to buy a [range-extending antenna](#) for the computer's WiFi card or router, or a [wireless range extender](#). A few of these strategically located in a large house can dramatically extend range and increase signal strength to remote corners of the house. Be forewarned though - the more complex a network is, the more it costs to install, and the tougher it is to troubleshoot problems.

Frequently Asked Questions

- What is • [802.11](#) and what do the “a”, “b”, “g” and “n” mean?

Wireless modulation technology and standards have evolved over time. Beginning with 802.11(legacy) to 802.11n (still not ratified at the time of this writing), they operate in the 2.4 and 5 GHz frequencies. The only difference that the home user really needs to know is that “n” is (or will be) the fastest, “g” is next fastest, then “a” (typically not used by consumers), then “b”. Not sure which protocol applies? Buy a router that allows a “mixed” network commonly 802.11b/g or 802.11a/b/g.

- Does it matter what brand of router is used?

All wireless routers work on the same principles, no matter what brand they are. Some probably work better in certain situations than others do, but none of this information is brand-specific, with the exception of Apple's Airport routers. Apple's routers are not

configurable using a web browser because they use proprietary setup software that will only run on Apple machines. If you are going to use an Apple router, you will need to configure it with the Airport Apple software on an Apple computer and then add any non-Apple devices to it after. Some popular router companies include [D-Link](#), [Netgear](#) and [Linksys](#). These companies (as well as others) also offer faster and better connections within the 802.11g band, however you usually need to buy a matched set of products. For example, a D-Link Wireless Router with Enhanced Wireless G and a D-Link Enhanced Wireless G card on the PC or notebook would be required to get the enhanced benefits of speed and/or range. Mixing and matching is generally ok with no problems to still get the best default setting between computer and router.

- Can a computer or printer be hard-wired to the network?

Yes, computers and printers can be wired to a WiFi network. Don't be shy about connecting computers, printers, or even storage di

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CUSTOM ELECTRONIC DESIGNS

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(from pg. 7 - Racehorses

rectly to the wireless router (most typically have four hardwired ports.) Sometimes, it's easier and makes more sense.

In Conclusion

Even though signal and security issues need to be addressed, setting up a WiFi network at home can solve a multitude of problems. But, what can be done when traveling? Part three of this series will take a closer look at accessing the Internet away from home.



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A Bit Of Humour - To Brighten Your Day

We'll never run out of math teachers because they always multiply.

When the smog lifts in Los Angeles, U C L A.

*** The math professor went crazy with the blackboard. He did a number on it.**

*** The professor discovered that her theory of earthquakes was on shaky ground.**

*** The dead batteries were given out free of charge.**

*** If you take a laptop computer for a run you could jog your memory.**

*** A dentist and a manicurist fought tooth and nail.**

*** What's the definition of a will? It's a dead giveaway !!!**

-
- How do you plan to make the potential customers aware?
 - In a home-based business you can experiment to see what the most effective approach will be.
 - Will there be equipment purchases and what about utility hook-ups?
 - Will you be building your inventory and what about storage?
 - Will home renovations be required?
 - If you have a current distributorship or franchise agreement with a com-

- pany, are there limitations to the products/services you may want to add?
- Are there municipal licensing and other regulatory limitations?
- Are there joint venture opportunities, possibly with other home-based businesses to grow the business mutually.
- In other words, do you have to do it all yourself or can you link up with someone who complements what you do to mutual advantage?
- Do you have the management skills?
- You will have to further assess your

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Feasibility Checklist for Starting a Small Business

Summary

This publication is a checklist for the owner-manager of a small business enterprise or for one contemplating going into business for the first time. The questions concentrate on areas you must seriously consider to determine if your idea represents a real business opportunity and if you really know what you are getting into. You can use the checklist to evaluate a completely new venture proposal or an apparent opportunity in your existing business.

Perhaps the most crucial problem you will face after expressing an interest in starting a new business or capitalizing on an apparent opportunity in your existing business will be determining the feasibility of your idea. Getting into the right business at the right time is simple advice, but advice that is extremely difficult to implement. The high failure rate of new businesses and products indicates that very few ideas result in successful business ventures, even when introduced by well established firms. Too many entrepreneurs strike out on a business venture so convinced of its merits that they fail to thoroughly evaluate its potential.

This checklist should be useful in evaluating your business idea. It is designed to help you screen out ideas that are likely to fail before you invest extensive time, money and effort in them.

Preliminary Analysis

A feasibility study involves gathering, analyzing and evaluating information with the purpose of answering the question: "Should I go into this business?" Answering this question involves a preliminary assessment of both personal and project considerations.

General Personal Considerations

The first seven questions ask you to do a little introspection. Are your personality characteristics such that you can both adapt to and enjoy small business ownership/management?

Do you like to make your own decision?

Yes / No

Do you enjoy competition? **Yes / No**

Do you have will power and self-discipline?

Yes / No

Do you plan ahead?

Yes / No

Do you get things done on time?

Yes / No

Can you take advice from others?

Yes / No

Are you adaptable to changing conditions?

Yes / No

The next series of questions stress the physical, emotional and financial strains of a new business.

Do you understand that owning your own business may entail working 12 to 16 hours a day, probably six days a week, and maybe on holidays? **Yes / No**

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Do you have the physical stamina to handle a business? **Yes / No**

Do you have the emotional strength to withstand the strain? **Yes / No**

Are you prepared to lower your standard of living for several months or years? **Yes / No**

Are you prepared to lose your savings? **Yes / No**

Specific Personal Considerations

Do you know which skills and areas of expertise are critical to the success of your project? **Yes / No**

Do you have these skills? **Yes / No**

Does your idea effectively utilize your own skills and abilities? **Yes / No**

Can you find personnel that have the expertise you lack? **Yes / No**

Do you know why you are considering this project? **Yes / No**

Will your project effectively meet your career aspirations? **Yes / No**

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The next three questions emphasize the point that very few people can claim expertise in all phases of a feasibility study. You should realize your personal limitations and seek appropriate assistance where necessary (i.e. marketing, legal, financial).

Do you have the ability to perform the feasibility study? **Yes / No**

Do you have the time to perform the feasibility study? **Yes / No**

Do you have the money needed to have the feasibility study done? **Yes / No**

General Project Description

1. Briefly describe the business you want to enter.

2. List the products and/or services you want to sell.

3. Describe who will use your products/services.

4. Why would someone buy your product/service?

5. What kind of location do you need in terms of type of neighbourhood, traffic count, nearby firms, etc.

6. List your products/services suppliers.

7. List your major competitors - those who sell or provide similar products/services.

8. List the labour and staff you require to provide your products/services.

Requirements for Success

To determine whether your idea meets the (go to pg. 11)

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basic requirements for a successful new project, you must be able to answer at least one of the following questions with a “yes.”

Does the product/service/business serve a presently unserved need? **Yes / No**

Does the product/service/business serve an existing market in which demand exceeds supply? **Yes / No**

Can the product/service/business successfully compete with existing competition because of an “advantageous situation”, such as better price, location, etc.? **Yes / No**

Major Flaws

A “Yes” response to questions such as the following would indicate that the idea has little chance for success.

Are there any causes (i.e. restrictions, monopolies, shortages) that make any of the required factors of production unavailable (i.e. unreasonable cost, scarce skills, energy, material, equipment, processes, technology, or personnel)? **Yes / No**

Are capital requirements for entry or continuing operations excessive? **Yes / No**

Is adequate financing hard to obtain? **Yes/ No**

Are there potential detrimental environmental effects? **Yes / No**

Are there factors that prevent effective marketing? **Yes / No**

Desired Income

The following questions should remind you that you must seek both a return on your in-

vestment in your own business as well as a reasonable salary for the time you spend in operating that business.

How much income do you desire?

Are you prepared to earn less income in the 1st - 3rd years?

What minimum income do you require?

What financial investment will be required for your business?

How much could you earn by investing this money? (A)

How much could you earn by working for someone else? (B)

Add the amounts in (A) and (B). If this income is greater than what you can realistically expect from your business, are you prepared to forego this additional income to be your own boss with the prospects of more substantial profit/income in future years?

Supply

Can you make a list of every item of inventory and operating supplies needed? **Yes / No**

Do you know the quantity, quality, technical specifications, and price ranges desired? **Y/N**

Do you know the name and location of each potential source of supply? **Yes / No**

Do you know the price ranges available for each product from each supplier? **Yes / No**

Do you know about the delivery schedules for each supplier? **Yes / No**

Do you know the sales terms of each supplier? **Yes / No**

Do you know the credit terms of each supplier? **Yes / No**

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(from ..pg. 8 *Expansion of Your Business*)

own abilities and skills.

- If you feel deficient, how do you acquire them and what are the time lines and costs to do this?
- Are there employee supply considerations.
- Have you established the costs and source of funds to make your plans work?
- Have you done a cash flow/budget analysis to evaluate the idea?
- Cash flow projections have limitations, but they are a planning tool and force you to identify your costs and estimate revenues on where you want to go.
- Have you a timetable?
- Have you a business plan?

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Do you know the financial condition of each supplier? **Yes / No**

Is there a risk of shortage for any critical materials or merchandise? **Yes / No**

Are you aware of which suppliers have an advantage relative to transportation costs? **Yes / No**

Will the price available allow you to achieve an adequate markup? **Yes / No**

Expenses

Do you know what your expenses will be for: rent, 12

wages, insurance, utilities, advertising, interest, etc.? **Yes / No**

Do you need to know which expenses are direct, indirect, or fixed? **Yes / No**

Do you know how much your overhead will be? **Yes / No**

Do you know how much your selling expenses will be? **Yes / No**

Miscellaneous

Are you aware of any major risks associated with your product, service and/or business?

Can you minimize any of these major risks?

Are there major risks beyond your control?

Can these risks bankrupt you?

Venture Feasibility

Are there any major questions remaining about your proposed venture? **Yes / No**

Do the above questions arise because of a lack of data? **Yes / No**

Do the above questions arise because of a lack of management skills? **Yes / No**

Do the above questions arise because of a “fatal flaw” in your idea? **Yes / No**

Can you obtain the additional data needed?

Can you obtain the additional managerial skills needed?

Are you aware that there is less than a 50-50 chance that you will be in business two years from now?

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