



Audubon County Economic Development Corporation

800 Market Street

Audubon, IA 50025-1050

Phone: 712-563-2742 Fax: 712-563-2537

Email: aced@iowatelecom.net www.auduboncounty.com

ACED TIDBITS

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DATA REPORTS

Numerous reports are issued monitoring population, unemployment, wages, retail sales, available workforce, employment needs assessments, tax rate levels and on and on. Many of these reports seem so negative and point out facts that are discouraging. Often we question the information source and happening. These concerns are legitimate as reports are just that; they are reports of available figures. However, they do serve as good benchmarks and a tool for making comparisons.

MARKETING TOOLS

The demographic of our country, state, county, and towns are changing fast. Most of these changes are beyond our control and many are very concerning. We need to do our best to identify the negatives that we feel we can affect with positive results. This takes a lot of unity between our towns and population in general. Many of our political and measured boundaries may need to be removed to get results and make an impact. Tools such as Survey Monkey and Social Networking are available and many other technologies are available for both communications and marketing. Are we using them?

PULLING TOGETHER

I hear comments that “these” folks don’t care about “those” folks succeeding within the county, but I am certain that is absolutely not true. There are issues that conflict but reality is that we all care about each other and have a willingness to help and support one and another. In reviewing reports, I feel we need not be intimidated with negatives but review them with an open mind to identify what we can do to make improvement.

If a concern regards retail leakage we may need to evaluate if we are taking advantage of our community assets to pull business in. If the concern is population, are we doing a good job of promoting our local businesses, goods and services, downtown convenience, city parks and other quality of life benefits? Are the local businesses working together to identify compatible business types that should be solicited to come to our town? Would some local financial incentives to keep commercial buildings in shape or to help a new or expanding business be beneficial? Do we have a place ready for a new business or business expansion to locate? The list can go on and on.

We need each other for support, for resources, for promotion, to make strategic plans, etc. Any notion that “they” don’t want “them” to succeed has no foundation. Our rural communities will survive but not without change and unity, maybe major change.

BUSINESS STRATEGY IDEAS

As retail and other business markets evolve, small business owners face a relatively simple problem: adapt or fold. Confined to relatively small spaces and lacking access to large sums of capital, local businesses are often unable to compete with large retailers with respect to variety or “one-stop” convenience. Here are some strategy ideas small businesses may consider adopting in order to remain competitive.

- If you sell complex items emphasize expert advice
- Offer delivery on large items
- Develop special order capabilities
- Identify services you can offer for additional fee
- Look for inventory gaps in the local market
- Keep inventory fresh by removing (Sale) obsolete inventory
- Review your operating hours
- Stress the quality of your products, service, and competitive advantage
- Earn word of mouth advertising
- Schedule a customer appreciation day
- Make employees “associates”
- Accept that change can be good and seize opportunities that are created
- Work with other businesses to define specific niches appropriate for the community
- Engage local music, art and craft talent to increase pedestrian traffic
- Special events and promotions
- Members of the local business community, whether in the same county town or not, may want to develop a handout describing some of their service, inventory, marketing, and customer relations benefits/advantages

AUDUBON COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FUND

It is amazing to see this program keep working. It keeps pumping money into the local economy through our not-for-profit organizations. The good news is it goes on forever. Soon it will be awarding the fall grants in the amount of \$32,000.

Investors are always in need and the local foundation committee encourages folks to invest in the Audubon County Community Foundation Fund. The Endow Iowa Tax Credit program has approximately \$1.8 million remaining. Detail information is available at www.auduboncounty.com or from any of the county committee members listed on the site.

MyEntre.Net

MyEntre.Net is a free, on line social network that works similar to other well known social networking sites, but with a twist that it is for small business owners. I frequently send information to you regarding their webinars. More than 100 of these webinars have been archived for on demand viewing. I hope you are utilizing this great service. The web site now has more than

3,000 members from all 99 counties and they have helped start or expand 210 businesses in the past year. They are part of the Regional Business Center at the University of Northern Iowa.

ENTREPRENEURIAL AND BUSINESS START- UP INGREDIENTS

- Networking
- Understand financials
- High personal drive
- Responsibility-for good and bad
- Be patient
- Be daring
- Be bold
- Don't fear failure
- Get a mentor
- Do it because you want to and want the challenge



Thomas R. Nielsen
Executive Director

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**Food for thought.....**

- Why do people pay to go up tall buildings and then put money in binoculars to look at things on the ground?
- Why are you IN a movie, but you're ON TV?

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Audubon County Tourism

Margee Shaffer Coordinator

Save the Date.....

- September 26 Exira Fall Festival ~ Entertainment & Activities in City Park ~ Pony Rides, Bake Sale, Craft Fair & more....
- October 2 Audubon County Hospital Foundation Books Are Fun Book Fair ~ 11 AM to 5 PM at the ACMH Education Center ~ For more details call 563-5295
- October 3 11th Annual Audubon Community Fall Garage Sale ~ For more details call 563-3780
- October 4 Nathaniel Hamlin Park Fall Festival ~ Entertainment ~ A Salute to Veterans ~ Smoked Pork Chop Dinner ~ Historical Museums to Visit ~ Crafts & Flea Market & more...
- October 25 Audubon County Hospital Foundation Big Band Harvest Dance ~ 6 to 10 PM at the Agri Hall ~ For more detail call 563-5295

For **Happenings** in Audubon County Check out auduboncounty.com

1. **News Report** (On the home page on the left under ACED)
2. **The Calendar** (On the right on the home page Arrow for the month and click on the date)

These locations have all the details and a flyer

Check out

Exira Fall Festival

Exira Fall Festival Chili Cook-Off Rules

Nathaniel Hamlin Park Fall Festival

ACHF Big Band Harvest Dance & 15th Anniversary Celebration