

SUMMARY OF 12-8-2009 HOME BASED BUSINESS FOCUS GROUP

Members of Home Based Business: Patrick Doyle, Global Health Products; Frank Peteroy, architect; Leslie Wood, Leslie Wood Research; Roberta Roll, Health in Motion; Marcia Peteroy, Sunrise/Sunset B&B; Bob Sacks, The Precision Media Group

Leslie Wood Research

LWR is a consulting firm that designs analytics and builds metrics for use in the advertising industry. A heavy focus on statistics and computers. Ms. Wood said she has had two businesses, one with a partner; went independent 12 years ago and has been in business for a total of 23 years. LWR focused previously on media; now, more oriented toward understanding the effect of advertising and types of advertising. LWR has had 6 employees for 10 years and does not want to increase. Media Trust Co. created 6 years ago; could grow, with a potential for 10-15 more local jobs. Currently, 2 strong analytic computer employees.; 2 1/2 in Copake, 1 in NYC, 1 in Monterey. Clients are private companies and ad agencies in US and Japan. Located in Copake because the lifestyle is congenial.

Global Health Products

Makes specialized medical devices. Wants to expand GHP medical devices and by adding aspects of the cosmetic industry; likes this area because it is close to Albany and New York City - but not too close. The business is decentralized; an office in Albuquerque and Copake. Twenty people around the country; communicate by webinars. One full-time Copake employee coordinates marketing and sales and one bookkeeper. Needs a larger space; not much available in Copake, looked in Hudson, where there is space, but not personnel. Does not need technical expertise, just desire, drive, enthusiasm. His medical devices, such as compression therapy devices, are sold through clinics and home health agencies, but he is trying to develop direct home sales. The devices are not commonly known, so they are difficult to home sell. The cosmetic devices, such as hair restoration, are subject to federal regulation.

Peteroy Architect

Mr. Peteroy is licensed in NYS to prepare architectural drawings. One employee. Mostly residential but did a small insurance office in Chatham. Until a few years ago, architects were *persona non grata* when it came to building; builders made their own plans. After 9/11, people from NYC moved here and brought their architects. The business goes up and down with the economy. Worked also in NYC until last year; background is in NYC building and zoning codes. Current market is for additions. Banks are not giving "good" people loans and if they do, it is only for about 33%. AIA had a 20% cut in the office. Not many homes are being built; has one job here now and the owners are struggling to obtain loans. Hands-on planning is very important to him; he can build what he draws. The trades have become more respectful of architects, and good architects are still getting work in small towns. However, he has received phone calls from Philadelphia asking about work up here. He built his B&B in 1996-7 and had some problems with the boards and inspectors, but boards in general are getting more competent people. In NYS jobs over \$25,000 require architectural drawings. Job is easier now because the building dept. ask for arch. drawings. The building inspectors have to take courses, and most towns are doing this now. Architects are responsible for safety issues, wind, stability, etc. They discuss these things with the contractors. There is not much Copake can do to increase his business - it is a referral business. In regard to the idea of consolidation of services in area towns, he said he would not want to have to go to New Lebanon, for instance, to file forms.

Health in Motion

Ms. Roll said she has been in business for a total of almost thirty years and in Copake since 1993. She is the sole proprietor and provides wellness services to adults and children with a broad range of problems, from pain, injury, stress, respiratory problems, M.S., digestive problems, musculoskeletal conditions, headaches, developmental delays, etc. She uses hands-on techniques; movement for alignment, strength and balance; breathing and body awareness. Hers is a referral business and her clients come from the Copake area, as well as from Millerton and Salisbury/Lakeville, CT. She also teaches yoga classes in Sharon, CT, Copake and Ancram.

The Precision Media Group

Mr. Sacks has two companies, one of which is an international consulting firm. He uses Skype 1-3 times a week. He does analytical research for the publishing industry and publishes the world's oldest electronic newsletter (since 1988); he writes 50% and uses 50% from writers around the world. He travels widely to lecture on publishing and the distribution of information and how people are going to read in the future. He is a journalist, writing about publishing and magazines. He travels out of Albany and said it would be nice to have a bus to the airport and the train. His business is thriving, but it doesn't have much to do with Copake.

Sunrise/Sunset B&B

The business is her home. Belongs to the CC and Southern Berkshire County Chamber of Commerce. Business comes from referrals and local residents who need extra room for guests.

Areas of Concern for the Future

Broadband speed too low and cost too high. Is the local problem political or economics?

Challenges in Copake are logistical. Improve Fed-Ex and UPS pickups

Space is not available for expansion. Given a choice, some would like to stay in Copake even though it might cost more.

Occasionally large trucks and trucks with trailers come down the main street and take out the phone lines. Who is giving them permission to do this?

Phone service should be improved for reliability.

Complaint about the availability of stimulus money for home-based business and how to obtain it.

Mixed responses to the issue of need for a way to communicate among "home-based" businesses. Some interest shown in a local Chamber of Commerce.

Feeling was expressed that town officials and residents generally do not understand or appreciate the existence of home-based businesses.

Not much for guests and clients of home-based businesses to do in Copake.