

Produced by The Small Business Community Network (SBCN)
133 Weber St. N. Suite #3-183 • Waterloo, ON N2J 3G9 Canada • www.sbcncanada.org • www.sbcnuk.org

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Founders Message

By *Linda Ockwell-Jenner*

May is almost here and I can hardly believe it! But the SBCN has been busy and we have welcomed lots of new members and launched 2 new groups: SBCN Ignite, and the SBCN FastTrack group, both of which are for SBCN Members only. Our Stratford and Barrie chapters are slowly growing and we recently hosted the 6th Annual Small Business Showcase event and SBCN Connect at TheMUSEUM in Downtown Kitchener. Make sure you check out the photos and see who you recognise! A big 'thank you' to our volunteers: Garry Stephens, Monika Szymczak and Lyndon Johnson, who did an awesome job at the Showcase event.

Growth is a must when you own a business and the SBCN loves nothing more than helping small business owners connect, collaborate and grow their success. Would you believe the SBCN will be celebrating our 10 year anniversary in November, so make sure you are ready to party and enjoy being a part of the SBCN.

Last but not least congratulations to one of our first ever, and longest serving member, Adam Smith on his marriage to Dawn.

Upcoming Events

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Tuesday May 14 th | Monthly networking - Stratford |
| Wednesday May 15 th | Monthly networking - Waterloo Region |
| Wednesday April 22 nd | Monthly networking - Barrie |

visit www.sbcncanada.org/events for more details



Planning For The Unexpected

By Linda Ockwell-Jenner



What if you broke an arm, or a leg, had an operation, or for personal reasons could not run your business for a while. What would you do? I am speaking from personal experience as in the past I have succumbed to cancer, broken my arm and my ankle, all at different times over the years and I have found it difficult to stay on top of business related tasks. Luckily for me I do have residual income from my speaking business, but I still found it difficult to complete all the work involved running two businesses.

As business owners we always make sure we have a business plan, but often-as-not that plan does not have provisions for unexpected accidents, ill health etc., and many business owners find their income dries up and this often leads to the closure of their business. Clients may be lost and once you are up and running again it is a case of going backwards in order to go forwards.

A couple of tips I can offer you that worked for me when I could not be as active in my business as normal:

- Have someone you trust to delegate to. If not all of the work involved but as much as can be done to keep the business ticking over.
- Plan ahead with your budget, make sure you have spoken to your bank and have provisions for an emergency short-term overdraft, if needed.
- Keep in touch with your clients, if you are able via email, phone and social media. Communication is vital at this time. Your clients would much prefer to be kept in the loop versus cease all contact.
- Social Media is a great way to continue to 'be seen to be seen' if you are already active and have trusted connections.

There are insurance policies that cover health related challenges that may tide you over short term, it is always a good idea to speak to a trusted professional before something happens so you are ready for the unexpected.

But, the one challenge we have when the unexpected overtakes us, and we cannot run our business effectively for a while, is our motivation. Unless you have been through this situation it is difficult to understand. For those of us who have, the common thought is to know there is light at the end of the tunnel. You will survive the crisis, if you truly believe in yourself and you will be back to normal at some point. Keeping in touch with your connections is a great way to stay involved and not feel you are isolated.

“planning ahead is definately the way to go.”

Once you are back at work it might take some time to get going again so be sure to ask for help and this takes away some of the stress you may be feeling. Before long the unexpected challenge that interrupted your business growth will be a long distant memory, but planning ahead is definitely the way to go.

What if nothing ever happens and you don't go through this particular challenge? That's fantastic but never think your planning for the future was in vain. What it really means is you are a serious business owner who prepares for the unexpected and that is part of your success!

- Linda Ockwell-Jenner, *Motivational Steps*
www.motivationalsteps.com / www.lindaobj.me

The Facts About Credit

By Ian Inglis



Your credit score is one of the most important numbers you have. Not only does your score affect your interest rates when applying for a loan, it can also impact your insurance rates, certain job prospects and even your chances of renting a great apartment. As a result, improving one's credit has become a multi-million dollar industry.

What's your credit score?

Your credit score tells lenders and other businesses if you are creditworthy; that is, how much of a credit risk you pose if they allow you to borrow money. The Fair Isaac Company (FICO®) uses an algorithm that takes into account several different factors within your credit report and comes up with a score from 300 to 900. The higher the score, the better the credit risk you are to lenders.

In Canada, lenders use Equifax and TransUnion to check credit histories.

Visit www.nabilcaptan.com for more information about taking control of your credit.

*Source: Nabil Captan, The Credit DVD

“the older the negative information, the less it impacts your credit score.”

3 Reasons You Don't Need a Credit Repair Company

The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada encourages consumers to be cautious about companies that promise to repair your credit and remove negative information for a fee.

1. No one can change negative information that has been reported correctly.
2. The only way to remove accurate negative information from your file is to wait until the legal time period has expired.
3. You can repair your credit yourself for free by using sound credit practices.

How long will dings to your credit be held against you?

In most cases, it's only a matter of time before they fall off your credit report. The good news is that the older the negative information, the less it impacts your credit score.

If you have had...	It will stay on your credit report...
Negative information on credit cards, loans, lines of credit	6 years
Negative information on secured loans (e.g. mortgage, car lease or loan)	6 years (Equifax: 7-10 years in PEI)
Bad cheques, chequing/savings closures "for cause"	6 years
Inquiries	TransUnion: 6 years Equifax: 3 years
Judgements	6 years
Collections	6 years
Liens	Equifax: 6 years from date of filing) except in PEI where it ranges from 7-10 years) TransUnion: 5 years from data of filing
Bankruptcy	6 years (7 years in Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Newfoundland & Labrador and PEI)
Remarks	6 years
Multiple bankruptcies	14 years



A Moveable Feast – Why Experiences Are Worth More

By *Graham McCormick*



I've recently finished reading Ernest Hemingway's Paris memoir, *A Moveable Feast*, written in the 1920's while he worked for the Toronto Star as a foreign correspondent. The novel chronicles his personal accounts and experiences living in the city and his observations about life and the people around him. It's a rather priceless and rare look inside his life as a struggling young writer and his first hand accounts of interactions with such famous writers as Ezra Pound, F. Scott Fitzgerald, James Joyce, and of course, Gertrude Stein. The title of the book originated from a conversation Hemingway had with his biographer. He commented that Paris leaves an impression on those who live there. Anyone who has lived there as a young person can attest to the fact that the city will stay with them for the rest of their lives. In essence: Paris is "a moveable feast".

A Moveable Feast was published posthumously in 1964, three years after Hemingway's death. Edited by his fourth wife Mary, it was compiled using the unfinished manuscript and a collection of material which Hemingway had indicated he did not want included in a final draft. At the time of his death he had not wanted his Paris memoirs published because he felt it lacked a true ending and was therefore not a complete story. A restored edition was published in 2009 by Hemingway's grandson Sean. This was intended to more accurately reflect the original work of Hemingway, disregarding the majority of Mary's edits. It's widely agreed that the new version can't be regarded as any more definitive than the original. Ann Douglas, professor of literature at Columbia University put it best when she said "there can be no final text because there is not one."

"people shouldn't be afraid to admit when they can't afford something"

One of the things I loved most about *A Moveable Feast* was the simple pleasure of being able to read about Hemingway's life in Paris as a young man. His vivid descriptions of the city transported me to the Boulevard St-Germain & Place St-Michel. His incredible eye for detail was able to capture what makes Paris a timeless city. He is able to describe the simple staples of Parisian life with intimate articulation. Hemingway encapsulates the most wonderful and rewarding experiences: be it strolling across the Luxembourg gardens, wandering through the Latin quarter, or sitting in cafes enjoying a café crème while observing people.

A common theme throughout *A Moveable Feast* is the poverty in which Hemingway and his first wife lived. Many times Hemingway makes reference

to their poor financial situation. He writes about life in the city's poorest neighbourhoods and the sacrifices they made on a daily basis to get by. He paints a portrait of his early life and the struggles he experienced as a writer while having to endure continuous hardships. Despite their circumstances, I was most shocked by their ability to live such a full life. Hemingway writes:

"But then we did not think ever of ourselves as poor. We did not accept it. We thought we were superior people and other people that we looked down on and rightly mistrusted were rich. It had never seemed strange to me to wear sweatshirts for underwear to keep warm. It only seemed odd to the rich. We ate well and cheaply and drank well and cheaply and slept well and warm together and loved each other."

They made sacrifices to have the life they wanted: a life full of rewarding activities with those close to them. If affording this life meant having to use public baths by the river, or having to often skip lunch, or borrowing books instead of purchasing them from Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare and Company, it was all in an effort to be able to enjoy a lifestyle that made them happy. Spending the money they saved on dining out with friends and on European excursions, such as winter in the mountains for a skiing holiday or summer in Spain for the San Fermin festival, shared a common theme.

Hemingway chose to spend his money on experiences and in no way was he the last person to promote such a lifestyle. David Chilton, author of *The Wealthy Barber*, suggests that people shouldn't be afraid to admit when they can't afford something and encourages spending more money on experiences rather than on "stuff". Hemingway was able to live well while poor, not because it was easier back then, but because he understood what was important. Being able to live a life surrounded with good friends, good food, and good drink was the foundation not only to a fulfilling life for him but also a starting point for many of his great stories.

In the original version, the book is concluded with a rather fitting last line: "But this is how Paris was in the early days when we were very poor and very happy." This still holds true almost a hundred years later. Just below the pricey restaurants and cafes is a vast expanse of places where people can go and still enjoy a great quality of life on a budget.

- Graham McCormick

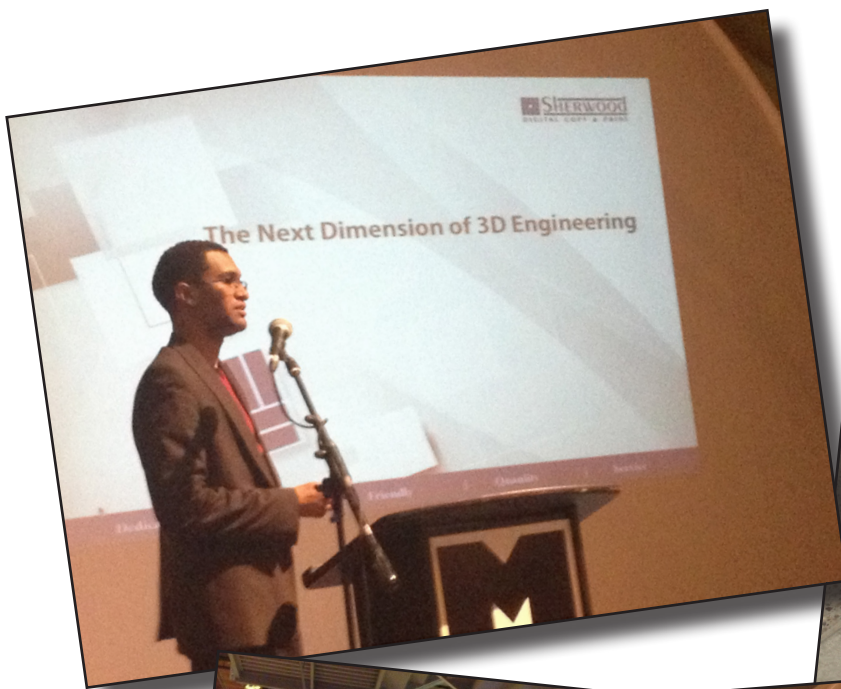
<http://grahammccormick.wordpress.com/>



Small Business Showcase

where business and people connect

On March 23rd the SBCN hosted the 6th Annual Small Business Showcase event at THEMUSEUM in Downtown Kitchener. Here are just a few photos of this great event, which also combined our popular SBCN Connect!



Security Corner

By *Dave Ockwell-Jenner*

Java

In this month's Security Corner I'd like to talk about Java—no not the Indonesian island, but the computer language that powers all sorts of things. You might wonder why I'd want to talk about a computer language, and you might further wonder what the heck this has to do with you! Well, read on...

Java became popular many years ago as it's what we call a cross-platform language, meaning that software written in Java can run on a variety of computer systems, such as Windows, Macintosh, Linux and even smartphones (Android, for example, uses a system very similar to Java at its core). It does this because programs written in Java run on top of something called the Java Virtual Machine, which translates Java into instructions native for the computer it's installed on.

This is all very well and good you say, but why should you care? One of Java's earliest usages was to run what are known as Java Applets. Applets are programs written in Java that can run within a web page (i.e. within your web browser, such as Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, etc.) Many years ago when web technology was much less capable than today, allowing Java programs to run in the browser opened up many new possibilities such as animations, rich user interfaces, and interaction with files on your computer. To prevent Java Applets from running amok, a clever system called a 'sandbox' was built into the technology to prevent Java Applets from accessing parts of your computer they aren't supposed to.

Unfortunately for us, this sandbox technology has recently been found to have some flaws, which allow hackers to make Java Applets do things they shouldn't. This might include downloading malware to your computer and running it, deleting files, capturing keystrokes and other such shenanigans.

These days, it's rare that we use Java Applets. Other web technologies such as HTML 5 and JavaScript (no relation to Java, incidentally) have made Java almost obsolete. However, it's installed on millions of computer systems, just waiting to run some hackers latest evil program.

I strongly recommend that you take two actions. Firstly, you should update Java to the latest version – which you can do by visiting <http://www.java.com/en/download/index.jsp>. Secondly, you should prevent Java from running in your web browser, unless you have a specific need to do so. Look in Control Panel (Microsoft Windows) or System Preferences (Macintosh OS



"In 2012, security issues in Java accounted for over 50% of all attacks"

X) and you will find a Java icon. In the 'Security' tab of the Java Control Panel you'll find an easy tick box to uncheck in order to prevent Java from working in the browser. Since some desktop applications use Java, we want to keep it installed, just not in our browsers.

In 2012, security issues in Java accounted for over 50% of all attacks, so by taking this simple step, we're protecting ourselves against a critical risk.

- Dave Ockwell-Jenner, Prime Information Security
www.primeinfosec.com

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Do you have a story to tell?

We're always on the lookout for great reader-submitted content for **The Hub**. Find out how to contribute at <http://www.sbcncanada.org/the-hub/submissions>.

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