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Business Owners Learn How to do More with Less

It is no secret that business owners are faced with more problems than ever before and increased uncertainty has forced everyone to seek ways to do more with less. To help provide relief to area businesses, Southwest Georgia Bank and the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber held the Chamber Small Business Conference on Wednesday Sept. 14 at the James H. Rainwater Conference Center.

“I see business owners struggling every day and Southwest Georgia Bank wants to do whatever we can to make sure businesses are aware of and utilizing all tools that are available for their success,” said Jeff Hanson, Executive Vice President. “We partnered with chambers across the region, along with Wiregrass Georgia Technical College and Valdosta State University’s Small Business Development Center to put together four sessions that could provide area business owners with information on low-cost options for maintaining and growing their business.”

Below are a few of the tips presented at the conference:

- Establish a relationship with your banker, don’t just call every five years when you need something
- Establish a “financial team,” include a banker, CPA, attorney, financial planner, and insurance agent
- Don’t present an hour long presentation to a lender, be able to tell lenders your situation, what you need, and how you are going to get it in 10 minutes
- Focus on bottom-line and profits as opposed to top-line and sales
- Take advantage of Google, register your business on Google places
- Add blogs to your website, this keeps content fresh and google happy
- Use social media to offer helpful and useful information- not just to sell your business
- Think long term with your social media strategy, it takes time to build relationships
- Have a mobile enabled website
- Have happy customers write reviews
- Develop a partnership agreement in the beginning; understand what each partner brings to the business
- Develop a by-sale agreement; make sure you have structure for future ownership
- Understand your financial position whether or not you prepare your financials
- Reevaluate your business plan every five years
- Do the things only you can do and delegate the rest
- Be decisive and don’t be afraid to take a calculated risk
- Take time to set goals and be organized to obtain them

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The Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber is constantly looking for ways to help businesses thrive. If you would like more information on Chamber programs and events designed to help your business succeed, contact the Chamber at 229-247-8100.



Jeff Hanson, Executive Vice President of Southwest Georgia Bank, stresses the importance of having a “financial team” at the Chamber Small Business Conference on Wednesday.