



Alabama Small Business Development Center Network

Strengthening Alabama's Economy, One Small Business at a Time.

www.asbdc.org

NEW TECHNOLOGY GUIDE HELPS ENTREPRENEURS GROW THEIR SMALL BUSINESSES AND CREATE JOBS

SBA and Microsoft introduce resource to deliver essential technology information to small business owners

A new technology tool for small businesses is now available to help them grow and create jobs. The new education resource, *Business Technology Simplified*, helps small business owners connect the dots between entrepreneurship and technology to give them a competitive edge.

The U.S. Small Business Administration and Microsoft have teamed up to develop this free, comprehensive guide on how technology can improve the small business owner's chances for success. The *Business Technology Simplified* guidebook includes fundamentals on the importance of technology, and on how it can be used to achieve a business's goals. In the guidebook's foreword, Earvin "Magic" Johnson writes about his journey in developing a multimillion dollar company and the value of technology to remain competitive.

"Our goal as an agency is to get information, tools and services into the hands of small business owners more quickly so they can spend more time doing what they do best – creating the jobs that will drive our economic recovery," said SBA Administrator Karen Mills. "This new guidebook is one more tool available to support small business growth through access to information and resources."

Business Technology Simplified offers straightforward tips on how to use technology and innovation to make businesses work more efficiently. The guidebook incorporates relevant and practical material on simplifying work tasks, do it yourself marketing, cloud computing, time management, finding and cultivating customers, and much more.

"Small businesses, which employ nearly 50 percent of the U.S. work force, rely on trustworthy technology that is easily adaptable and scalable to support growth and give them freedom to focus on the innovation and passion that drives their businesses," said Cindy Bates, Microsoft's vice president of U.S. Small and Medium Business. "We are thrilled to continue our long-standing relationship with the SBA and small businesses by providing this free resource that will arm this community with the technology know-how to safely and smartly grow their businesses in many strategic ways."

Business Technology Simplified is available in a printed format in SBA district offices, Alabama SBDC Network locations, and other SBA resource partners, or may be accessed online as an electronic publication and as an electronic distance learning course. The new online course has been created for self-paced access to practical guidance on applying technology to build and grow strong companies.



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The *Business Technology Simplified* online course allows quick access by small business owners to learn more about basic technology tools that can help their companies run more efficiently. The course features an audio guided lesson indexed by modules that includes information on how to use technology to save time in day-to-day tasks, how to better manage a business, mobile solutions that work, and tips on expanding customer base.

To access the course, go to www.sba.gov/training, then click *Business Technology Simplified* in the Highlighted Courses section. It is one of nearly 30 online tutorials offered by the SBA, and is available 24/7. Additional tutorials and training opportunities are available through the Alabama SBDC Network: www.ASBDC.org.

About Alabama SBDC Network: The Alabama Small Business Development Center Network is a statewide, inter-institutional program to enhance economic growth in Alabama by providing management and technical assistance to small businesses. Certified business counselors are available in 12 Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) located at our member university partners across the state. ASBDC Counselors provide no-cost assistance to companies and individuals in Alabama that are interested in starting or growing a business, utilizing SBA loan guarantee programs, selling to the federal government, or exploring international trade.

About SBA: The U.S. Small Business Administration is the nation's largest financial backer of small businesses. The SBA's programs and services help business owners start, run, and grow their businesses, and provide a range of financial, technical, and management assistance. SBA also plays a major role in the government's disaster relief efforts by making low-interest recovery loans to both homeowners and businesses. For more information on SBA's programs and services visit www.sba.gov.

About Microsoft: Founded in 1975, Microsoft is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential. Microsoft serves millions of small and medium-sized businesses in the U.S., helping them start, grow and thrive by leveraging today's powerful and affordable technologies. At the pillar of these technologies lies cloud computing, in which Microsoft has more than 15 years of experience and understands how to meet the demands of SMBs for simplicity and impact, with enterprise-grade capabilities, flexibility and affordability in a familiar environment. For more information on Microsoft technologies for small and mid-sized businesses, visit <http://www.microsoft.com/business>.

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