

Free seminar with retail and hospitality expert Monday

Written by By Paul Bailey, PIO for PJC-SSC
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Helping local entrepreneurs and businesses succeed is the goal of a series of seminars being developed by the Paris Junior College Small Business Development Center and the city of Sulphur Springs.

The first in the series, also sponsored by the Hopkins County Chamber of Commerce, features Marc Willson, who brings more than 36 years of experience refining and promoting retail businesses and restaurants to the public.

“We are so pleased to be able to present Mr. Willson’s services free to the Sulphur Springs community,” said SBDC Director Bradley Gottshalk. “He is known as an operations expert and has counseled more than 500 clients in best practices, marketing and customer service. His seminars and presentations help keep entrepreneurs current in an extremely competitive and changing environment.”

The informative gathering of business owners will take place over hors d’oeuvres at LouViney’s Restaurant in Sulphur Springs from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Monday, April 15. The topic is “Staying Relevant to a Changing Consumer.”

The seminar will cover changes among consumers of all ages and include an overview of the economic climate and what consumers want in 2013; how a deep recession alters consumer buying habits; marketing, promotions and social media; and merchandising and store layout.

Helping retail, restaurant and tourism-related small businesses promote their concepts is something Willson has done for decades. He helps small business owners determine why their business is unique, who their customers are, and how to reach them. He is well known as an operations expert and has counseled countless retailers in areas of marketing and customer service, merchandising, social media, financials and cash flow.

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He began his career in 1975 as co-owner of the largest Earth Shoes distributor in the United States. He joined Britches of Georgetowne and left it as vice president of operations after 12 years. He opened 83 mall-based Circuit City stores, served as president of Storetrax, Inc., and opened the world's first energy efficiency store for Current Energy, LLC. Willson holds an MBA from James Madison University and an MA from George Washington University.

Following the presentation, Willson will be available for a limited number of free, 90-minute audits at the business locations. Slots are limited. To make a reservation or for more information call 903-782-0224.