

EMPOWERED BUSINESS JOURNAL

A monthly online publication published by Thompson Management Consulting, LLC for small business owners and entrepreneurs – JANUARY 2018

In This Issue:

- Page 1-2** Use Disruption to Access Your Desired Path in Life – Austin E. Thompson, Jr.
- Page 3** The Inevitable Obsolescence of Retail Bricks-and-Mortars – Austin E. Thompson, Jr.
- Page 4** WATB 1420AM: Signing Off – Austin E. Thompson, Jr.
- Page 5-7** Business Advertisements
- Page 8-9** Upcoming Business Events
- Page 10-11** Advertising Rates for Thompson Management Consulting, LLC
- Page 12** About Empowered and Thompson Management Consulting, LLC
-

Use Disruption to Access Your Desired Path in Life

Austin E. Thompson, Jr.

How do you recognize when a disruption in your life is clearly an opportunity for you to change gears and head in your desired direction, and a pathway which will lead you on your way to a more fulfilling life. At the moment, what may seem as a cataclysmic shift in your life, which shakes you out of your comfort, is actually a path being cleared for you. On this path, is a journey which you've envisioned for a while, but one which was a delayed opportunity because you were tied to whatever created comfort and stability for you. Oftentimes, we have to be abruptly thrown into a moment of disruption to recognize our potential, and how that potential can be transformed into kinetic energy (energy in motion). If you were floating comfortably in a raft and a wave slammed up against your raft abruptly and dislodged you from the raft, you will immediately find yourself in a very compromising situation. Either you begin to flap your arms and kick your legs to try and swim for your survival, or sink rapidly to the bottom. In this moment of turmoil, you learned something important about yourself. With determination and a will to survive, you were able to flap your arms and kick your legs, despite not knowing how to swim, and miraculously got back to your rubber raft. With reserved strength and a heightened flow of adrenaline, you hoisted yourself back into the raft and paddled to safety. You had the desire and will to survive.

Following this harrowing experience, you decided to take swimming lessons, which you thought of before the incident occurred, but disregarded the lessons as something you could postpone. Within a year of embarking on those lessons, you become skilled in swimming, pursued the acquisition of a swimming instructor license, and began teaching others to swim. The disruption was created by the wave slamming up against your raft, which lead to you being thrown into the water. Your comfort and a sense of stability was disrupted.

As aspiring entrepreneurs, many of you continue with the aspiration to become an entrepreneur and launch a new business, but potential remains because you have not experienced a major disruption to shake you from your comfort. So, you postpone your desired goal of becoming an entrepreneur, and remain in prolonged agony on a path you find undesirable.

Continued on Page 2

You choose to settle in your current situation, remain comfortable and satisfied, knowing quite well that you have the desire to rise out of your undesirable condition and pursue your entrepreneurial dreams. At least, you can make attempts at modest steps toward your desired goal.

In March 2009, I became a victim of the economic depression, when I was laid off from a very good engineering job. I was thrown from my comfortable position in the floating raft, and into rough waters. The economy was hemorrhaging profusely, and eventually, over 7.5 million jobs were lost from the collapse of the U.S. economy. The unemployment rate rose to 10.4%, and in addition to the loss of jobs, companies were going bankrupt. It was a turbulent time in our history, which lasted from December 2008 to December 2010. For the first 3-4 months of my layoff, I was thrust into a frenzied job search, spending endless hours per day combing through Department of Labor postings and others on numerous company websites. This was the beginning of what would be a 26-month ordeal. However, during this major disruption, which included many job interviews, loss of utility power, three near evictions from my apartment, unemployment and extended unemployment benefits being depleted, draining my 401K to survive, applying for government assistance, and so much more life lessons, I managed to find my path to survival. Employment would not be realized for me until May 2011, but throughout 2009 and 2010, I discovered much about myself during this major disruption.

In June, or sometime in early July 2009, I was searching through a box in my storage closet and found a folder containing notes and articles I saved on the subject of developing personal images for professionals and business owners. They were among other documents I researched and gathered, with the intent of designing professional development workshops. After searching the entire box, and reacquainting myself with those papers, I immediately launched into a plan to develop those workshops, and turn my research into a published book. Since I was not working, and I had no desire to continue being rejected by potential employers, I immersed myself in wiring a manuscript, utilizing the databases and facilities of the DeKalb Public Library, Georgia State University Library, Kinkos (before the merger with FedEx), Barnes and Noble, Borders (before they liquidated), Starbucks, and wherever I could find peace and solace to complete my work. After a grueling process, I finally submitted my work and became a published author in

March 2010. After publishing of the book, I attended book signing events, and researched any event I could find where authors had the opportunity to engage an audience. In addition, the material I gathered for those professional development workshops transformed into a plan which materialized into what is now the annual Entrepreneurship and Small Business Summit. This year, I will execute the 5th installment of this event on Thursday, May 3, 2018 (ESBS 2018). Although, I had these ideas written on paper before I was laid off, they were pushed into a closed box and replaced with “comfort”. I forewent doing anything with those plans, because I got comfortable in my engineering position. It took a firm and aggressive wave to slam up against my floating raft, and toss me into rough waters. Instead of succumbing to the reality of the moment, I flapped my arms and kicked my legs, and got back into the raft. I did not become a victim, but used the disruption to propel me forward. Today, I can look back at March 2009 as the moment that defined who I am today. The moment which gave birth to Thompson Management Consulting, LLC, the annual conference, this Empowered Business Journal publication, now heading into its 5th year, producing a radio program centered around entrepreneurship, and so much more.

For many aspiring entrepreneurs, recognizing when a moment in your life is an opportunity to shift gears can lift you out of adverse conditions, and remove you from your comfort. Disruptions occur, and no matter how secure you think you may be in your comfortable position, a strong wave will shake you from your comfort. These are moments for you to shift gears and pursue your desired entrepreneurial goals. Instead of looking at these moments of turmoil as something negative, turn them into positives. Find the passion to flap your arms and kick your legs for survival. These are the moments when you find out what you are made of, and how capable you are to survive being abruptly thrown into rough waters. It is not easy, but if you are determined to become an entrepreneur, you must realize that building your dream takes work, grit, and the determination to make it happen, regardless of how challenging the path to success may be. In 2018, become that entrepreneur and start your business. Stop aspiring, and be inspired to get going. Use disruption to place you on your desired path to success. Happy New Year to all those who are determined to become entrepreneurs, and join the 28 million U.S. small businesses, which are driving the economy forward.

HAPPY NEW YEAR
Be Phenomenal in 2018

The Inevitable Obsolescence of Retail Bricks-and-Mortars

Austin E. Thompson, Jr.



The day will soon be upon us when we will have limited options of walking into a retail bricks-and-mortar to purchase a desirable item of our choice. We will do a majority of our shopping primarily online, as retail outlets succumb to the reality of a mass migration to cyber shopping and heightened online consumer demand. Hence, the dependence on costly overhead will diminish, and be replaced with a higher demand for website bandwidth to accommodate the volume of online shoppers visiting the sites of retailers. However, smaller retail outlets are now struggling to attract customers through their doors, because of they relied on bigger outlets to draw traffic. With massive store closings at the nation's busiest strip mall centers, small retail outlets are now faced with increasing their online presence to survive.

It has become increasingly evident that consumers prefer to do their shopping online, rather than scurry from store to store scavenging for discounts and their favorite items. All the hassle of physical exertion can be avoided by sitting in front of a computer, or operating a digital handheld device, like a smart phone or tablet, and locating your items of choice with minimal energy exerted. Each day brings news of retailers closing their doors resulting from a decreased volume of customers walking into stores. For instance, women's fashion journal, WWD, reports a plethora of retail closings that could start a tsunami of other closings resulting from increased ecommerce activity.

Retail closings nationwide has affected stores such as J. Crew, which reports closing 50 stores, K-Mart/Sears closing 413 stores, Payless closing over 900 shoe stores, Rue21, Inc. is closing 400 stores, J.C. Penny closing 140 stores, and others like Abercrombie and Fitch, J'S. A. Bank, Gordmans, Guess, and Macy's are all reporting massive store closures. As the economy continues to grow, consumer confidence will grow, and more money will be spent with the nation's retailers. What is vastly changing is the way consumers are shopping. Almost \$7 billion was spent online on Cyber Monday, according to National Retail Federation (NRF), which was 39% higher than Black Friday sales. Mobile sales accounted for \$2 billion on Cyber Monday, according to a CNBC report. Black Friday online sales increased 16% in 2017 to \$5.03 billion.

With increasing favorability in online shopping, made desirable by convenience, we are seeing a decrease in foot traffic into traditional retail models, which is resulting in store closures. This drives up unemployment among retail employees, and less of a demand for retail clerks. In 2017, retail outlets laid off over 100,000 workers. However, with increased online sales and e-commerce activity, many of these workers are being hired by warehouses across the nation, which are stocking and shipping online orders to consumers, and they are earning much more than they did in a bricks-and-mortar model. ***"Production and non-supervisory workers in the e-commerce sector, including fulfillment centers, earn an average of \$17.41 per hour, compared to \$13.83 in general retail, a 26% premium. And wage and salary payments to e-commerce workers have increased by almost \$18 billion since 2007, in 2016 dollars."*** (www.forbes.com: "How E-Commerce Is Raising Pay and Creating Jobs Around the Country"). In this same article, it is reported that, in Kentucky, from 2007 to 2016, traditional retail jobs increased by 2000. At this same time, e-commerce jobs increased by 11,000, over 450% higher.

Smaller retailers will have to capitalize on new opportunities to grow their businesses online, and not risk losing customers. This digital disruption, while negatively impacting the number of people shopping in stores, is creating opportunities for increased salaries in the e-commerce market, and allowing retail owners to look at reducing overhead costs. Retail entrepreneurs must stay abreast of these trends to drive key decisions in adjusting their approach to doing business, or risk going out of business.

CALL FOR VENDORS

Exhibit at ESBS 2018

Advertise your business

Reach new customers

Get recognized

Register today at:

www.b2bconference.net

WATB 1420AM Signing Off

Austin E. Thompson, Jr.



For the past four years, I had the esteemed honor of co-hosting a radio program with Colin Tinto, formerly of the Carib and Company Show, on WATB 1420AM radio. One Saturday a month, Thompson Management Consulting, LLC sponsored a one hour show titled “The Entrepreneurship and Business Empowerment Hour”. Colin’s show aired each Saturday between 4:00PM – 5:00PM, but I commanded one hour a month. This hour, on the second Saturday of each month, featured some of the most successful business owners and entrepreneurs in Metro Atlanta, who came into the studio for a live on the air interview, or called in if they could not make it into the studio. Each entrepreneur told his or her story of how they made it, the challenges, the triumphs, when they almost felt like quitting, who inspired them, what motivated them to start their business, how do they scale, what marketing strategies work for them, how do they grow successfully, how do they adjust when sales decline, and so many more questions answered. It was their time to shine and inspire thousands of listeners, while promoting their brand on the program. I enjoyed what I did, and I had a great time in the studio with Colin and all of the business owners who came through for that one special hour.

In the studio, some of our esteemed guests included Joe Fernandez of the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Gregg Burkhalter (The LinkedIn Guy), Celeste Giordano Coaching, Tina Greer of Greer Business Solutions, Marc Hamm of Procurement Websites, Saurel Quettan of the Georgia Haitian-American Chamber of Commerce, Dr. Glen Leman of the Jamaican Chamber of Commerce, Tanya Bryant of Just Lovely Lipstick, Sebrena Sumrah Kelly of the Caribbean and American Global Business Exchange, The LONA Gallery, and so many more distinguished entrepreneurs. We made some great friends, and we connected well with everyone who came on the program. In addition, this opportunity gave Thompson Management Consulting, LLC a platform to discuss business and economic development on an open forum. We worked to deliver value-added content for the 10,000 listeners who tuned into the frequency (1420 AM), and thousands who listened online.

Advertise with the Empowered Business Journal and increase your visibility. See details and prices on Page 10. Be EMPOWERED!

I thank Colin for encouraging me to produce my own segment, which I probably would not have done, if his genuine encouragement was not offered. As a consultant, I seldom appeared on his show to conduct various political and business discussions with listeners, and eventually, after realizing how comfortable I became on the mic and speaking on the airwaves, Colin offered me a proposal to host my own show. It was a phenomenal four years, and I enjoyed each moment I had to share useful and valuable information with my audience of entrepreneurs, business owners, and business professionals. I honestly believe that we all can reach an audience utilizing a myriad of options. Whether it is radio, speaking during a workshop or in a keynote capacity, at an expo while vending, or with the Empowered Business Journal. We, as business owners, need to be constantly plugged into sources which provide us valuable and inciteful information we use to help make critical business decisions. No entrepreneur or business owner has all the answer, including me. We must grow expansive networks and connect with like-minded individuals who are heading in the same direction. Imagine the attempt to grow your business and your brand, and remaining reclusive. Exposure is critical to making yourself visible to your audience, and your target market, so isolation and introversion will not lead you down a successful path. I enjoyed radio, because it gave me global exposure, not just exposure to the 10,000 listeners within the frequency range of the station. If you have the passion to command an audience in the capacity of hosting a radio show, I strongly encourage it. You will be surprised how much of a natural you are in a radio station studio. For those of you who tuned in, whether regularly, or seldom, I sincerely appreciate you and the time you gave to the segment. My goal is to leverage various resources to reach my audience, which are business owners, entrepreneurs, aspiring entrepreneurs, decision makers, thought leaders, those in the academic field, visionaries, change makers, and others. I thank you all immensely for tuning in, and I shall identify another opportunity to place the Entrepreneurship and Business Empowerment Hour back on the air.

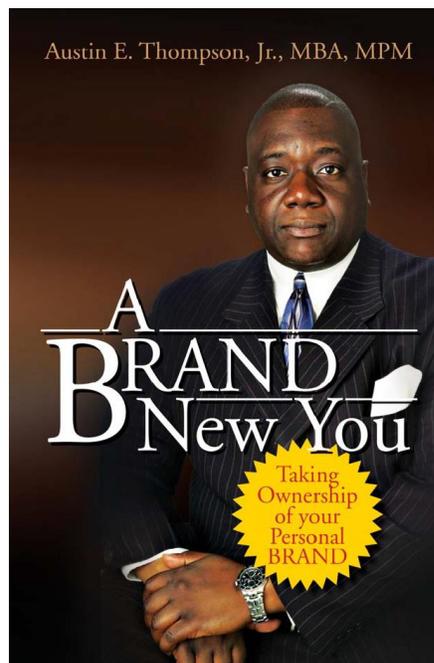
The building which housed WATB 1420AM was purchased by a private investment group, with the intention of demolish the building for construction of a private commercial establishment. Thompson Management Consulting, LLC appreciates your support over the four years of business reporting, and we look forward to resuming radio interviews in the future.

Business Advertisements

Have your business advertised in our publication to over 1,500 subscribers. Thompson Management Consulting, LLC promotes small businesses and entrepreneurs, and our subscriber database is growing fast. Be empowered, and invest in your continued success. Visit us at www.tmconsultingllc.com and send your comments or questions to info@tmconsultingllc.com



Celebrating 20 years of business operations as one of Georgia's premier shipping companies, Caribbean International Shipping Services has been an institution in the metro Atlanta area providing consistent and quality service to its customers, and has provided jobs to residents of DeKalb County. Please support our small businesses.



Available in softcover and hardcover at www.amazon.com and at www.barnesandnoble.com



Savoring the simple pleasures in life



An ideal gift for any occasion or event

(678) 525-4847/O

(678) 221-0290/F

Email: gourmetgiftgiving@gmail.com



THOMPSON
MANAGEMENT
CONSULTING, LLC

www.tmconsultingllc.com

- ***Business Plan Writing & Reviews***
- ***Marketing – Analysis, Writing, and Reviews***
- ***Project Management***
- ***Feasibility Studies***
- ***Financial Analysis & Budgeting***
- ***Strategic Planning & Development***
- ***Business Event Planning (workshops, symposiums, conferences)***
- ***Business Coaching***
- ***Workshop Facilitation & Keynote Speaking***

Email: info@tmconsultingllc.com

Phone: (404) 587-3949

Althea S.
PRINCE, ESQ.
Attorney at Law

Althea S. Prince, Esq.
The Prince Firm, LLC
1479 Brockett Road, Ste. 301
Tucker, GA 30084
D. (678) 705-5409
F. (678) 666-4484
www.theprincefirm.com



Where Hard Work, Personal Service and Results Matter Most!



Ms. Prince specializes in:

- **Immigration**
Green Card, Naturalization, Citizenship, VAWA, USA Visas
- **Civil Rights**
False Arrests, False Imprisonment, Excessive Force during arrest
- **Small Business Disputes**
- **Personal Injury**
- **DUI**



EDUCATION

- University Of Illinois College Of Law, J.d., 2001
- University Of Pennsylvania, B.A., Sociology, 1996

BAR ADMISSIONS

- Supreme Court of Georgia • U.S. District Court Northern District of Georgia
- U.S. District Court Southern District of Georgia
- Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals • Georgia Court of Appeals

MS. PRINCE HAS PRACTICED LAW FOR 15+ YEARS

Place your ½ page ad here.
See below on page 11 for
details.

Upcoming Business Events



THOMPSON
MANAGEMENT
CONSULTING, LLC

PRESENTS
It's 5th Annual
**Entrepreneurship and
Small Business Summit**
(ESBS 2018)

"Leading With Innovation"

Thursday, May 3, 2018

7:30AM - 5:00PM

The Busbee Center

Gwinnett Technical College

5150 Sugarloaf Parkway • Lawrenceville, GA 30043

Exhibitor Registration - \$150.00

**\$75 deposit in advance due by 02/01/2018
(First come - First serve)**

Exhibitor Registration closes on April 6, 2018

Online Advance Attendee Registration - \$20.00

On-site Attendee Registration - \$25.00

Advertise in Swag Bags - \$10.00

Breakfast Refreshments and Networking

7:30AM - 8:20AM

NO REGISTRATION COST FOR HEALTHCARE COMPANIES

**All Exhibitors and Attendees register online
at www.b2bconference.net**

- ★ **Classroom Style Workshops**
- ★ **Business Panels**
- ★ **Keynote Addresses**
- ★ **Get On-Site Business Advisement**
- ★ **Health Fair (free screenings)**
- ★ **Networking Opportunities to Build Valuable B2B Relationships**
- ★ **Breakfast Refreshments
(included with registration fee)**
- ★ **Catered Buffet Lunch
(included with registration fee)**

See all event details at www.b2bconference.net.
For contact information, (404) 587-3949 or
info@tmconsultingllc.com



THOMPSON MANAGEMENT CONSULTING, LLC



NETWORK AFTER WORK

at Venkman's

Wednesday, January 24, 2018

740 Ralph McGill Blvd., NE

Atlanta, GA 30312

6:00PM – 9:00PM

Visit me at my vendor table and let's have a chat 😊

Gwinnett Association of Business Entrepreneurs – GABE

Free Networking & Business Meeting

Vendor Tables \$25.00 – Advertise your business

The Lona Gallery

176 W. Crogan Street, Lawrenceville, GA 30046

Tuesday, February 6, 2018

6:30pm to 8:00pm

Refreshments Always Served

For Information: Call Sylvia or Carolyn at (678) 349-2223

Advertising in the Empowered Business Journal

Advertise in Empowered

These advertising rates are for solo and micro business models, SOHOs, and small businesses with annual gross receipts of \leq \$100K. For major corporate advertisement or for businesses with larger revenue profiles, please call (404) 587-3949 or email us at info@tmconsultingllc.com for rates. No contract required. Pay monthly, quarterly, or annually. Thank you for your support of Empowered Business Newsletter. We support small business success, so let's grow together!

Advertise in Empowered

**¼ page ad
\$35/month**

(Black and White, or Color. Ad must be ready for placement in JPEG format)

*Call us and get started today!
(404) 587-3949*

**Advertise in Empowered
½ page ad (vertically or horizontally placed)
\$45/month**

(Black and White, or Color. Ad must be ready for placement in JPEG format)

*Call us and get started today!
(404) 587-3949*

Advertise in Empowered
Full page ad
\$75/month

(Black and White, or Color. Ad must be ready for placement in JPEG format)

Call us and get started today!
(404) 587-3949

About Empowered Business Journal

The Empowered Business Journal (EBJ) is published by Thompson Management Consulting, LLC as an online publication to provide business related information for small business owners, entrepreneurs, micro enterprises, solopreneurs and business professionals who support small business development. The EBJ is not produced in hard copy format. Articles in the EBJ are written by small business owners, who contribute to the success of each publication by providing insightful and informative articles for the small business community. Moreover, the EBJ promotes small businesses, spotlights entrepreneurs, reports on business, political and economic activity which affects small business owners, and highlights developments from Thompson Management Consulting, LLC. The EBJ has a direct distribution to over 1,500 contacts, who receive the publication via email and share it with their contacts. Copies in PDF format can be retrieved from our website at <http://tmconsultingllc.com/newsletter.html>. We invite small business owners to submit subject matter "Business-related" articles for publishing, along with a head shot and brief bio. All submittals are vetted carefully to qualify for our readers. Finally, we encourage small businesses to advertise with us and support a publication looking out for the concerns of small businesses. Thank you.

About Thompson Management Consulting, LLC

Thompson Management Consulting, LLC works with small business owners and entrepreneurs who are primarily in the 0 – 5 year range of the business lifecycle, those in the seed and start-up to expansion phases. We assist with business plan writing, marketing, feasibility studies, project management, financial and budget analysis, business event planning, and business training. Thompson Management Consulting, LLC produces an Annual Entrepreneurship and Small Business Summit in celebration of National Small Business Week, and hosts a monthly radio program, The Entrepreneurship and Business Empowerment Hour on WATB 1420AM. We are A+ accredited by the Better Business Bureau, and hold memberships in the Gwinnet Chamber of Commerce and Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Additional information can be found at www.tmconsultingllc.com/about.html.

