

# Empowered

*A monthly online publication published by Thompson Management Consulting, LLC for small business change makers – October 2014*

## NATIONAL WOMEN'S SMALL BUSINESS MONTH

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Over a century and a half ago, the Woman's Suffrage movement took off with great potential, as women living in America during the late 1800's began to voice their concerns emphatically for equal rights and fair treatment in society. Women were severely disenfranchised, subjugated, alienated, and unfairly marginalized by society's perception that women were second class citizens, and not equal to men. It was not until pioneers like Susan B. Anthony and others organized a woman's rights conference in Seneca Falls in 1848 and placed pressure on Congress to pass laws to include equal rights for women, that the Suffrage movement received heightened attention and gained momentum. These women pioneered a spirit which was uncommon at the time, because women were severely disenfranchised, subjected to unfair treatment, and drowning in a system of inequality and disparagement. Women were not allowed to work, vote, acquire an education, and were regarded as housewives whose sole purpose was to be subservient to their husbands. Feminist groups like the National American Women's Suffrage Association (NAWSA) fought for the enfranchisement and dignity of women, especially challenging law makers to pass legislation granting equal rights to women.

On August 18, 1920, the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment was ratified to grant women the right to vote after many years of protest and placing constant pressure on Congress to do the right thing and pass laws which protect women. This change came after the ratification of the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment, which granted black men the right to vote, but women did not support this ratification, because it did not include the right for women to vote. However, as they continued to protest and pressure congress for changes, women finally had the right to vote in 1920, and from this victory, began to push forward for other changes to bring fairness and equality to the suffrage movement (<http://www.history.com/topics/womens-history/19th-amendment>).

For much of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and with growing recognition and laws supporting women's rights, women evolved from protesting in suffrage movements to recognizing and capitalizing on their entrepreneurial ambitions. Women opened businesses, which consisted of bakeries, food services, dress making, housekeeping, and evolved from those early domestic models to businesses with more sophisticated models.

According to a ***Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2012 Women's Report***, data was produced on the success of entrepreneurship activity among women from a comparative analysis conducted by region. The study was a collaboration of Babson College (Wellesley, Massachusetts), Universidad Del Desarrollo (Chile, South America), Universiti Tun Abdul Razak (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), and London Business School (London, England). The purpose of this study is to analyze the success of entrepreneurship among women in various global regions, and determine how successful they are in comparison to their male counterparts, especially as the world emerges from the recent global recession where many small businesses were lost. In the study, it is reported that women entrepreneurship activity in Pakistan is only at 1%, while at 40% in Zimbabwe. Women entrepreneurship activity ranked lowest in Europe and Asia, while in comparison, women in Uganda, Nigeria, Panama, Thailand, Ecuador, and Mexico are on equal par or slightly higher with male entrepreneurs. This extensive report highlights the contributions made by women on the global economy, and also illustrates the vast disparities between men and women in entrepreneurship around the world. What you will realize from this study is that entrepreneurship among women is celebrated and welcomed in some societies, while, in other societies, women still fight for equal recognition and participation in business ownership. Many countries which have laws protecting the rights of women, and have a better historical record of fair treatment among women will have higher levels of female entrepreneurs, than those countries which still practice the subjugation and unequal treatment of women. Accomplishments are being made globally in many of these countries, albeit at very slow rates. This report also studies the rates at which women are failing at entrepreneurship and exiting business ownership, and the number of female owned businesses who are exceeding beyond 3-5 years after starting their business. These studies show that success among women depends on access to much needed capital, and overall support for long-term sustained operations.

As we celebrate National Women's Small Business Month in October and pay recognition to the achievements, success, and viability of women entrepreneurs, I had the pleasure of soliciting stories from six dynamic and successful business women who contributed without reluctance. These women are serving as important role models for young women who aspire to be entrepreneurs, and are making a significant impact in business and in the industries they serve. Empowered is grateful for their stories, and we are excited to help bring recognition to these hard working women entrepreneurs and business owners who are making tremendous contributions to Georgia's economy. They are extraordinary, passionate, and ambitious about success in business. These remarkable women, albeit only a small sample, prove that in a society which respects the right of equal and fair participation in entrepreneurship, dreams do become reality, which translates to a productive and competitive society when everyone is welcomed to play on the team.

***This story was contributed by Austin E. Thompson, Jr. of Thompson Management Consulting, LLC for Empowered.***

## **Celebrating National Women's Small Business Month**

***By Ana Maria Marin  
Founder & Managing Director***



My name is Ana Maria Marin and I'm the founder and Managing Director of A-Z Sophisticated Solutions which has been in business since June 2010. Our staff provides three distinctive services: Technical Writing: i.e. brochures, user manuals, website content, video scripts, etc. Technical Instruction related to plastics and processing simulation and we also provide Technical Translations which are completely edited and proofread. We provide services to North America including Canada and Mexico and will be expanding our services to South America.

Our customers, mainly in the plastics and software industries, praise us for the effective and efficient services we provide as shown in their testimonials on our website. At A-Z Sophisticated Solutions we love what we do. We get to learn and share information about new technologies and products, and in the process we get to meet wonderful people from all over the world.

Initially, I didn't have a passion for entrepreneurship. I thought I would follow my father's footsteps, who worked as an employee for 30 years.

He worked most of his career for one company going up the ladder and he retired with many accomplishments including almost 40 patents!!! In my case, I guess I found my passion for entrepreneurship once I was forced to evaluate new opportunities; after my last employer reduced the work force and my department was heavily impacted. Surprisingly, my father, the company man, was my biggest supporter and he still is; the same for my customers and colleagues. My own customers inspired me to become a business owner. I realized there was a need in the market and they wanted me to provide such services. Now that I have my own business, it is such an accomplishment. There are significant amount of responsibilities and possibilities, yet been small allows us to be flexible and my customers appreciate that.

Probably the biggest challenge I faced was becoming a business owner overnight with all the responsibilities that it entitles while simultaneously working on my first customer projects. It was like drinking from a fire hose! Fortunately, having highly qualified professionals around me such as accountants, attorneys and business advisors helped me build my business with a solid foundation. As a result of having highly satisfied customers and been profitable I consider myself a successful business owner.

I was recently asked if there were any instances where I felt being a woman business owner was tough and challenging, and if so, how did I dispel that feeling of discouragement. The truth is yes, a few times, especially since I am double minority here in the US. Growing up in Venezuela, a country known for its machismo, I really didn't face such difficulties. Being a female engineer in a male dominant field taught me it is important for me to see myself as an equal with equal rights since that is the philosophy this country is based upon. So I force myself to snap out of it and move on as fast as possible.

The significance of National Women's Small Business Month gives me the chance to empower other women to act upon their dreams and start their own businesses. As we are currently celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month until October 15th, it is very important for me to be a role model to young Hispanic women. I have been a Plastics Engineering Adjunct Professor for the University of Massachusetts- Lowell since 2005 and this year I took up the role of Region 7 Professional Representative for the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers. I do my best to be an example for the next generation and the satisfaction of helping them is priceless. I hope that I am able to inspire more young entrepreneurs and be proof that strategy; planning and hard work can help you achieve your dreams and career aspirations.

Customers say Ana Maria is joyful, reliable and professional. "Joyful" because she is always smiling and cheering. "Reliable" because you can always count on her doing her best. "Professional" because of her high standards of practice and ethics at all times.

Been happy is a mindset. People like to be around others that are positive and optimistic, so I always ensure I am having fun. While I am not working I would be gardening, dancing, meditating and learning about all what I can along the way.

My advice to potential new entrepreneurs is: if you really have the self-discipline and you find something you are passionate about just go for it. Don't overthink it. The more you think the timing might pass. As Randal Pinkett, author of Campus CEO and the winner of The Apprentice Season 4 with Donald Trump, said during The Young Millionaires | Emerging Leaders Panel at Harvard University which I attended while evaluating my career options: "At least when you are running your own business you will be eased into when your role is over." So your time is now, what are you waiting for?

#### **About Ana Maria Marin**

**Ms. Ana Maria Marin** is Autodesk Moldflow Silver Certified and holds a Master of Science degree in Plastics Engineering from UMASS Lowell, a Bachelor of Science degree in Materials Engineering, Major in Polymers from Universidad Simón Bolívar in Caracas- Venezuela. She is the founder of A-Z Sophisticated Solutions, LLC and she is also an adjunct professor for the Department of Plastics Engineering at UMASS Lowell. Throughout her 16 years of professional experience with CAD and CAE products, she has assumed different roles that allowed her to expand her knowledge and experience. Ana Maria has been a member of the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE) since 2005, the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) since 2005 and the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) 2003-2013. She can be contacted through LinkedIn at <http://www.linkedin.com/in/anamariamarin1>



Superior Hospitality LLC and Plan-it-well.com was founded by Bertley Bernard who serves as its President and Chief Planner.



**Bertley Bernard**  
**President and**  
**Chief Planner**

We are an Event Planning and Hospitality Logistics Management Service Company that is located in Stone Mountain Georgia.

Our services include Planning and Managing of Corporate Events, Socials, Weddings, Non Profits, Family Reunion, Fashion Shows, Conferences, Business Meetings, and other types of events.

We create unique and memorable events and are engaged in every aspect of them. This includes planning, theme, design, logistics, technical and on site coordination.

We also provide outstanding personnel including seasoned caterers, bartenders, valet attendants, servers, security, DJs, singers, emcees and others. With expertise in event planning, event management, promotional staging and event staffing our team combines unparalleled experience with unmatched promotional techniques. Our objective is to create events of superior quality that provides exceptional experiences for our clients, event hosts and their guests to enjoy and treasure. Our services are custom tailored to ensure the success of each venture.

There are many challenges that can present themselves while planning and executing an event. One of the greatest challenges I faced was lack of communication. It is important to keep the line of communication open at all times to ensure there is no interruption in the smooth creation of an event. All of the people working on various aspects of an event should constantly communicate because there is nothing that can come up that cannot be fixed, there is always a Plan B. It is also necessary for changes to be relayed immediately so that an alternate plan can be put in place.

My greatest reward as an Event Planner is having a client satisfied with the work of my team. When the guests enjoy the event and the clients achieve their dream, I am fulfilled. I love planning weddings, this is my first love. Seeing a bride and groom totally enjoy their day gives me great satisfaction. Since my introduction to event planning came through Wedding Coordination, I am a little biased.



Continued on Page 5

## Lecture Series and Book Signing Atlanta-Fulton County Library System

### Ordained for Success

A lecture with information from the soon to be published book from Austin E. Thompson, Jr., Author of **A BRAND New You: Taking Ownership of Your Personal BRAND.**

Tuesday, November 18, 2014

6:30pm – 7:30pm

The Fairburn Branch

60 Valley View Drive

Fairburn, GA 30213

**For Information: call (404) 587-3949**



Please join Austin E. Thompson, Jr., Co-host on the Carib & Company Show's Entrepreneurship and Economic Development segment for a discussion on **"The New Jamaican Chamber of Commerce of Atlanta"** We will have Dr. Janice M. Barrow, Founder and President of the new Chamber as our guest. We will discuss its programs, objectives, and all that Dr. Barrow and her Executive Board has planned in working with Jamaican and Caribbean owned businesses. Also, we will be recognizing female entrepreneurs as we celebrate National Women's Small Business Month during October.



Tune in Saturday, October 11, 2014 at 4:00pm on 1420AM, or join us online at [www.WATB1420.com](http://www.WATB1420.com), and click on listen live. Thank you very much for your support, and we look forward to a progressive discussion. We welcome you to call in with questions at (404) 292-1420.

The last twenty three years I worked in Atlanta's financial sector. I transitioned in October 2012 and made the decision to use my passion and love for Event Planning to fulfill my dreams. I realize that I love working with numbers and I am very organized, planning was always in my blood so I am putting it all together to help my clients create memorable dreams.

Let Superior Hospitality LLC and Plan-it-well.com be your choice for Ultimate Event and Entertainment Planning and Management Services. Serving Metro Atlanta we offer personalized service for events from 10 to 5000 guests. For your free initial consultation call us at 678-318-1322 or email us at [events@Plan-it-well.com](mailto:events@Plan-it-well.com). Please visit us at Website: [www.Plan-it-well.com](http://www.Plan-it-well.com), and view our complete marketing video on Youtube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KqhKudO1Xbl&feature=youtu.be>

**About Bertley Bernard:**

*Twelve years ago God gave me a vision to become a Wedding Coordinator, at that time I had no idea what it entailed. After doing some research I enrolled at Georgia Perimeter College where I became a Certified Wedding Coordinator. I fell in love with event planning and worked with various organizations including my church. I later attended DeVry University where I obtained my Bachelor's of Science degree in Technical Management with a concentration in Hospitality Management.*

*I am now the President and Chief Planner of Superior Hospitality LLC and Plan-it-well.com and I am excited to share my passion and to help others create remarkable and memorable events.*

## The Jamaican Chamber of Commerce of Atlanta, Inc.

By Dr. Janice M. Barrow  
Founder & President



This year has been quite an exciting one for the community with the incorporation of the Jamaican Chamber of Commerce of Atlanta, Inc. in May, or "JamCham" for short. The personal challenge for me as the Founding President, given that "JamCham" is in its infancy, is to build its infrastructure, build membership and continue to build its already impressive strategic partnerships and networks for the benefit of its members. Along with 22 other founding members, JamCham was formed out of a need for the community to come together with a unified voice, to be able to lobby for resources, to have access to solutions and opportunities, and be empowered to make informed choices and transform those choices into success.

I have always known that I wanted to run businesses, choosing to study Economics in high school and then going on to do a bachelor's degree in Management Studies, an MBA and then a Ph.D. in Finance. My motivation is my love of learning, the need to have an outlet for my creative energies, and the tremendous personal and professional reward I get from managing complex projects and overcoming difficult challenges, all of which resulted in me being part of a diverse set of very fulfilling initiatives. I have worn many different hats and currently juggle the responsibilities of being a Finance Professor for a nationally ranked business school, a CEO for a professional development firm, and recently added the role of founding President of the Jamaican Chamber of Commerce of Atlanta, Inc. – JamCham.

My path to business ownership was not straight nor was it easy, however all experiences have proven to be beneficial in some way. In my journey I have had the opportunity to be the Director for women's leadership programs and saw and heard, first hand, the unique challenges faced by women in business but have also had the opportunity to hear from the presenters who had many nuggets of wisdom that they used to thrive. The top 4 which I would like to share are:

1. **Personal Branding:** Explore your personal values and attributes; define your short- and long-term career goals; and develop your brand message
2. **Networking: Unleash the Power of Relationships:** Build relationships inside and outside of your company; and create a strategic framework for relationships



### Annual Business Expo

Wednesday, November 12, 2014  
At the 755 Club, Turner Field  
9:00am – 4:00pm

### For additional information:

Santiago Marquez, VP & CFO  
Email: [smarquez@ghcc.org](mailto:smarquez@ghcc.org)  
(404) 929-9998, ext. 224

3. **Understand Personal Motivation:** Understand your personal management style, motivations, fears and “overused strengths”; learn how to adapt your personal style to better work with others; and have a tool for improving ongoing interaction with others
4. **Negotiate for Yourself:** learn the secrets of savvy negotiators; explore gender differences in negotiation frequency and style; and gain confidence in your negotiation style

What are my secrets to success? Three words that describe me are: **Thoughtful** – wish the best for others, **Analytical** – solve complex problems, and **Driven** – achievement oriented. These characteristics guide me to (1) seek ways to achieve goals without harming others, (2) do what I say I will do, (3) focus on what works to arrive at a mutually beneficial solution, (4) learn from things that did not go well then move on, and (5) take responsibility for my actions and treat others as I would like to be treated.

It is important to have balance which means to also rest and relax. For me, this means spending time with family and friends, sharing life’s simple pleasures like birthday celebrations or just going out to have fried fish with friends on a Friday night.

**About Dr. Janice M. Barrow:**

*Dr. Barrow is the Founding and Current President of the Jamaican Chamber of Commerce of Atlanta, Inc. (JamCham) a Georgia non-profit corporation. JamCham has 23 founding Board members made up of community leaders, business owners, business professionals, members of the AJA, and Jamaica’s Consul General to Miami who is responsible for consular affairs in 13 States of the Southern USA, as well as Bahamas and the Cayman Islands. In addition, JamCham has founding corporations such as the Atlanta Airport Authority, which manages the busiest airport in the world, Aroma Ridge, Inc., a coffee distributor, Gayle Tax and Accounting Consulting, and Panton Capital Holdings Group.*



**Nancy Rosenberg**  
**President & CEO**



**EMP:** What business do you own and what services to you provide to your customers?

**NR:** Signarama BUFORD specializes in helping companies increase their Visibility, Branding & Marketing with signage, promo items, event tents, embroidered shirts & more! We offer everything a business needs for success.

**NR (Continued):** Signarama Buford is one of the top performing franchisees out of 850 locations in the world!

**EMP:** What was your passion for entrepreneurship?

**NR:** We have a passion for understanding our client’s needs and I love what I do! People can tell if you are in business just to make money or if you have a genuine passion for your job, regardless of the industry.

**EMP:** What is your personal long-term vision as a business owner?

**NR:** My long-term vision for the business is to have a large sales team in place so I can work on growing the business. In 2011 we purchased an 8,000 sq. ft. facility to expand & ensure future growth. Our goal was for our clients to experience the “Ultimate Wow Factor” the minute they walked through the door. Goal accomplished!

**EMP:** As the owner of Signarama Buford, how long have you been in business, and what is your commitment to keeping customers coming back?

**NR:** We are celebrating 14 years of excellence. We excel at providing amazing customer service and quality products. We are also very involved in our community, our local schools, sports teams and charitable events within our local area. Our marketing strategy is everyone we meet receives something with our logo on it. We are famous for giving out stainless steel coffee mugs, notepads, pens & recycled grocery totes. This keeps our name in front of our existing and potential clients at all times.

**EMP:** What drives or motivates you?

**NR:** I am motivated by the satisfaction of my client’s success and positive feedback. My goal is to have every one of my client’s grow and thrive to be the best and most successful in their industry. I am also motivated by my amazing Signarama Buford Team. We now have 15 employees and my goal is to keep them happy so they stay with us forever! We offer a 401K with company match. We celebrate birthdays, company anniversary parties, any reason to have fun...life is too short not to love your job, whether an employee or owner.

**EMP:** Who inspired you to become a business owner?

**NR:** My Mom inspired me to become an entrepreneur. She had a very successful jewelry & clothing boutique and when I was younger I would travel to trade shows and showrooms in New York to purchase inventory. I witnessed first-hand the hard work and sacrifices that she made and learned a lot about determination and never giving up. I started my first business at 22 selling wholesale hair accessories to beauty supply companies.

**EMP:** What were some of the challenges you had to overcome as an entrepreneur?

**NR:** The biggest challenge most entrepreneur's face is working capital. Make sure you have enough \$ in personal savings so you do not have to take a salary for the first 2-4 years, depending on the business. Invest all profits back into growing the business.

**EMP:** Were there any instances where you felt being a woman business owner was tough and challenging, and if so, how did you dispel that feeling of discouragement?

**NR:** Not applicable, answered in advice section.

**EMP:** Are you a woman who owns a successful business or simply put, a successful business owner?

**NR:** I am a successful business owner who happens to be a woman!

**EMP:** What is the significance of National Women's Small Business Month to you?

**NR:** Women have come a long way, but there are still large discrepancies in salaries for the same positions in corporate America. Start your own company so you can control your own destiny!

**EMP:** What are three words that describe Nancy Rosenberg, and why these three words?

**NR:** Loyal, Trustworthy, Fun

**EMP:** What are some of your favorite past time activities?

**NR:** I enjoy spending time with my husband and two boys, ages 14 & 17, who are involved in multiple sports: Cross Country, Track, Fencing, Baseball & Basketball. We also enjoy hiking in the North Georgia Mountains.

**EMP:** Finally, what advice do you have for young women who are inspired to venture into business ownership?

**NR:** Expect to sacrifice everything to be successful. Failure is not an option when you invest your entire life's savings into a business. Expect to work harder and longer hours than you ever did in your past careers, but remember you are investing in YOUR SUCCESS, not someone else's. Learn from your mistakes, everybody makes them, the key is learning from them and always continue to learn and grow. Become an expert in your industry, attend seminars and read business and motivational blogs. Find a mentor and follow their advice. Live below your means, when you start making \$, save it, don't start upgrading your house, your car, etc. Save the money for unexpected business expenses or if you have a few months of lower than expected sales. As a business owner, wife and mother of two very active boys, the best advice I can offer is "Learn to Say NO and don't feel guilty about it!" You will never find a perfect balance between family and work, just do what you think is best for you and your family.

Nancy Rosenberg, CEO & President

[www.Sarbuford.com](http://www.Sarbuford.com)  
[nancy@sarbuford.com](mailto:nancy@sarbuford.com)

### Accolades & Recognition:

*Signarama Buford is an independently owned franchise. There are 500 locations in the US and 850 worldwide.*

*Signarama Buford is proud to be one of the top performing franchisees in the world!*

*Signarama Buford is a Mentor Store, Hall of Fame Winner and President's Award recipient, the highest recognition from Signarama Corporate.*

*There are 21,000 businesses in Gwinnett County and 90% of those businesses have 50 or less employees. Signarama Buford was awarded the prestigious Gwinnett Chamber Pinnacle Award for three consecutive years, 2012, 2013 & 2014, recognized as one of the TOP 25 SMALL Businesses in Gwinnett County!*

## Accidental Entrepreneur

**Lara O'Connor Hodgson**  
**CEO & Founder**  
**NOWaccount**



As children and young adults, we are often taught that we should pursue entrepreneurship, if we like risk, if we like to build things, or if we want to be our own boss. I do love to build things and I love to tackle impossible problems, but I don't come from a family of risk-takers, nor did I have a burning desire to be my own boss. In fact, armed with a degree in Aerospace Engineering with highest honors from Ga. Tech, an MBA from Harvard Business School and a stint in Japan learning to speak Japanese with a Defense Dept. program, I began a career path that included senior positions in which I helped others build and grow their companies and in which I never had a job that someone had before me. I worked in strategy consulting, emerging internet strategy, athletic footwear branding, just-in-time manufacturing and commercial real estate development and investment before I started the first of my own companies.

What drove my passion for entrepreneurship? The answer is actually not a "what" but a "so what." I often hear people say that you should be passionate about what you do. I don't agree. The "what" doesn't drive me – I can be excited about many products and services, but what really drives me is the "so what" – does it have a positive and meaningful impact on the world.

As a young girl that excelled in math and science I was encouraged to pursue engineering and for years I believed that I was analytical, but not creative (I can’t sing or draw). But I realized that this was not the case, because creativity is the ability to problem solve – the ability to look at the same thing as everyone else, but to see something different. And it was in realizing that I am extremely creative that I also realized that just because you are good at something does not mean you love it. I decided that my goal in life is not success – that is not thinking big enough – my goal is significance. And so, I became an entrepreneur because I saw needs that were not being filled and because... I became a mom.

I am a workaholic by nature and, so when I became a mom, I knew that if I was going to appreciate this special time then I needed to step away from my full-time job running a large real estate development company. I partnered with Stacey Abrams, a Leadership Atlanta classmate of mine, and we started, first, a consulting and development company, and then Nourish, a patented line of water bottles for babies and toddlers. I learned two things: (1) Having a partner is key because it keeps you accountable to someone and (2) I work more for myself than I ever did for others but I have the flexibility to work when I want so my family can come first.

As we were growing Nourish and selling to larger and larger customers (national grocery retailers) we came to a painful realization – we were growing to death! Larger companies take longer to pay their invoices and each larger order hurt our cash flow. We looked for a solution with banks and other financial products and met John Hayes, who had founded Peachtree Accounting Software and who had built and sold several companies, and we became a customer of his financial product. We soon found ourselves collaborating on what we would do if we could build the perfect program to help small businesses get paid immediately so they could grow, and what we designed became NOWaccount – an innovative new program that enables a small business to get paid immediately in a way that is not a loan, feel like and costs less than taking a credit card for payment, and is invisible to their business and government customers. Once again my passion for solving impossible problems, for being the contrarian and asking why does it have to work the way it has always worked, and for the “so what”, led me to the opportunity of a lifetime.

At NOWaccount we will remove the burden of funding trade credit from small businesses and will do so in a way that actually helps the small business grow and strengthen their balance sheets, while it also helps banks and the capital markets more safely fund the growth of small business. I know what it felt like to work hard to grow my business only to see it grow to death, and I don’t want another small business owner to experience that.

I am often asked how I can balance it all – being an entrepreneur/CEO, being a mom and wife and being active in the community on many boards and committees. Women have cornered the market on this topic and love to discuss it – something that never comes up with our male counterparts. Women have debated for years whether “work-life balance” is achievable. It is but you don’t want it! It is the wrong goal! If everything is in balance it is a bit like a see-saw on the playground – everything is average. I have no desire to be an average mom, an average wife, or an average CEO. Therefore, my goal, along with significance, is to optimize my life (and work is a part of life) so when I am doing a task I am 100% focused on doing that task. People often say with great pride “I am a good multi-tasker”, but the reality is that they are not. They may be doing several things in parallel, but they are not doing all of them at the highest level of excellence. Standing at the playground and answering work texts/emails means the child knows they are not really present, and they have probably sent a less than well scripted email – so everything is average.

I have spent a great deal of my life in contexts, in which I am the only female, but I have always believed that one’s greatest weakness is also their greatest strength and so I have used that difference as a strength and differentiator. I am a contrarian, I am curious and I am a pioneer (I love an adventure in which I don’t know the outcome – I thrive on ambiguity). As we celebrate National Women’s Small Business Month, I challenge each of you, who ever had an idea or an interest, to pursue it – collectively we will change the world!

To learn more about NOWaccount, and how we can help your small business, please see our video by clicking here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AARs6CubzRc>. Visit NOWaccount at [www.nowaccount.com](http://www.nowaccount.com).





**Cartridge World - Lawrenceville**

<https://www.cartridgeworld.com/main/>

**Nancy McGill**

**Owner**



**EMP:** What business do you own and what services do you provide to your customers?

**NM:** I own Cartridge World Lawrenceville with a retail store located in the Publix shopping center on 911 Duluth Hwy Lawrenceville GA 30043. We sell all brands high quality re-manufactured, compatible and OEM toner and ink cartridges, printers, paper, we also offer secure shredding, copy services, and printer repair. We have free delivery for businesses, a bi-lingual staff, a 100% satisfaction guarantee, assistance with inventory control, recycling and provide advice on printers and cartridges.

**EMP:** What was your passion for entrepreneurship?

**NM:** I enjoy a challenge and learning new things. I opened Cartridge World Lawrenceville because I could help businesses and individuals save money on something they already use while also helping the environment.

**EMP:** What is your personal long-term vision as a business owner?

**NM:** I want to make Cartridge World a household name in Gwinnett County and continue to grow my business so I can give back and help more in the local community.

**EMP:** As the owner of Cartridge World Lawrenceville, how long have you been in business?

**NM:** We have been in business 10 years and I have the longest tenure in Georgia.

**EMP:** What drives or motivates you?

**NM:** Getting to know local businesses people and learning about their businesses, then talking to them about their cartridge needs and helping them save money and recycle. Building long term relationships with customers and trying to give them the best customer service.

**EMP:** Who inspired you to become a business owner?

**NM:** My husband, he saw an article in the Wall-street journal about the re-manufacturing of printer cartridges which seemed like a good business fit for me. I researched several companies in this industry and decided to buy a Cartridge World franchise. It was the first one in Gwinnett County and the 3rd one to open in Georgia.

**EMP:** What were some of the challenges you had to overcome as an entrepreneur?

**NM:** You have to learn what your strengths are and what

part of your business you excel in, such as sales, bookkeeping, purchasing, marketing, etc. and hire good reliable people to help with the other areas that the business needs. As a business owner you cannot run a business by yourself it takes the whole team working together to have a successful business.

**EMP:** Were there any instances where you felt being a woman business owner was tough and challenging, and if so, how did you dispel that feeling of discouragement?

**NM:** I have never felt that being a woman business owner made it any tougher. We all like to do business with people we know and trust. Being a business owner is not about whether you are a man or woman. It's about being able to multi-task, having patience and flexibility when unexpected things happen. Our agenda changes many days several times a day.

**EMP:** Are you a woman who owns a successful business or simply put, a successful business owner?

**NM:** I am a successful owner, we continue to show a profit. Our franchise is rated within the top 5% in the US. I have a passion for my business and still get excited about educating people about Cartridge World Lawrenceville and what we have to offer. I take pride and care in my employees and customers.

**EMP:** What is the significance of National Women's Small Business Month to you?

**NM:** It's a great way for women to celebrate the success of being a business owner, which many years ago would have not been possible.

**EMP:** What are three words that describe Nancy McGill, and why these three words?

**NM:** Tenacious, business owners don't work 9-5 it means working to get the job done, Competitive, striving to be the best we can possibly be in quality, service, and sales. Positive, seeing the glass half full when problem arise. There is always a solution.

**EMP:** What are some of your favorite past time activities?

**NM:** Spending time with family and friends, watching movies, exercising, reading and traveling. I am involved in several organization; Lawrenceville Rotary club, Ambassador for the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce, Board Member Sage School and other local networking groups.

**EMP:** Finally, what advice do you have for young women who are inspired to venture into business ownership?

**NM:** Look into several types of businesses, do your research on the business you are considering and make sure it's a business you see yourself working in. Having passion and enjoying your business is key to having a successful business. Seek professional help with an accountant and possibly a business broker.

# Business Marketplace

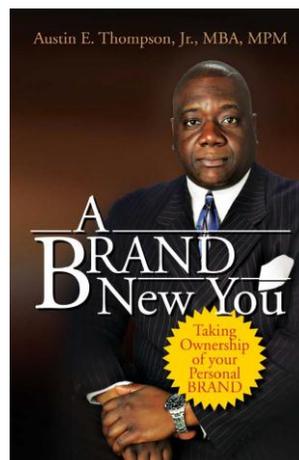
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