



Request for Proposal – Inspire eBusiness Initiative

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

Bermuda Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) seeks to identify a Project Coordinator to manage the 2015/15 Inspire eBusiness initiative. The Project Coordinator will be responsible for:

- Managing project based on specified plan
- Serving as liaison to the Steering Committee
- Receiving guidance from Steering Committee/Project Manager
- Supervising participants
- Seeking additional sponsorship where necessary
- Directing/leading team members toward project objectives
- Handling problem resolution
- Coordinating all events as part of the initiative

The Project Coordinator will report to the Project Manager: BEDC and be led by decisions made by the Steering Committee: Dept of Ecommerce and BEDC.

The goals and objectives for this initiative will focus on educating existing and potential entrepreneurs as well as the public about the process of starting an online business and setting up ecommerce on their websites.

At the conclusion of the initiative we hope to accomplish:

- Database of etailers – continue to maintain and update information about existing and new ebusiness.
- Update the website and create more access to information via the website.
- Coordinate a minimum of 6 seminars/workshops.
- Expose existing and new ebusiness owners to a broader knowledge base with regard to ecommerce.
- Completion of 2 Startup Weekends in Bermuda
- Coordinate an event/competition to highlight local Youth technology programmes

Background information

The Inspire eBusiness initiative evolved from a previous eBusiness initiative - eMonday. Launched in Nov 2010 and run consecutively until 2012, eMonday was run in conjunction with the celebration of Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW). This online initiative was aimed at encouraging residents to “Shop Local” but the greater purpose of eMonday was to encourage the development of e-commerce in Bermuda through education and competition.

The Inspire eBusiness initiative is in keeping with the BEDC’s Mission to actively assist the development of a strong, well-managed and prosperous local business sector in Bermuda. In addition, the BEDC is the leading coordinator for Global Entrepreneurship Week, which included the formation of a GEW Host Committee. Formed in 2008 the Committee is comprised of representatives from BEDC, The Department of Ecommerce, and The Youth Entrepreneurship Initiative of Bermuda. BEDC’s role as a member of the host committee is to assist with the identification and coordination of events during this week that will help to inspire, engage, mentor and connect existing and new entrepreneurs to resources and experts. Inspire eBusiness is in keeping with the objectives of Global Entrepreneurship Week and thus supports the basis of this request.

Whilst the intent of the 2015/16 Inspire eBusiness will be to start offering programmes as early as June 2015 it is the intent to run events, and programmes throughout the year, inclusive of GEW, Nov 16 – 22, 2015 through to March 31, 2016.

Inspire eBusiness 2014/15

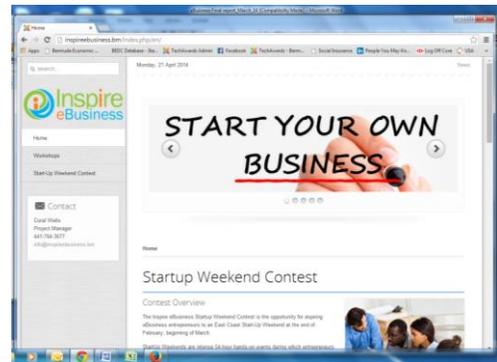
The goal of Inspire eBusiness 2014/15 was to support and encourage the development of local e-commerce business in Bermuda with a focus on educating existing and potential entrepreneurs as well as the public about the process of starting an online business and setting up ecommerce on their websites.

Specific objectives of the 2014/15 Inspire eBusiness initiative included:

- 1) Awareness: The Awareness Programme involved marketing the website and providing access to information about eBusiness in Bermuda. In addition we focused on education of the public, the existing etailer and the new eBusiness entrepreneur by hosting six seminars to help equip those interested in entering into the eBusiness industry.
- 2) Facilitation: the Project management team collated information provided from the Banks regarding how to establish online banking and utilize local payment solutions. We utilized the inspireebusiness.bm website as a tool to allow service providers and local vendors to make information available. In addition throughout the seminars we created networking opportunities to increase access to information and service providers for existing and new entrepreneurs in order to facilitate their ease of establishing their businesses.
- 3) Accessibility: The inspireebusiness.bm website can now be utilized as a resource for information about all things ebusiness related in Bermuda. The has become a resource providing:
 - a. Access to video of past workshops,
 - b. Analysis on rates to establish a ebusiness presence in Bermuda
 - c. Database of ebusinesses in Bermuda
 - d. Way for ebusinesses to advertise and connect with their consumer
 - e. Listing of what available resources/shopping carts work with Bermuda Banks
 - f. Price list of typical costs to establish a web and online presence.
 - g. Link to forms needed to establish online Banking
 - h. Contact information for the industry experts and Banks
 - i. Step by step process for establishing an online business

The website was updated to aide in the awareness of the Inspire eBusiness initiative. The update to the website also assisted with facilitating businesses being able to access information on starting an eBusiness.

We also provided the public and entrepreneurs with knowledge around establishing an eBusiness, by continuing the series of educational workshops. The workshops started during Global Entrepreneurship Week in November 2014 with the first series of three Lunch & Learn workshops being held on Monday 17th



Lunch and Learn Sessions
presented by
Inspire eBusiness

Securing the flow of money and data online: is cybersecurity a concern for us?
Meet industry experts Fred Oberholzer, KPMG and Ronnie Viens, First Atlantic Commerce

Monday, 17 November 2014 | 12.30pm
at the Chamber of Commerce,
Front Street, Hamilton

Department of E-Commerce

BEDC
Bermuda Economic Development Corporation

Light lunch refreshments provided

Lunch and Learn Sessions
presented by
Inspire eBusiness

Starting an online business? There's plenty of support out there!
Florence C. Smith, VP Head of Merchant Services, Butterfield Bank

Wednesday, 19 November 2014 | 12.30pm
at Butterfield Bank, Rosebank, Hamilton

Department of E-Commerce

BEDC
Bermuda Economic Development Corporation

Light lunch refreshments provided

Lunch and Learn Sessions
presented by
Inspire eBusiness

7 simple steps to setting up an online business

Thursday, 20 November 2014 | 11.30am
at the Chamber of Commerce,
Front Street, Hamilton

Department of E-Commerce

BEDC
Bermuda Economic Development Corporation

Light lunch refreshments provided

November – Securing the flow of money and data online – Is Cyber security a concern for us? , Wednesday, 19th November - Starting an online business? There’s plenty of help out there and Thursday, 20th November – 7 Simple Steps to setting up an Online business.

The workshops continued starting on February 19th – How to start your eBusiness, March 5th – Local Rules & Regulations and March 12th – Marketing & Social Media.

Startup Weekend was officially held in Bermuda on March 6th -8th at Mt. St. Agnes School Hall thanks to coordinating entrepreneurs, Coral Wells, Nhuri Bashir and Courtney Bushner and the Project Management Team consisting of members from Department of Ecommerce and BEDC.

With help from facilitator Ethan Bagley of Startup Global based in Boston, the event was a huge success. There were 42 participants and of those 21 people pitched at the opening night and 9 ideas were selected to move through to the finals. Of the 9 businesses the top three in order place included, third place winner Bermuda Hacks an online platform and App for making life easier in Bermuda, second place prize went to K.I.M.S. List, which provides online educational resource for parents of children aged 5 – 16 years old and the first place prize went to The Kitchen, a commercial shared kitchen concept for home cooks and chefs on the Island. There was also a People’s Choice Award given to 16 year-old Dahji Grime’s business, TechChoppers. Dahji is a Biz Camp graduate which is another great initiative sponsored by the Department of Ecommerce.

Accessibility

The website www.inspireebusiness.bm is the hub for the Inspire eBusiness initiative and will continue to evolve as new information and eBusinesses are made available. The website provided visitors the ability to register for the seminars, online access to news articles and general eBusiness information and a directory of local eBusinesses. This will continue to evolve as more information is gathered and more eBusinesses come online. To further maximize access and exposure, we have created a Facebook page to complement the website and it continues to grow with the likes increasing, currently the page has 375 likes.



Advertising

There were three areas that were focused on when advertising; 1) general awareness of Inspire eBusiness, 2) the educational seminars offered for ebusinesses and 3) the startup weekend initiative.

The general awareness campaign consisted of one main advert in the Royal Gazette, Press Release and Facebook Ads. There are funds in the overall budget to support advertising of the initiative.

To advertise and promote the educational seminars, various mediums were utilized including Facebook Page ads, radio interviews and direct emails to the BEDC Business Register.

Social Media marketing was the focus of the advertising campaign. The ability to reach a variety of audiences, in a short period of time and the ability to change the promotions as required without added costs.

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram were used during the workshops to promote the present workshop and encourage people to attend the next workshop as well as during Startup Weekend.

The Facebook page is continuously used to provide users with global ideas from other organizations such as Start-up week, Mashable and Social Media Marketing.

In the future we will re-introduce the radio advertising and interviews leading up to the workshops.

Project Scope

This year the initiative will continue to focus on three areas:

- 1) Awareness
- 2) Facilitation
- 3) Accessibility

1. Awareness: The Awareness Programme will involve marketing the website and providing access to information about eBusiness in Bermuda. In addition we will continue to focus on education of the public, the existing etailer and the new eBusiness entrepreneur. Education will take the form of seminars, workshops and white papers (as required) to help equip those interested in entering into the eBusiness industry. Having facilitated several workshops and seminars in the past we will rely on the partnerships that have been created to continue to educate our stakeholders. Some topics for seminars will include but not be limited to:

- a. Starting an eBusiness
- b. Local requirements and regulations for eBusinesses
- c. Using Marketing and social media to increase your profile and drive traffic to your website
- d. Panel discussions with local eBusiness entrepreneurs
- e. Processing online payments
- f. How to build your own ecommerce presence – Websites 101

We will seek to host these workshops throughout the year and could repeat some topics based on demand. Breaking out the some of the workshops to allow for more in-depth discussions and training on a specific topics that include rules & regulations, marketing.

The Project Coordinator will be responsible for organizing these and all future workshops.

2. Facilitating the ease of establishing an online business by:
 - a. Working with the Banks to get the information on what is required to establish an ecommerce presence in Bermuda and continue to encourage the Banks to facilitate payment solutions.
 - b. Working with smaller vendors to identify options to remove some of the existing barriers to establishing and online presence.
 - c. In addition we propose that we incorporate an opportunity to allow eBusiness industry experts and service providers to showcase their services (i.e., Banks, web developers, marketers, Govt. benefit providers, Marketing firms, social media providers, etc.). This will essentially include using the website to make information available and can also include creating networking opportunities at the various seminars that will be held during this time period. The goal would be to increase existing and new entrepreneurs access to information and service providers in order to facilitate their ease of establishing their businesses.

- d. Partner with Local Entrepreneurs to facilitate two Start-up Weekend events focused on technology and targeted to youth to inspire new eBusiness ideas in Bermuda.
 - i. Startup Weekends are weekend-long, hands-on experiences where entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs can find out if startup ideas are viable. Over a Saturday and Sunday, teams will discuss their ideas and develop, validate and/or dismiss ideas utilizing the tried LEAN Startup Methodologies in order to build a minimal viable product. On the Sunday evening teams demo their prototypes and receive valuable feedback from a panel of experts. This initiative must be driven by entrepreneurs, thus we will seek to partner by, participating as speakers, panellists, and sponsors of the event.
 - ii. We would like to hold a Start Up weekend specifically targeted to youth and will seek to partner with the Senior Schools and the Bermuda College. Although we have facilitated the training of several entrepreneurs to deliver the Startup Weekend curriculum, we may need to sponsor training of other entrepreneurs depending on availability of the entrepreneurs who have already been trained. The alternative will be to see if we can identify some entrepreneurs from the 42 other people that attended the Bermuda Startup Weekend to assist with the organization. I have contacted Startup Global to confirm whether or not this can occur.
 - iii. The second Startup Weekend will be held in partnership with the Bermuda Hospitality Institute and will focus on Tourism related businesses. We have discussed a potential date of October for this date, the month prior to GEW 2015. We will also seek to offset some of the cost by requesting that BHI cover some of the costs.
 - iv. Host Networking Sessions/Mentoring Opportunities for Startup Weekend Participants. We plan to hold a Networking Event for those participants who attended the March 2015 Startup Weekend to create another opportunity for them to interact with the Judges and their teams in hopes that this will assist them with the advancement of their winning ideas.

Further, after the successful hosting of the two Startup Weekends for 2015/16 we will seek to have a similar networking event for all participants.

3. Accessibility:

- a. The website that was built can now be utilized as a resource for information about all things ebusiness related in Bermuda. The site will continue to be a resource providing:
 - i. Access to video of past workshops which can become a resource to those who were unable to make the seminars in person,
 - ii. Comparative analysis on rates to establish a ebusiness presence in Bermuda
 - iii. Database of all ebusinesses in Bermuda
 - iv. Way for ebusinesses to advertise and connect with their consumer
 - v. Resources page for those interested in starting an online business (i.e. Listing of what available resources/shopping carts work with Bermuda Banks, Price list of typical costs to establish a web and online presence, Link to forms needed to establish online Banking, Contact information for the industry experts and Banks)

The Project Coordinator should either be in a position to update the website or identify a provider to maintain and update the website as needed. The website was built on a Joomla platform and has historically been maintained by W&W Solutions. There are funds that have been allocated in the budget to cover the cost of Website updates outside of the Project Coordination fee.

Submission Deadline

Vendor proposals must be submitted by **5:00 pm Friday, June 19th, 2015**. Proposals received after the deadline will be deemed non-compliant and will not be considered.

Response Requirements

Please email responses to jlodge@bedc.bm .

Please include the following in your response:

- Project Plan/Methodology
- Proposed subcontractor plan (Name and address of any proposed subcontractor and their role)
- Proposed responsibilities of BEDC
- Costs – include total estimated costs for work that you will do and any additional costs that you think may be required based on plans as set out above

Selection

The successful vendor will be notified the week of **Monday June 22nd, 2015**

Contract

Execution by the successful vendor of a contract that outlines the terms, scope of work and costs will be required. The project will initiate after the contract has been fully executed. The BEDC shall incur no costs or liability to any vendor prior to initiation of the project. All contracts are subject to a final review by the BEDC advisory committee and/or board of directors.

Acceptance and Authority to Cancel the RFP

The BEDC will not be obliged to accept the lowest price or any of the proposals submitted during this process. Each vendor acknowledges and agrees that the BEDC will have no liability or obligation to any vendor, except to the vendor awarded a contract, if any. The BEDC reserves the right to cancel this RFP without any obligation or reimbursement for cost, materials or time allocated to vendor response preparation.

References and Qualifications

Before awarding a contract, the BEDC reserves the right to require the vendor to submit evidence of qualifications it deems appropriate. This evidence may include references from prior customers, information regarding business ownership and financial soundness and relevant technical experience of the vendor.

All applicants must provide proof that they are in good standing with their Government obligations.

Appendix 1 (Website)

Screenshot of eMonday website (based on Joomla platform)

