

**Entrepreneurship & Small Business
Alliance Meeting
May 5, 2009
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
CCSR**

Attendees: Tracee Adams, Nicholas Ayon, Trish Brasted, Roger Douthett, Andrea Gegen John Gendron, Jack Huber, Rob Koger, Phyllis Robertson, Randy Roebuck, John Stevens, Miriam Ubben, Tim Pett

City Arts Tech Studio & Tech Council

City Arts Tech Studio

Randy Roebuck gave a presentation on the City Arts Tech Studio. This initiative originated with the Visioneering Cyber Alliance. It will be a place to take your questions about web sites, software, cyber security, networks, GPS devices, digital camera, cell phone, etc. Supervised high school and college interns will answer questions. This will give the students an opportunity to improve their communications skills and build their resume while providing a community service. Themed events such as YouTube Thursdays are planned also.

Tech Council

The Visioneering Cyber Alliance is forming a Tech Council which meets on the 1st Thursday of the month at City Arts at 5:30 p.m. The 1st meeting is May 7th. This council will oversee the City Arts Tech Studio.

Software & Information Technology Association of Kansas

Miriam Ubben gave a presentation on the Software & Information Technology Association of Kansas (SITAKS). There are 3200 software and IT companies in Kansas that employ 58,000 with an annual payroll of \$4.2 billion. The average salary is over \$70,000 which is 91% above the average state wage. This industry has huge economic benefits for our state. The goal of SITAKS is to be the voice of the association at the state level. They also provide educational programs and networking opportunities. Current membership is 75. Once they reach 100 – 110 members they will have state-wide recognition events. Everyone with an IT connection were invited to join SITAKS.

Q&A with Randy & Miriam

Q – What are the training needs of companies?

A – Employers are looking for soft skills.

Q – Of the 3200 IT companies how many are start-ups?

A – They are predominately small companies – telecommunications – not sure how many are start-ups.

Q – From a cluster development standpoint – what legislation can help promote this industry?

A – We need to focus on what we have here and grow it here. Get people engaged and educate the community on the importance of this industry. We need to publicize the fact that we have IT in Kansas.

Q – What do we need to attract the creative community to come here?

A – Access to an airport and direct flights, access to capital and quality workforce.

Q – Social media – from a small business point of view how can this help my business?

A – Need to have strategies in place around use of social media

Q – Does Wichita need a digital oasis? A physical place for people to go?

A – Absolutely.

Q – How are you marketing the Cyber Tech Studio?

A – Relying a lot on media. There is no marketing budget. Also planning to use social media to help spread the word.

Q – From a Visioneering alliance standpoint what can we do? This is good information for us to have.

A – Support the tech studio and help get the word out. If in an IT related business, join SITAKS. Become involved in the Tech Council.

Social Media Seminar

The Chamber is hosting a Social Media Seminar at Friends University on May 19th at 3:30 p.m. Neal Sharma with Digital Evolution Group is the guest speaker. Social Media is the new conventional wisdom but it extends far beyond the internet. He will present practical advice on how to leverage emerging and established web based technologies to advance your business. Everyone was encouraged to attend. Reservations are required.

Alliance Next Steps

What should the work of this alliance be? Should it be a higher level than projects?

- Be a part of the economic development planning
- Lobby for an environment for entrepreneurs
- Help get the work out to the community about opportunities

Next meeting: June 9th at 9:00 a.m. at the Chamber.