

SPRING 2008

# taking care of business

a publication of TruWest® Credit Union Business Services

*TruWest Credit Union knows that your plate is full with the day-to-day business decisions you have to make, while still trying to cultivate your long-term business growth. With such a busy schedule, there's not much time left to sit down and reevaluate your commercial real estate loan.*

## COME TO TRUWEST FOR YOUR COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE LOAN

Whether you're looking to purchase or refinance, our Commercial Lending team can relieve some stress by helping you find a loan that fits your needs.

- TruWest Credit Union offers commercial real estate loans with interest rates in the low 7% to the mid 8% range.\* This pricing is very aggressive and lower than many financial institutions offering commercial loans.
- TruWest also offers highly competitive commercial real estate loans for both new or existing property. We offer a five- and 10-year fixed rate with loan payments based on a 25-year amortization.
- If you have a business that has less than three years history and you're thinking about getting an SBA loan, we have some good news! TruWest's Commercial Lending Department now works with the SBA to offer business members the SBA 504 commercial real estate loan program.
- If you currently have an SBA 7A commercial real estate loan that is more than three years old and have an interest rate in the high 9% or 10% range, contact our Business Lending Department. We can discuss paying off your existing SBA 7A loan and refinancing your loan into a fixed-rate commercial real estate loan.

### WE CAN HELP

Call us today at **480.441.5900** or toll-free at **800.528.1441** to set up an appointment. Our Commercial Lending staff is happy to meet with you to learn more about your business and how we can help you make it grow.

\*All loans subject to credit approval.



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*TruWest Credit Union is proud to announce a simple solution for business check and deposit ticket reorders from our preferred check provider, Harland Clarke.*

Visit [ExpertChecks.com](http://ExpertChecks.com), and you'll be reordering business-related products online in no time.

## BUSINESS CHECKS AND ACCESSORIES ARE A CLICK AWAY

### CONVENIENCE

Reorder business checks and deposit tickets online anytime, without making an extra trip to the branch. Visit [ExpertChecks.com](http://ExpertChecks.com) and you will find out that reordering checks has never been easier.

### FLEXIBILITY

[ExpertChecks.com](http://ExpertChecks.com) allows you to navigate the site easily. You can place a quick reorder without changes, or you can shop for alternate checks or

deposit tickets. It even offers computer checks and deposit tickets compatible with most popular software packages. You can also shop for binders, security deposit bags and other business supplies.

### SECURITY MATTERS

[ExpertChecks.com](http://ExpertChecks.com) uses a secured socket layer verified by VeriSign Inc., the most trusted name in online security, to protect you while conducting online transactions. To access the

site, you must log in using your transit/routing number and account number. For your protection, personalization and shipping destinations cannot be changed and are not displayed. Because Harland Clarke uses direct debit to process purchases, there's no reason to fear purchasing online.

Visit [ExpertChecks.com](http://ExpertChecks.com) or call **800.503.2345** and a Business Products Expert will be happy to assist you.



## IN TIMES OF TROUBLE

### 4 POINTERS FOR BUSINESSES IN A FINANCIAL PINCH

Even in the best of times, keeping a business afloat is challenging. If your business is struggling through stormy seas, consider these four steps.



#### **Make sure all payroll taxes are paid on time,**

especially those withheld from employees' paychecks. Otherwise, the IRS and state tax authorities can hold you personally and legally

liable for these taxes plus penalties, even if your business goes bankrupt.



#### **Take control of your cash flow.**

If you lack the revenue to pay bills coming due, prepare a short-term cash projection. Make a list of money owed to you, and collect as much of it as possible. Cut

expenses to the bare minimum, and pay only necessary items like taxes and overhead costs. Work with suppliers and other creditors to develop a flexible repayment schedule.



#### **Rethink borrowing.**

If you're tempted to borrow more money to ease your financial situation, consider carefully whether your business is really likely to do better in the near future. If you do

decide to apply for a new loan or consolidate old ones, openly disclose your financial situation so your lender can help you make the best choice for you and your business.



#### **Plan for ongoing insurance coverage.**

Insurance carriers can be hesitant to offer coverage to businesses undergoing bankruptcy. So if you're planning to seek bankruptcy protection, make

sure you have insurance in place that extends at least 12 months into the future.

### TRUWEST CREDIT UNION CAN HELP

As your partners in business, we want to work with you to find solutions and improve your company's financial position. If you're struggling, don't wait until it's too late – call us today at **480.441.5900** (AZ) or **512.996.4000** (TX).



## BUDGET-FRIENDLY WAYS TO RECOGNIZE YOUR EMPLOYEES

**Give personalized thank-you notes to employees who excel at their jobs.** Be sure to mention how they make a difference – it shows you are truly aware of their talents and contributions.

**Feature photos of employees in advertising or on your Web site.** Not only can this make employees feel recognized and important, it can give your business a personal touch.

**Help employees get to know each other with a dash of fun.** Ask each employee to submit a childhood photo, then post “Guess Who?” profiles for all employees to view and try to determine who’s who.

**Host an appreciation breakfast, lunch or dinner.** Depending on your type of business, you could have it quarterly, annually or after your company reaches a goal everyone has worked hard to achieve.

## 4 WAYS TO REDUCE EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

One sign of a successful company: employees want to stay. But turnover happens, and when it does, it can be costly – financially as well as emotionally. Retaining key employees is crucial in today’s job market. Here are some tips to help keep your best and brightest on board.

**Show commitment from the top down.** An employee who has a positive view of management and a good relationship with his or her supervisor is more likely to enjoy his or her job. Listen to employees to ensure that their skills and interests match their duties. Providing career path advice and recognition for a job well done can go a long way.

**Keep the doors of communication open.** When changes are happening at your organization, make sure they are communicated to your employees in a timely manner. Ask your employees for opinions and ideas on a regular basis. This helps employees feel valued, and you may gain some new insight for improving your business’s products and procedures as well as employee morale.

**Realize that money matters, but it isn’t everything.** Yes, talented workers want to be paid what they are worth and comparably to what others receive for similar work in the industry. But health benefits, flexible hours, professional development opportunities and employee discounts can give employees a reason to stay as well.

**Say “Thank you.”** Your business couldn’t exist without the people who work for you. Showing your appreciation – whether it’s a handwritten note, a day-off bonus or a special company dinner – lets your employees know you recognize their contributions and truly care about them.

Perhaps the greatest key to employee retention is understanding what your employees want to gain from their jobs. Developing this personal connection with them greatly reduces the chances that they’ll be looking for employment somewhere else.



**REMEMBER: YOUR BUSINESS  
COULDN'T EXIST WITHOUT  
THE PEOPLE WHO WORK  
FOR YOU.**



*If employee training is little more than a line item in your business's annual budget, you're likely missing an opportunity to build your company's future.*

## 4 TRAINING TIPS TO HELP YOUR BUSINESS GROW

A strong employee training program starts with the mindset that training is an *investment* in the development of your company, not an *expense*. Consider these tips to help nurture your employees' growth.

### BOOST YOUR WEB SITE'S SEARCH ENGINE RESULTS

Increase your business' search engine rankings to help drive business to your company's Web site. Search engine optimization (SEO) helps raise your site to the top of the results page when potential customers type in search terms. The following tips can help.

- Add inbound links from major companies, trade groups, government organizations and educational sites and link your site to others.
- Join Web directories such as Yahoo! and Business.com to boost your search rankings.\* Also submit your site to the major search engines for indexing.
- Catch the eye of search engines by sprinkling good search phrases and keywords throughout your site with plenty of text. Think about what search words your prospective customers use and ask your clients.
- Consider hiring a professional search engine optimizer to manipulate search results and boost your search engine rankings. Ask other business people for recommendations.

\* Web sites provided for information only. No endorsement is implied.



**1. Focus your efforts.** Make the most of your time and money by determining up-front the skills that you want to address. What types of training will benefit the company most, now and in the future?

**2. Communicate your expectations.** Let employees know that honing their skills and learning the latest industry trends are essential to stay ahead of competitors. Be sure to support them in their efforts.

**3. Choose quality.** A knowledgeable trainer, thorough materials and a stimulating presentation improve the training's impact.

**4. Keep it current.** Before you recycle that 10-year-old customer service training session, refresh it with up-to-date information and new tactics that will motivate both new and existing employees to develop their skills.

At TruWest Credit Union, we want to help you establish or improve your employee training program. Use our business savings accounts to save for training expenses – and to store the resulting increased profits!



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