

THE BPG NEWS

Fort Lauderdale, FL • September 2011



Business & Professional Group

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THIS MONTH

Speakers

Steve Shires
Sam Chalfant
Daniel Wasinger and Howard Cohen
Drew Miller
Bev Shaffer

Events

BPG Membership Get-Together • BankUnited

Photos

Bowling • Manor Lanes

NONPROFITS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Submitted by Peter Meyerhoefer, Director of Communications



Many BPG members give of their time to nonprofits and charities. I found this article about nonprofits and social media interesting. These are ten mistakes that organizations make. Most of them are real easy to correct. A lot of them also relate to your own business or personal social media interaction.

1. Using a horizontal logo for your avatar

Your nonprofit's avatar is your visual identity on social-networking sites, and with the exception of LinkedIn Groups, all social-networking sites require a square avatar. Unfortunately, many nonprofits upload horizontal logos to serve as their avatars, resulting in the obvious

cropping of the images. Would your nonprofit ever put a cropped, completely wrecked logo in print materials or on its website? Absolutely not! Yet tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of nonprofits every day send messages to their communities on social-networking sites with completely wrecked logos. Crazy!

2. Posting more than one status update a day on Facebook

Everyone seemingly has a different and passionate opinion on this, but in my research and experience posting more than one status update a day on average on Facebook has a negative effect. People either start ignoring your updates because you're always in their news feed, or they "hide" you altogether. I am a big believer that less is more on Facebook.

3. Not following on a 1:1 ratio on Twitter

If your nonprofit's objective is to gain a lot of followers on Twitter, then you should follow on a 1:1 ratio. People are much more likely to follow you if they think you will follow them in return, and the more people you follow, the more your nonprofit's avatar gets spread throughout the Twitterverse. Also, people can't direct message you on Twitter if you don't follow them. To many supporters and donors who are trying to direct message you, it's a bit of a snub when they realize they can't because you're not following them in return.

If you don't want to follow a lot of people on Twitter for fear that the volume of messages will become overwhelming, just organize those you do want to read regularly into Twitter Lists. There are so many benefits to following on a 1:1 ratio, and sadly less than 1 percent of nonprofits on Twitter do.

4. Not applying for YouTube's Nonprofit Program

YouTube.com/nonprofits. Enough said.

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DO BUSINESS WITH A MEMBER

Business & Professional Group

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*BPG Members meet for breakfast every Thursday at 7:45 a.m. at Hugh's Catering
4351 NE 12th Terrace
Oakland Park, FL 33334*



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello everyone.

Into the fall we go! I hope everyone's summer was filled with good vacations, pool parties, and relaxing days at the beach. Hopefully you also worked a bit on your advertising plans and cleaned up old business. It is time to hit the ground running with all your plans and strategies and put them into action. With this effort,

your businesses should be able to tap into the stream of monies that the consumers are now spending more freely.

BPG has many exciting things planned in the coming months. The most important event is the Membership Open House on Friday September 16th at BankUnited. If every current BPG member brings one new guest, it will help to make the group stronger. The reality is we used to be the only gay networking group, but not anymore. There are so many gay and gay-friendly groups that we need to reach out to people. We need to show other business owners that BPG is different and that difference means referrals and friendship.

We have great guest speakers and some really fun events planned. Anyone remember Full Moon Kayaking? I do. Stay tuned, and shhhhhhhh...an awesome holiday party (for which the idea has not been done before).

Don't forget on September 16th to bring all your friends who would benefit from BPG to the event. It is free and with great food and wine. So let us do some growing again. We are different. We make lasting lifetime friendships and can have fun while we make some serious money. Our dues are next to nothing, so why not join. Tell your associates and your trades people (Electrician, Pool Cleaner, etc.), we need them as well.

See you there!

~ La Prez

BPG BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

August 2011 Meeting

The BPG Board Meeting was held on Wednesday, August 4, 2011 at George Kallas's office at Wilton Office Suites.

In attendance: Donna Watson, Susan Kissinger, Matt Gill, Arlen Leight, Peter Meyerhoefer and Chris Truster.

Meeting was called to order at 7:08pm.

Peter Meyerhoefer made a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting and Susan Kissinger seconded it and it was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

Hugh's Catering advised that they were going to raise the cost of the breakfast \$1 per person. The board is working to negotiate.

Continued on page 4

MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITIES

SCHEDULED SPEAKERS

September 1

Steve Shires

September 8

Sam Chalfant
(networking)

September 15

Daniel Wasinger and
Howard Cohen

September 22

Drew Miller

September 29

Bev Shaffer

MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

September 6 Darcy Beeman

September 6 Val Gremillion

September 8 Richard Jannotti

September 20 Sam Chalfant

September 21 Steve McAleer

September 29 Tom Millner



SOCIAL CALENDAR

BPG Membership Get-Together

Friday, September 16th
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Bank United at 5 points
(2723 N. Dixie Highway)

As much as you need new
business contacts, we all do.
Bring a guest and meet
new people.

Please send out direct
invitations to the
BPG Membership
Get-Together as well as post on
Facebook & LinkedIn.

RSVP with amount of attendees
to Matt Gill at
mac_swim1956@yahoo.com

MEMBERSHIP REPORT - JULY 2011

Our Guests

Andy Rogow, Sierra Insurance

Referred by Peter Meyerhoefer

Derek Skiba, Manela & Associates CPAs

Referred by Paulette Halpern

When you attend breakfast, introduce yourself to our guests and welcome them to the BPG! Please bring a business associate or friend to a BPG breakfast, networking or social event.

Thank you for your support!



BPG BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

Continued from page 2

Matt Gill, VP for Membership presented his report. No new applications. It is suggested to do a membership event to bring guests. Chris Truster will check to see if we can use Bank United and we set a tentative date of September 16th.

It was also reported that in July, six guests were welcomed.

Susan Kissinger, Treasurer, presented the financial report. It is as follows:

July Bank Statement

Ending July 31, 2011

Created from the bank statement

Beginning balance	\$8420.29
Deposits/Credits	\$1616.00
Withdrawals/Debits	\$2109.24
Ending Balance on 7/31/2011	\$7927.04

Peter Meyerhoefer, Director of communications, presented his report. All of the info is in for the newsletter.

1. Sam Chalfant, Director of Networking, was not present at the meeting. But sent his report in. With the help of Susan, I have removed the business cards from the business card binder of members who did not renew their membership.

Arlen Leight, VP of Programs, presented his report. He has speakers scheduled till mid Sept.

Steve McAleer, Director of Social Activities, was not present. He e-mailed his upcoming events for August. The board discussed the holiday party and will look into the options discussed.

Chris Truster, Director of Community Relations, he will follow up with the Susan G. Komen Foundation for the upcoming October presentation.

Bev Shaffer, Friendship Director, was not present.

HAVE A SPECIAL PROMO?

If you have a promotion or a special event that you want the whole membership to know about, you can create an article or announce it in the monthly Newsletter. You can also ask BPG to have it sent out via the BPG Facebook page.

Thank you for being a member!

DR. DONNA'S CORNER

Submitted by Dr. Donna Watson,
A Place Of Health

Study Shows Chiropractic Helps Golfers With Full Swing Performance



A scientific study published in the December 2009 issue of the Journal of Chiropractic Medicine further documents the benefits of chiropractic care for athletes. The stated objective of this study noted that there has been an increased usage of chiropractic care for athletes who wish to increase their performance. This study specifically looks at golfers to see their improvement under chiropractic.

In this study golfers at 2 different clubs in São Paulo, Brazil, were studied. A total of 43 golfers were divided into 2 random groups for comparison in this study. One group received only a stretch program while the second group received the same stretch program in addition to chiropractic care.

All participants in this study were initially asked to perform three full swing maneuvers. Measurements of the average distance they were able to hit the ball for the 3 swings were made. Then the golfers were put through either just the stretching program, or the stretching plus chiropractic depending on which test group they were a part of. After either just stretching, or chiropractic plus stretching, the participants were asked to repeat the same three swing maneuvers and measurements were taken. This entire process was repeated for a period of four weeks over the course of the study.

To maintain consistency, the study noted that of the 43 golfers in this study, the average age, handicap, and initial swing were comparable among all golfers. The

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results showed that there was no improvement in what the study called the “full swing performance”, (average distance the golfers were able to hit the ball), in the group that only did the stretching program prior to hitting the golf balls.

However, after the fourth session of stretching and chiropractic care, the golfers in this group showed a statistically significant improvement in their “full swing performance” translating into better distance when hitting golf balls.

The authors of the study concluded, “Chiropractic in association with muscle stretching may be associated with an improvement of full-swing performance when compared with muscle stretching alone.”

For more information, please contact **Dr. Donna Watson of A Place of Health at 954-568-9355**. You may also visit her website at **www.aplaceofhealth.com**.

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2008 BEST CHIROPRACTOR
THE NEW TIMES MAGAZINE

NONPROFITS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Continued from page 1

5. Not creating Flickr slideshows to tell your nonprofit's story

Quite often your nonprofit's story can be much better told through images. On the Web where people are inundated all day long with lengthy text and messages, a visually compelling slideshow can be a welcome respite from information overload.

6. Not adding social-networking icons to your website

Your supporters and donors now expect your nonprofit at the very least to be on Facebook, and Twitter comes in a close second. If they visit your website and can't easily find quick links to your social-networking communities, they become frustrated and some even will question your credibility. That said, get those icons on your homepage!

7. Ignoring LinkedIn 'Company' pages

LinkedIn recently surpassed 100 million users, and odds are your nonprofit has a Company Page on LinkedIn. Find it, claim it, set it up, and promote it!

8. Not claiming your 'Places' pages on Facebook, Foursquare, Gowalla, etc.

If your nonprofit is location-based (zoos, museums, health clinics, food banks, etc.) and you haven't yet claimed your Facebook Places Page, Foursquare Venue Page and/or Gowalla Spot Page, then your nonprofit is precariously and quickly falling behind. No doubt about it.

9. Posting only (boring) marketing content

Make a donation! Come to our annual gala! Sign our online petition! Make a donation! Like us on Facebook! Follow us on Twitter! Oh yeah, PLEASE make a donation! Blah, blah, blah. Sorry, but it's the truth. If all your nonprofit does on social-networking sites is marketing, then I guarantee no one is listening and your ROI is next to nil.

10. Not blogging

Blogging is the glue that holds your social-media strategy together. The social Web is driven by fresh content, and if your nonprofit doesn't regularly publish new content to the Web, you'll struggle with getting "shared" and "retweeted." Nonprofits that don't get shared or retweeted will not do well on the Social Web.

That said, publishing news articles to your website doesn't have the same credibility or positive effect as blogging does because donors and supporters usually cannot comment or participate on those news stories — the content is static. Blogging is the original social media, and not blogging is one of the biggest mistakes a nonprofit can make today on the Social Web.

Finally, if strategically designed, your blog will grow your e-newsletter list and communities on social-networking sites faster than any other tool available today. Seriously. Blogging is the missing piece in most social-media campaigns.

From the June 2011 issue of Fundraising Success Magazine.

YOU CAN'T SELL A GROUP

Submitted by Paulette Halpern, Sandler Training



A guaranteed prescription for failure is to present to a group without having first identified and appealed to the critical perspectives of its members on an individual basis (each person may have a unique set of "pains" that you should have already identified). By the time you present the solution, there should be no surprises for anyone. Everyone should be aware of how the proposed solution might impact them, and enough support should exist to guarantee that the group decision will be a mere formality prior to implementation of the solution. Presentations made to groups should not be the reason to get business, but rather a confirmation that the business already exists. If you are relying on your presentation to make the sale, you are putting too much pressure on yourself.

For additional information, contact Paulette Halpern of Sandler Training at 561-715-6892, paulette@sandler.com, www.noonangroup.sandler.com, or www.linkedin.com/in/paulettehalpern.

REASONS TO BUY A HOME

Submitted by Thom Carr, Atlantic Properties International



Yesterday, Fannie Mae released their National Housing Survey for the second quarter of 2011. They survey the American public on a multitude of questions concerning today's housing market. Each quarter, we like to pull out some of the findings we deem most interesting. Here they are for the most recent report:

Most Important Reasons to Buy a Home

When we talk about homeownership today, it seems that the financial aspects always jump to the front of the discussion. However, the study shows that the four major reasons a person buys a home have nothing to do with money. The top four reasons, in order, are:

- It means having a good place to raise children and provide them with a good education
- You have a physical structure where you and your family feel safe
- It allows you to have more space for your family
- It gives you control of what you do with your living space (renovations and updates)

The Home as an Investment

Though most people purchase a home for non-financial reasons, everyone realizes there is a money component to homeownership. Here is what they said on this issue:

- 65% of the general population (and 67% of homeowners) believe that homeownership is a 'safe' investment.
- 56% believe that homeownership has more potential as an investment than any other traditional asset class.
- 69% think that now is a good time to buy a home (this number has increased in each of the last two quarters)

Rent vs. Buy

We are always interested in the difference people see in renting vs. owning.

- 63% of renters have aspirations to someday own their own home
- 72% of renters think that owning is superior to renting
- 95% of homeowners see homeownership as a positive experience (4% see it as a negative experience) while 82% of renters see renting as a positive experience (17% see it as a negative experience)
- 96% of homeowners live in a single family residence while 46% of renters live in a multi-unit building

Bottom Line

Even in difficult times, Americans still realize the value of homeownership

For more information, please contact Thom Carr at 954-566-1225 or thomcarr@aol.com.



Ideas for Social Events

If you have any social events that you would like to see, please let us know and we will see if we can make it happen.

Please feel free to share your ideas with us.

Contact Steve McAleer at social@bpgftl.com.

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A Simplified Guide to Creating a Personal Will
Co-Author: *The Broward County Domestic Partnership Ordinance* (1999)

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW AND ESTABLISHED MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES

In future issues, we would like to include biographies from established members in addition to our new members. It offers more exposure for you and allows new members to get to know you better as well as you getting to know them. Writing your bio for the newsletter does not have to be a daunting experience. For some, the words just flow and before you know it - voila! a full member bio is done. Yet for others, this is not always a fun or easy task. For that reason, we thought it was important to help guide those members, both new and not-so-new to get through this process. These questions are only helpful ideas, you may want to add or not include some of them in your writing.

Your biography does not have to be very long. It will help members get to know a little bit more about who you are, where you come from, and what interests you may have in common. It is also a great way of letting other members know what your business can offer them and, can help you boost your sales. I have included a number of questions that can help you write your biography for the next newsletter. Take advantage of the exposure we are offering you by spending only 10-15 minutes of your time to showcase your business. Please include anything you think is important that you would like others to know about you and your business. We will also need a current picture of you so members can recognize who the biography is about and a company logo if you have one to enforce your brand.

Guideline questions for biography:

Where are you from originally?
How long have you lived in Florida?
Do you have any children, grandchildren?
Do you like pets? Do you have any?
What do you like to do on your free time?
What are your hobbies?

Pertaining to your occupation:

How long have you been in business?
What is your job like?
- A typical day?
- What do you do? What are the duties/functions/responsibilities of your job?
- What kinds of problems do you deal with?
- What kinds of decisions do you make?
How did this type of work interest you and how did you get started?
What things did you do before you entered this occupation?
How does your company differ from its competitors?

Thank you for your participation in making our newsletter and our group better! Peter Meyerhoefer, Director of Communications, communication@bpgftl.com.



HAVE A SPECIAL PROMO?

If you have a promotion or a special event that you want the whole membership to know about, you can create an article or announce it in the monthly Newsletter. You can also ask BPG to have it sent out via the BPG Facebook page.

Thank you for being a member!

PLACE YOUR AD NOW

Get great exposure through the BPG Newsletter! Place your ad now and let the networking and new business begin! At our last Board meeting, the Board Members felt that, since the newsletters are now in print again, they should be more accessible to members. The newsletters should also be used as a tool for us to encourage others to join and for YOU to also advertise your business! If you'd like to promote the group to your clients and colleagues, please let us know how many copies of the newsletter you will need. We will also provide a stand for you that can be used to display copies of the newsletter in your reception area or at your desk in your office. In addition, we'd like to remind you of a great opportunity to gain exposure for your business. You can place an ad in our newsletter and, depending on the month of placement, your fee will be prorated since we normally invoice quarterly. **Contact us at communication@bpgftl.com.**

SEALING OR EXPUNGING A CRIMINAL ARREST

**Submitted by Marc P. Lyons, Esq.
Lyons, Snyder & Collin, P.A.**

As a criminal defense/personal injury attorney in Fort Lauderdale, I oftentimes receive inquiries regarding whether a client is eligible to seal or expunge their criminal record. I created this "cheat sheet" for my clients to understand the benefits of sealing or expunging a criminal record and the common reasons for denial.

Benefits

Due to the economic downturn, the unemployment rate in the United States is hovering around 9%-10%. As a result, employers can be very particular with their new hires and may preclude hiring an individual with any criminal record. Worse yet, with advances in technology, employers can inexpensively uncover your criminal history from anywhere in the United States with no time limitations. I recently had a client fired from his job for not disclosing a misdemeanor marijuana charge from 1978! In addition to employers, criminal background checks are common when applying for housing, professional licenses, security clearance, and certain bank loans. I have even heard of potential dating partners researching an individual's criminal history before dates.

When you seal or expunge your criminal record, your criminal history is no longer accessible to the public. Such criminal history includes your Court Case number, your Jail file, and the police record of the incident (i.e. probable cause affidavit). Please be aware, that if you were arrested for a crime, even if the charges were never filed or your case was dismissed for any reason, the record of your arrest and Court Case remains public access until you seal or expunge your case. It is worth repeating that even if the State Attorney's Office "dropped" or announced a Nolle Prosequi ("Dismissal") of your case, the record of your arrest and Court Case are still available for employers to view until you seal or expunge your case.

In most situations (including all expungements), you may legally deny that you were ever arrested for the crime that you had sealed or expunged. Think of the value of not having to tell an employer of your youthful indiscretion or poor-behavior that is currently leaving an indelible mark on your resume. The cost-benefit of spending a few hundred dollars to hire an attorney to seal or expunge your record could potentially net you tens of thousands of dollars in the future. Please note, in Florida, it takes approximately 6-7 months for a Court to seal or expunge your record. As a result, be proactive - do not wait until you are applying for a new job before petitioning the Court to seal or expunge your case.

Common Reasons for Denial

I receive dozens of phone calls a year from individuals who were improperly advised by their previous criminal defense attorney that they can seal or expunge their record of the arrest. I am always amazed when criminal defense attorneys misstate the law on sealing or expungements as the

Florida Department of Law Enforcement provides a detailed explanation on their website of which crimes are ineligible to be sealed or expunged.

By far, the most common inquiry I received concerns the criminal offense of Driving While Under the Influence. In the State of Florida, anyone who accepts a plea to Driving While Under the Influence receives an Adjudication of Guilt. An individual cannot receive a Withhold of Adjudication to Driving While Under the Influence, unless the State Attorney changes the charge to Reckless Driving. The law is clear that an individual CANNOT seal or expunge their record if they have ever been ADJUDICATED guilty of any criminal offense, including Driving While Under the Influence or Driving While License Suspended.

The second most common inquiry concerns individuals who were improperly advised by their previous criminal defense attorney that they can always seal or expunge the record of their arrest if they received a WITHHOLD of ADJUDICATION to the charge. Again, I consider this legal malpractice considering the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's website specifically enumerates which crimes are ineligible to be sealed or expunged, regardless if adjudication of guilt was withheld. Of note, all the ineligible offenses are listed in Fla. Stat. 907.041.

Criminal defense attorneys most often misrepresent that the following crimes can be sealed or expunged if the client received a withhold of adjudication: (1) Burglary of a Dwelling; (2) Any act of domestic violence; and (3) Stalking. These charges cannot be sealed or expunged even if the charge is a misdemeanor and you received a withhold of adjudication. In addition, an individual can only seal or expunge their record on ONE occasion. An individual cannot seal or expunge a charge in 2010 and expect to seal or expunge another charge in 2011.

Although you do not need an attorney to petition the Court to seal or expunge your criminal record, it is my recommendation to hire an experienced criminal defense attorney to handle this matter for you. Most attorneys in Florida will charge anywhere between \$500.00 - \$1,000.00 to seal or expunge a criminal case. As making sure you correctly seal or expunge your criminal record could be one of the most important decisions you make in your lifetime, it is beneficial to make sure it is done properly.

The information in this article site was developed by Marc P. Lyons of Lyons, Snyder & Collin, P.A. for informational purposes only and should not be considered legal advice. The transmission and receipt of information from this article does not form or constitute an attorney-client relationship with Lyons, Snyder & Collin. Persons receiving the information from this article should not act upon the information provided without seeking professional legal counsel. **For more information, please visit www.lyonssnyder.com or call 954-462-8035.**


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